Greetings from the DSSC!

Welcome back to all the PhD students and candidates! Hopefully this summer was rejuvenating and you all had a chance to recharge! We would like to welcome the incoming cohort, Fred (Fritz) Graham, Harry (Dan) Heist, Ama Nyame-Mensah, and Allison Russell – we look forward to getting to know each of you throughout your tenure! Please take time to welcome them to the program! Congratulations to the second years for successfully completing your preliminary exams! Both of you worked hard all year, and your passing is a reflection of your success in the program!

We are looking forward to the upcoming semester! Our first meeting will be on September 16th - we can't wait to hear about everyone’s summers! We will be working to increase interactions between faculty and students, and will be planning many fun activities to ease everyone into this semester. Activities on the horizon include: a welcome happy hour for the new cohort, an apple picking day, and another dinner in West Philadelphia. Please be sure to let us know if you have any ideas for events in the fall and spring! Welcome back!

DSSC co-chairs,
Allison & Kalen

Greetings from the PhD Program Director!

Welcome to the 2015-2016 academic year! This past year was full of good things - an increase in student stipends, a Communicating Science workshop by the AAAS (American Association for the Advancement of Science), videos of our students talking about their research, what motivates their work, why they chose to come to Penn, and more (see http://www.sp2.upenn.edu/people/current-phd-student-profiles/), an overhauled website, and a new dean!

Five students graduated during the academic year, six students successfully defended their dissertation proposals, and first-year students passed the preliminary exams. Two students received federal research grants for their dissertations; another has an application under review. And, in continuing to count, I believe that the student who submitted the most had five manuscripts under review during the year. And, finally, a recent review of the CVs of current PhD students documents more teaching and research across the years.

Please join me in welcoming four students to the program: Fred (Fritz) Graham, Harry (Dan) Heist, Ama Nyame-Mensah, and Allison Russell. By the time you read this, they likely will be several weeks into their first semester.

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Looking ahead, we will continue our outreach efforts, consider changes to the curriculum, and think about program administration (my term ends this year). Special thanks to Professor Phyllis Solomon, who will serve as the program director while I am on leave this semester.

Onward and upward in 2015-2016!

Susan Sorenson

NEW STUDENTS

Fred (Fritz) Graham

His name is Fred Graham, although he is more likely to answer to Fritz. If you're interested in learning why, he'd be happy to tell you the story. Originally, he is from Alliance, Ohio. After high school, he lived in France as an exchange student for a year before starting undergrad at Pomona College in Claremont, CA. Fritz graduated in 2006 with a BA in Psychology. His MPH is from The University of the Sciences in Philadelphia, which he received in 2012. For the last 8 years, he has worked with three different Philadelphia based social service agencies.

First, at ActionAIDS for 4 years, followed by a year at Pathways to Housing, PA and finally, 3 years at Philadelphia FIGHT. While at both ActionAIDS and FIGHT, he worked with low-income individuals infected with HIV/AIDS by helping them find and maintain safe, affordable housing in the 5 county regions. While at Pathways to Housing, PA, Fritz helped chronically homeless individuals transition from the streets to supported, independent living. Given his academic and professional background, his research interests lie in medication adherence and housing insecurity amongst HIV-infected individuals. His advisor is Dr. Ghose, with whom he is excited to be working. His expectations, from this Ph.D. program, are neither high nor low. He is taking things one day at a time. He is honestly just blessed and honored to be a part of SP2 and the greater Penn community. To blow off steam, he plays soccer, rugby and he brews beer at home. Come by for a pint!

Harry (Dan) Heist

Dan Heist is from Bryn Mawr, PA. After graduating from Penn State with a BA in Speech Communication, he served a two-year mission in Geneva Switzerland speaking French. He pursued his career in university development at Brigham Young University and then completed a MA in Philanthropic Studies at Indiana University.

For the last five years, he worked in fundraising as a Major Gifts Officer for LDS Philanthropies, at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Dan will be working with Dr. Ram Cnaan on research involving volunteerism and welfare service provision within religious organizations. His research interests fall in the same area of faith-based philanthropy and social service provision. Dan and his wife Katie have four children.
Ama Nyame-Mensah

Ama Nyame-Mensah holds a B.A. in Economics and an M.A. in Urban Affairs and Public Policy, both from the University of Delaware. Before joining the Ph.D. program in Social Welfare at UPenn, Ama worked as a research staff member at the Computing Research Association's Center for Evaluating the Research Pipeline (CERP). While there, she conducted research on the benefits of undergraduate research experiences on women and minority students' academic and career aspirations and helped to facilitate the automation of CERP's data analysis and reporting activities. Ama’s research interests include sociocultural disparities in educational and economic attainment as well as the impact of experiential learning activities on student outcomes.

