

MSS-Minority Scholars Committee Report **2016**—Chicago, Illinois

Committee Members present at the 2016 Minority Scholars Committee (MSC) Meeting: **Regina Dixon-Reeves** (MSC Chair), *Pernevelon Ellis, Layana Navarre-Jackson, Gail Wallace, Jennifer Casper, Ted Thornhill, Veronica Newton, Miguel Ceballos, Derrick Brooms, Chavella Pittman, and Christina Gomez*. President Elect Elect Phyllis Baker came to the meeting to announce the 2017 theme - Globalization: Promises, Possibilities, and Pitfalls - and encouraged committee members to organize sessions, serve as facilitators and panelists, and bring colleagues and students to the meeting. MSC members have agreed to submit sessions and several graduate student members have committed to organizing a session of graduate students from their school. MSC members were also asked to consider adding MSC as a co-sponsor to any other sessions that they might propose that deal with race and ethnicity.

The MSC enthusiastically nominates potential new committee members – Juyeon Son, University of Wisconsin Oshkosh and Ronald “Ron” Ferguson, Luther College. We are grateful for the service and support of Gail Wallace and Deadric Williams, who are rotating off the committee this year. We are continuing our efforts to diversify the membership of the MSC committee and will reach out to Native American and Asian American MSS members to join the committee this year. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Minority Scholars Committee, please contact Regina Dixon Reeves, regina.dixonreeves@sbcglobal.net or request nomination to the MSC committee through the MSS Executive Office at mwsocsoc@centurylink.net. If you request nomination by August 31, 2016, the board will review your request at the upcoming MSS Fall Board Meeting and you will receive notification by the end of this calendar year.

During our committee meeting, Thursday, March 24, 2016, the MSC committee debriefed the 2016 annual meeting and discussed the best ways to support the long-range goals of the Midwest Sociological Society. Four goals were identified for the Minority Scholars Committee over the next year:

1. Propose a robust schedule of professional development and race and ethnicity sessions for the 2017 annual meeting

2. Actively recruit ethnically diverse faculty, undergraduate, and graduate students to join MSS and attend the annual meeting
3. Increase the scholarship around issues of race and ethnicity by inviting papers for the sponsored sessions
4. Offer a networking reception for ethnically diverse faculty, students, and allies at an off-site venue at the annual meeting

Our overall impressions of the annual meeting were very positive. We were impressed with the variety of workshops, panels, plenaries, and paper sessions. Committee members remarked that having the joint conference with the North Central Sociological Association increased the attendance at most sessions. They did express concern about the system used to submit workshop/panel sessions. Several expressed either personal frustration with or knowledge of someone who felt as if the process for submitting sessions was confusing and cumbersome. Others felt disadvantaged if they did not have a full slate of participants at the time of submission. A couple people commented that they had been in sessions where the papers were only loosely connected and seemed disjointed. Almost everyone loved the idea of the film and facilitated discussion and wondered if it might be featured as a “Movie night” or at the end of the day so that more people could participate in it. We all loved the focus on First Generation students and hoped that this would continue. We were also especially happy to see an expansion of sessions for Community College faculty and staff

The MSC offered its 3 signature sessions during the 2016 meetings: (1) ***Mentoring Diverse Populations: Successful Models & Effective Strategies for Working With Unique Populations of Students Including Underrepresented Minority Students, Athletes, Older Adults, Veterans, and Students With Disabilities***; (2) ***Teaching and Learning While ___: How Marginalized Identities Shape the Classroom Experiences of Faculty and Students***; and (3) ***Building A Diverse Campus: Recruiting and Retaining Students, Faculty, and Administrators of Color***. As a committee, we liked that all of the MSC-sponsored sessions were held at the same time each day (8:30-10 am), however, we would have preferred to have a later time slot. We believed that a time during the mid-morning or early afternoon would have increased the attendance in our sessions. Several people commented on how our sessions became more populated around 9:20. We attribute some of the increased attendance in our sessions to be a result of the

expanded workshop descriptions for the signature sessions. We will continue to tweak those descriptions this year.

MSC also co-sponsored 2 sessions with the Publications Committee – ***Writing a Scholarly Book Review for Publication*** and ***How to Get Published by TSQ and Other Refereed Journals***. Both sessions were very well attended and a number of graduate students and junior faculty commented throughout the conference about how helpful those sessions had been. We have received several requests for the PowerPoint for the *Writing a Scholarly Book Review* since the conference. We have already talked with the Publications Chair and plan to co-sponsor additional sessions with that committee at the 2017 conference.

The 2016 off-site reception at The M-Lounge was very successful. We had approximately 25 people participate in a relaxed evening that featured wonderful food, beverages, and music. We are committed to creating a space for networking and support for underrepresented members of the MSS during the annual meetings. We make a ***formal request for \$150 in support of appetizers and 1 soda per attendee at a local venue near the 2017 conference hotel***. A cash bar will be available for participants who would like to purchase alcoholic beverages. We will have the venue identified early enough that an announcement of the reception (along with date, time and location) can be published in the online conference program and on the MSS website so potential participants may plan to attend. The *purpose* of the reception is to encourage networking among the members, and provide a space for existing MSC members to get to know other ethnically diverse faculty and students in the region. The reception is a good tool to recruit future members to the MSC committee.

As the MSS Board and Long Range Planning Committee continue to deliberate about Certificate Programs, the MSC makes a ***formal request that a certificate program be added in Faculty Certificate of Professional Development in Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality***. We believe that each year we have sufficient panels, workshops, and plenary sessions to warrant a certificate program. Offering a certificate of Professional Development in Race, Ethnicity, and Inequality will help to increase the visibility of these sessions and encourage MSS participants to attend a compliment of these sessions. A certificate program in this area would be of interest to faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, and applied

sociologists. A subcommittee of MSC members is ready to manage this process should it be approved.

All current MSC members have committed to encouraging their departmental colleagues to join MSS, encourage their undergraduate and graduate students to enter the MSS paper contests, and bringing groups of students to the 2017 annual meeting. All members have agreed to reach out to colleagues from the Milwaukee area to encourage them to join MSS, invite their colleagues to join, and bring their students to the conference. We will also use these contacts to organize another off-site reception for the 2017 meeting.

We continue our work to develop a ***MSS Faculty of Color Directory***. We are committed to the MSS Long Range Planning objectives of supporting a diverse membership and developing scholarship that promotes the professional development of faculty and students who attend MSS. Regina Dixon-Reeves will work with the Executive Officer to get that directory generated for the 2017 annual meeting.

The Minority Scholars Committee invites you to come to our sponsored events at the 2017 MSS Annual Meeting. We are working hard to become more visible and active within the MSS. Our goal is to continue to integrate ethnic minority faculty and students into the profession and the leadership ranks of the MSS. Increasing the diversity of MSS is consistent with both MSC's and MSS' commitment to social justice and equality. A special thanks to the MSC committee members who have volunteered their time, energy, and helpful ideas to make this year's MSC committee meeting a success!

2016-2017 Committee Members

Regina Dixon-Reeves	Chavella Pittman	Jennifer Casper
Erika Busse-Cardenas	Gwendolyn Purifoye	Derrick Brooms
Miguel Ceballos	Ted Thornhill	Christina Gomez
Tanya Gladney	Juyeon Son	Layana Navarre-Jackson
Angela Nelson	Ronald Ferguson	
Veronica Newton	Pernevelon Ellis	

-Regina Dixon-Reeves 2016, 2017 MSS Minority Scholars Committee Chair