2017-18 ISSR Scholars Named

The Institute for Social Science Research is pleased to announce its 2017-18 Scholars, who represent four colleges and six departments across the University of Massachusetts, Amherst campus.

ISSR Scholars participate in a year-long seminar that helps each of them develop a strong research grant proposal. In addition to attending in-depth sessions on grant writing and receiving valuable peer feedback on their proposals, ISSR Scholars are given unique opportunities to consult with nationally recognized experts about their proposals.

The mission of ISSR is to promote excellence in social science research. One of our most important goals, served by the Scholars Program, is to strengthen existing social science infrastructure on campus in order to stimulate high-quality scholarship.

Meet Our 2017-18 Scholars

**Joseph F. Bergan, PhD | Assistant Professor | Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences | College of Natural Sciences**  
“Synaptic Foundations of Sexually Dimorphic Circuit Architecture”

Social interactions reflect the interplay between the external world and the neural circuits that mediate social behavior. Dr. Bergan will apply microscopy and physiological techniques to investigate how sensory inputs are transformed into sexually dimorphic cognitive, endocrine, and behavior outcomes.

**David A. Cort, PhD | Associate Professor | Department of Sociology | College of Social and Behavioral Sciences**  
“HIV Stigma Beliefs and Precautionary Sexual Behaviors in Southern Africa”

A large literature explores how HIV stigma affects the precautionary sexual behaviors of those infected with HIV, yet we know little about the relationship between expressing stigmatizing beliefs (about people with HIV) and the precautionary behaviors of those who do the stigmatizing. Dr. Cort will explore how HIV stigma beliefs affect precautionary behaviors such as condom use in Southern Africa.

**Peter M. Haas, PhD | Professor | Department of Political Science | College of Social and Behavioral Sciences**  
“Global Sustainability Through Issue Coupling”

Global issues tend to be governed in isolation from one another. Yet we know that many issues are interconnected, and that their effective and sustainable governance requires attention to externalities experienced elsewhere in the world. Dr. Haas will study how these linkages are recognized, and issues are coupled through new legal efforts and new practices.

**Elizabeth A. Henneman, RN, PhD, CCNS, FAAN | Associate Professor | College of Nursing**  
“A Novel Approach for Managing Unpreventable Interruptions During the Medication Administration Process”

Interruptions in the healthcare workplace bring negative consequences, including medical errors and delays in care. Dr. Henneman will evaluate a training program for managing unpreventable interruptions in the medication administration process. The goal of this program is to reduce negative consequences of interruptions and improve patient safety.

**Jason M. Kamilar, PhD | Assistant Professor | Department of Anthropology | College of Social and Behavioral Sciences**  
“How is Sociality and Group Structure Related to Kinda Baboon Microbiome Diversity?”

Humans exhibit uniquely complex social systems, but the basic structure of human social interactions is also seen in other primate species. The Kinda baboon of Zambia is a highly social primate whose microbiome diversity can shed light on the evolution of the human microbiome (i.e. bacteria and other micro-organisms found on and in the body). Dr. Kamilar’s project will be among the first to test hypotheses relating sociality to diversity in the Kinda microbiome.

**John Kingston, PhD | Professor | Department of Linguistics | College of Humanities and Fine Arts**  
“The Intensity Puzzle”

Because speech sounds nearly always occur in the context of other speech sounds, each one’s acoustics and perception varies as function of what speech sounds occur next to it. Dr. Kingston will explore a paradox in this relation: The size of perceptual effects depends directly on how intense those neighboring sounds are, but their own identification does not.