Ph.D. Research Assistantship to Study Opioid Risks in Non-Metropolitan Communities

A new Ph.D. research assistantship is available in the Department of Sociology at Iowa State University. This assistantship will be funded as part of a new project identifying and disseminating effective place-based strategies to reduce opioid risks and hazards in rural and micropolitan communities experiencing social disorganization due to economic and farm restructuring. The assistantship will be part of an interdisciplinary team from rural sociology, public health, criminology, and computer science. The student will gain experience in data management and statistical modeling, qualitative interviews and case study analysis, and engagement with stakeholders across the nation.

The successful applicant will have a Master’s Degree in sociology or related field; knowledge of rural sociology or community criminology; a strong background in quantitative methods; and a willingness to learn qualitative techniques and apply them in the field.

The position begins in fall semester 2018 and is funded for three years. The 12-month 0.5 FTE assistantship provides a stipend, full tuition waiver, and benefits including health insurance. Opportunities for professional development are encouraged, including contributing to peer-reviewed publications and presentations at professional meetings. In addition to the research assistantship, the student will be expected to develop a dissertation related to the project to fulfill requirements for the Ph.D. in Rural Sociology or Sociology.

Interested applicants should apply for admission to the graduate program in either Rural Sociology or Sociology at Iowa State University by January 31, 2018. In addition, applicants should send a curriculum vita and cover letter describing their interests and qualifications for the assistantship to Dr. David Peters (dpeters@iastate.edu) by the same deadline. Additional information about the department and graduate program can be found on the Iowa State Sociology website at http://www.soc.iastate.edu.
Graduate Programs

The Department of Sociology offers a Ph.D. in either Rural Sociology or Sociology, with specializations in Agriculture and Development, Criminology and Criminal Justice, and Social and Economic Disparities. Specifically, the Agriculture and Development area rigorously trains graduate students in the profession of rural and development sociology for careers in academia, government, and non-governmental organizations in the United States and internationally. Our academic degree program enables students to meet the following learning objectives: (1) examine linkages among agriculture, food, natural resources, and society; (2) analyze the relationships between social change, technological innovation, and development; (3) understand the social, demographic, and economic dynamics of rural communities; (4) apply quantitative and qualitative methods of social research; and (5) engage in problem-focused research and extension scholarship.

Related Research and Extension Projects

- **Iowa Small Towns Project / Sigma Study**: Survey of residents living in 99 small towns in Iowa, conducted every ten years since 1994 and now biennially since 2016. Measures local services and amenities, social conditions, quality of life, and other issues relevant to small towns. Funded by USDA-AFRI and the Iowa Experiment Station.

- **Smart Decision-Making in Small and Shrinking Communities**: Examines why some small towns have increased quality of life despite declining populations. Project describes shrink-smart towns using survey and secondary data; and then identifies strategies enhancing quality of life through qualitative methods. Funded by NSF-SCC.

- **Rural Crime**: Understanding the causes and consequences of crime and deviance in rural and micropolitan communities, focusing on offenders, criminal justice professionals, and public perceptions. Funded by USDA-AFRI and the Iowa Experiment Station.

- **Iowa Farm Poll**: Panel survey of Iowa farmers conducted annually since 1982. Provides information on diverse agriculture-related issues and initiatives, such as nutrient reduction, pesticide resistance, conservation, farm succession, farm safety, and quality of life. Funded by the Iowa Experiment Station.