Allison Russell

Allison Russell is a native of Buffalo, NY, but grew up in Pittsburgh, PA. After graduating from Fordham University with a BA in Latino American and Latino Studies, she went on to earn a Master’s in Public Administration from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington. While at UNCW, Allison worked as both an editorial assistant for the academic journal Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly and a research assistant in the field of nonprofit studies under the guidance of Dr. Jeffrey Brudney. As part of her research apprenticeship with Dr. Femida Handy, she will continue in her role as an editorial assistant for NVSQ here at SP2. Her research interests include the development and implementation of GIS applications for nonprofit organizations; the valuation of community-engaged learning from the community perspective; and inter-sector collaboration in social service delivery. In her “free time,” Allison enjoys fitness training, following her favorite hockey team (the Buffalo Sabres), and reading books that are completely unrelated to her studies.

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Seongho An

This summer, Seongho attended the 4th European Summer School on Social Economy (ESSE). ESSE is held at the University of Bologna Italy every summer. The theme of this year was “Personalization and Social Entrepreneurship”.

ESSE is an international summer school where a group of scholars and practitioners come from all over the world to discuss current issues on social economy for an intense week. This year, they discussed the new paradigm in the production of social services, called personalization, which replaces the previous one: consumerism. The distinguished professors gave lectures about the emerging need of building a new generation of more user-centred, efficient and cost-effective services, which requires (and implies) that changes be made by the organisations that deliver them.

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ESSE provides graduate students interested in social economy with opportunities to present their papers as well as to receive scholarships.

It was an invaluable experience for Seongho. Twenty four people from around the world stayed at a castle—more than a thousand years old—for six days, sharing ideas and opinions about their research. He learned that people have different perspectives on social economy based on their national backgrounds, which has shown him a more realistic picture of welfare regimes than did Esping Andersen in his book. ESSE also provides an opportunity to visit Italian social enterprises; the group visited several social co-operatives dealing with social services and the enterprises showed the group how they were achieving their multiple goals (health care, labor inclusion, and local development) through the alternative organizational model.

What really impressed Seongho at the ESSE was the presentation of a graduate student from Egypt. He went to graduate school to study social enterprise after experiencing the Arab Spring, the democracy movement in East Asia. He is recently helping people with PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) from the civil war in Syria. He had dual identities of “researcher” and “social activist” along with very clear motivation and a purpose for conducting his study. This passionate guy made Seongho to think about the reason why he was sitting in the office reading and writing.

Overall, the ESSE in Italy provides doctoral students with opportunities for developing knowledge, scholarship, and networking. Of course, authentic Italian pizza and pasta are extra benefits for you. Seongho is certain that attending an international summer school will serve as a strong stimulus for your study and life.

**PEER CITES**

**Publications**


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**Presentations**


**Awards and fellowships**

Ryan Petros: Community Driven Research Day Grant, Center for Public Health Initiatives. Co-Principle Investigator, CBPR with Elwyn, Philadelphia, PA ($10,000), Community Integration: A Psychometrically Sound, Usable Tool for Agencies.

Jia Xue: 2015 GAPSA-Provost Fellowship Award for Interdisciplinary Innovation, $6,000

Jia Xue: 2015 GAPSA Student Group Event Funding, $800

**SP2 Doctoral Summer Fellowships**

Seongho An: Exploring the strengths and challenges of worker cooperatives in the Homecare industry: Comparison between the US and South Korea.

Travis Labrum: The Family Limit-Setting Scale: Scale construction and correlates.

Jeffrey Sharlein: Beyond recidivism: Investigating comparative educational and employment outcomes for adolescents adjudicated in the juvenile justice and criminal justice systems.

If you have any inquiries or suggestions about the Fellow, please contact Eunhae Kim (eunhaek@sp2.upenn.edu) or Travis Larbum (tlabrum@sp2.upenn.edu) Thank you!