

Spring 2010, 6:15-8:05 pm
Instructor: Kathryn Young
kmyoung@stanford.edu

SOCIOLOGY 300: TEACHING WORKSHOP

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course covers principles for becoming an effective instructor and teaching assistant in graduate courses, as well as how to serve as an advisor and mentor to undergraduates. Topics we'll cover include course organization, syllabus development, grading and commenting on student assignments, conflict resolution, mentoring, diversity, common classroom problems, and university policies related to matters such as plagiarism and sexual harassment. We'll have a number of guest speakers, including professors, undergraduates, former and current TAs, and people from Judicial Affairs and Green Library's Information Center. The goal of this course is to prepare you to go confidently into your first teaching assignment.

ASSIGNMENTS AND PARTICIPATION

Because this is a short course, we'll cover a sizeable amount of material each week. Based on the survey results I received from your cohort, we'll rely heavily on in-class discussion, and in lieu of a long paper, we'll have a series of very short (~2 pages), informal papers. In the spirit of full disclosure, I'm also thinking about making a website for TAs so that we can have old syllabi, useful tips, and other things all compiled in one place. There's a chance that I'll incorporate this into some of your assignments, too. Rest assured that it's all for the greater good. (As Karl Marx would say, "From each, according to his ability; to each, according to his need.")

GRADING

The bottom line is that if you come to every class, do all the reading, and participate actively in discussion, you will get an A. Here's the exact breakdown:

Discussion/Participation: 30%
Short Writing Assignments: 30%
Group Work: 25%
Teaching demo(s): 15%

MATERIALS

Grad students are saddled with enough expenses already, so there's no course reader. Instead, I'll hand out materials in class or post them on Coursework.

CONTACTING THE INSTRUCTOR

I'll hold office hours on request, and will nearly always be available after class (just grab me at the end of class) or before class (in my office). You can also send me an email and we can arrange to talk or have coffee some other time. It's fine to do this even if you just want to chat generally and don't have a specific question. If you need to reach me quickly, email is fastest.

LAPTOP POLICY

Research suggests that laptops are detrimental to the classroom environment—not just because people check their email obsessively, but also because bright, pixellated screens distract the people around you. If you have a documented disability and need to use a laptop in class, please come talk to me about it.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS AND OTHER SERVICES

If you know or are concerned that you may have a disability, contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) (<http://www.stanford.edu/group/DRC/>, or at info@drc.stanford.edu). The DRC can provide a variety of resources to aid instruction, and will work with the instructor and the student to arrange suitable accommodation.

If you require accommodation, it is your responsibility to contact the DRC, which will keep the details of your circumstances in confidence and work with you and your instructors to arrange suitable accommodation. Physical or mental conditions that interfere with your ability to complete coursework as scheduled in a syllabus constitute circumstances in which you should consult the Disability Resource Center.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is available to help students who experience a wide variety of personal, academic and relationship concerns. Contact (650) 723-3785 (24 hours a day).

HONOR CODE

As a Stanford student, you agree to abide by the Honor Code. This includes *not* giving or receiving unpermitted aid in any work used by the instructor as the basis of grading, *and* taking an active part in seeing to it that others—and you—uphold the spirit and letter of the Honor Code. Unless otherwise stated by the instructor, all assignments in this class are to be your sole efforts in research, analysis, and writing.¹

¹ The material in the last two sections on this page was mostly written by Becky Sandefur, one of my favorite teachers.

SYLLABUS

SOCIOLOGY 300: GRADUATE TEACHING WORKSHOP

Week 1 (4/8): Introduction

- Course information
- Survey results
- What to do when you receive your teaching assignment
- ASSIGNMENT: Mini-presentation #1

Week 2. (4/15):

- What makes a good teacher?
- Mini-presentation #1
- Prepping for class
- Core teaching strategies
- Introduction to the Handbook
- ASSIGNMENT: Read “Teaching at Stanford” Handbook; write 2-page teaching statement/reflection

Week 3. (4/22):

- Presentation from library’s Academic Technology Specialists re: using technology in the classroom
- Introduction to grading and feedback
- Follow-up discussion about technology in the classroom; brainstorming activity
- ASSIGNMENT: Reading posted on CW; 5-part grading and commenting assignment

Week 4. (4/29):

- Discussion about grading and feedback based on the sample essays you graded
- Designing a course syllabus
- ASSIGNMENT: Syllabus design; short reading (CW) mini-presentation #2 (starting a course)

Week 5. (5/6):

- (6:15) Judicial Affairs Presentation
- Mini-presentation #2
- Handling “problem” students
- ASSIGNMENT: TBA

SPECIAL SESSION: Wed., May 12, 7-8, panel with undergrads (and dinner!) in room 120-059. Come with questions for them—it’s a great group!

Week 6. (5/13):

- (6:15) Presentation on sexual harassment
- Mentoring students
- Diversity in the classroom: making students from all different backgrounds feel at home in your classroom
- ASSIGNMENT: Micro-teaching prep statement, 2-3 pages (e-mail to me by 10 pm on 5/19)

SPECIAL SESSION: Wed., May 19, 6:15-7:15, panel with profs (and dinner) in room 120-059. Come with questions—all three are stellar teachers.

Week 7. (5/20):

- Prep for micro-teaching sessions (6-7, 7-8)
- Presentation by current and former sociology TAs

Week 8. (5/27):

- Wrap-up
- TA assignments, organization, and other logistics
- Micro-teaching sessions (will be videotaped by CTL)

** Like the US Constitution, this syllabus is a living, changing document that will evolve according to our present situation, while keeping the goals and spirit of the class in tact.*