

SPECIAL REPORT
of the
ACADEMIC PRIORITIES COUNCIL
concerning the
**MERGER OF THE DEPARTMENTS OF
SOCIOLOGY AND THE LABOR CENTER**

Presented at the
695th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
May 13, 2010

COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP

Margaret Allard	Sheila Mammen
Joseph Berger	Ernest May
Richard Bogartz	J. Eliot Moss
Carolyn Cave	Matteo Pangallo
Jimmy Cheung	Deborah Picking
W. Curt Conner	Monroe Rabin
Kathleen Debevec, Chair	James Rinderle
Jean DeMartinis	Jan Servaes
Bryan Harvey	Susan Sturgeon
John Kingston	Dara Wier
	Jerri Willett

The Academic Priorities Council voted unanimously to support the proposed merger of Labor Studies and Sociology at its meeting on April 29, 2010. The merger allows the Labor Center to preserve its core teaching and extension missions in addition to strengthening the core competencies of both the Labor Center and Sociology Department. The Labor Center Faculty and Staff will administratively become part of the Sociology Department. Considerable thought has already been given to guidelines for future hiring, how tenure decisions for Labor Center faculty will be made, curriculum and governance for the Labor Center, administration of the Labor Center budget, potential curricular opportunities and the relocation of Labor Center faculty and staff. In addition, a joint committee comprising members from the Labor Center and Sociology will be appointed to work out additional administrative issues. The merger was initiated by the Labor Center and Sociology Department. The Academic Priorities Council views it as beneficial for the faculty and students in both disciplines and strongly endorses the merger.

MOVED: That the Faculty Senate approve the Merger of the Departments of Sociology and the Labor Center, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 10-047.
49-10

UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
THE FACULTY SENATE

PROGRAM REVISIN APPROVAL FORM

50 COPIES REQUIRED

PROGRAM TITLE: Merger of Sociology and Labor Center Departments

PLEASE CHECK: GRADUATE UNDERGRADUATE

DEPARTMENT: Sociology

HEAD/CHAIR: Donald Tomaskovic-Devey and Eve Weinbaum

SCHOOL OR COLLEGE: SBS

DEAN: Robert Feldman

Submission Date: April 1, 2010

Proposed Starting Date: September 1, 2010

I. PROPOSAL DEVELOPMENT

A. Describe the Proposal.

The Labor Center currently has three tenured faculty (Tom Juravich, Stephanie Luce, Eve Weinbaum), a professional staff position (Beth Berry), and an extension coordinator (Dale Melcher), and supports two related MS degrees, one a two-year residential degree, one for adult learners who come for intensive instruction for ten days in January and ten days in July (doing most of the readings before they arrive, and writing papers after they leave), earning a Master's over the course of three years. The goal of this proposal is to merge the Labor Center faculty and staff into the Sociology Department, preserve the core teaching and extension missions of the Labor Center, while strengthening both the Labor Center and Sociology programs.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Faculty and Staff Lines: The five current faculty and staff lines in the Labor Center will be moved administratively to Sociology.

Hiring: The viability of the Labor Center is predicated upon having at least three faculty members. Stephanie Luce has accepted a position at CUNY and will need to be replaced for these programs to be viable. When a position is authorized, a recruitment committee will be appointed consisting of two Labor Center faculty and two Sociology faculty, with appropriate graduate student representation. No one will be hired unless the Labor Center and Sociology faculty both believe the person fits their needs.

Tenure: When new Labor Center faculty come up for tenure, the decision will be made by normal Sociology departmental processes. The Labor Center faculty and director (see below) can write a letter or letters setting out their views, and those will be given significant weight by the department, but the decision will be made by the regularly constituted personnel committee.

Curriculum and Governance: A Labor Center Program Director will be appointed (initially Eve Weinbaum), and that person (in consultation with the Sociology Chair) will appoint a Labor Studies Program Committee, consisting of the three Labor faculty and at least one other Sociology faculty member. That Committee will be a normal departmental committee and count toward the expected faculty service obligation.

The Labor Center Program Director will have day-to-day control over all routine curricular decisions. This position, at least initially, will come with a two-course per year teaching load, given the heavy administrative expectations during the proposed curriculum transitions. The Labor Studies Program Committee will admit students to the Labor Studies MS and will control curricular matters. Major curricular changes will come before the entire Sociology faculty.

The labor extension coordinator (Dale Melcher) will report to the Labor Center Program Director and will continue her current responsibilities for outreach and labor education. Beth Berry will continue to be the staff person for the Labor Center, but will take on other Sociology department duties as appropriate. We will integrate current Labor Center personnel and budget reconciliation tasks within the current Sociology staff structure.

Budget: The Labor Center Program Director, in consultation with the Labor Studies Program Committee, will control the Labor Studies budget. As is already the case in Sociology, budgets will be transparent to the entire faculty. The Labor Center Director and Labor Studies Program Committee can sponsor speakers, hold conferences, work with other UMass labor centers, strengthen connections to Labor alumni and raise funds from them, undertake to do reports and initiate outreach activities, and seek outside funding from any and all sources.

Sen. Doc. No. 10-047

The General Operating Funds (GOF) which have previously gone to the Labor Center will be allocated to Sociology; this money covers normal office expenses. The Labor Center gift account, the project revenue account, and donations from Labor Center alumni will continue to be controlled by the Labor Center. Any net balance from the Labor MS CPE limited residency program will go to the Labor Center (positive balances will be available to be spent; deficits will be charged to the Labor Center). The three TA lines which the Labor Center has had will be absorbed by Sociology, with the understanding that, in normal budgetary circumstances, they will be available to the Labor Studies Program Committee to allocate.

5-Year BA/MS degree: The Labor Studies Program and the Sociology department will seek Faculty Senate and administrative approval to replace the current two year residential Labor MS with a 5-year program that will result in a B.A. in Sociology and an M.S. in Labor Studies. Students will be recruited primarily at UMass and the five Colleges, though external admissions will be considered. UMass undergraduates would have to satisfy the requirements for an undergraduate Sociology BA, and through their first three years advising would be the same as for other sociology majors; in their fourth year advising will be from both programs, and in the fifth year advising will be through Labor Center Director or affiliated faculty. Admission to the program will be selective, and determined by the Labor Studies Program Committee.

Location: Labor Center faculty and staff will be physically relocated to the vicinity of Sociology.

Further details will be worked out as we proceed; this proposal is intended to cover the broad principles, and does not attempt to specify all the details of implementation. The Labor Center and Sociology will appoint a joint committee to work out any remaining administrative issues concerning the merger and transition.

B. Provide a brief overview of the process for developing the Proposal.

Sociology and the Labor Center have been discussing a possible administrative merger for the past year. In the spring of 2009, initial negotiations between Don Tomaskovic-Devey, Chair of Sociology, and Labor Center faculty and staff developed the broad outline of the proposal. During the summer of 2009, a joint Sociology-Labor faculty committee produced the more detailed proposal presented above. This proposal has been ratified by faculty of both the Labor Center (all in favor) and Sociology (vote 13 in favor, none opposed, five abstentions) and by Dean Feldman and Provost Staros.

II. PURPOSE AND GOALS

To merge Sociology and the Labor Center while preserving or strengthening the core competencies of both.