

# **A Manual on**

## ***Launching Majors into Satisfying Careers***

*Launching Majors into Satisfying Careers: A Faculty Manual with a Student Data Set* is the latest publication by the ASA Research and Development Department. The purpose of this manual is to provide sociology faculty members and their departments with a variety of easy-to-access resources, based on the American Sociological Association's longitudinal "Bachelors and Beyond" study. The manual addresses the pressing need to help students prepare for and navigate a daunting job market, with national unemployment levels hovering around 10 percent in 2010. Students major in sociology because they find sociological concepts and perspectives to be exciting, but, given current circumstances, sociology students and their parents (more than half of whom are not college graduates) ask: "What can I do with a baccalaureate degree in sociology?"

When these questions arise students often turn to faculty and their departments for answers. The information on the link between their major and possible careers may be especially useful for students of color, students of non-college graduate parents, and children of immigrants, many of whom comprise a growing share of the student body at universities and colleges, especially within sociology departments. Meanwhile, most sociology faculty have had little formal training in career guidance and often do not have the time or resources necessary to do the research to provide thoroughgoing answers to students or parents who ask this question. Faculty members, by definition, have pursued an academic path and may not have a realistic understanding of the multiple ways in which sociology can be used in the current workforce or in graduate study.

The contents of this manual and the attached CD contain supportive resources for faculty navigating career counseling. The manual includes a power point presentation of survey findings, letters to parents of majors, letters welcoming students to the major, sample resumes, and a student data set (in SPSS and STATA) with a codebook based on the "Bachelor's and Beyond" study. It also provides curriculum ideas including data analysis suggestions, career links, and examples of alumni surveys. These resources and curriculum ideas should increase the likelihood that majors will find satisfying careers that use their sociological knowledge and skills without faculty members sacrificing their primary role of teaching about the theoretical and conceptual core of sociology. In addition, the manual provides an assessment guide, an important resource given the increasing pressures on departments to assess student success both inside the academy and in students' post-baccalaureate lives.

Order the manual online at the ASA Bookstore at [www.e-noah.net/asa/asashoponlineservice/](http://www.e-noah.net/asa/asashoponlineservice/).