

University of Texas at El Paso—Fall 2014

**SOCI 5311-16529: Professional Development in Sociology Proseminar
Wednesdays 6-8:50pm
Old Main 201**

Professor

Dr. Aurelia Lorena Murga, Assistant Professor of Sociology
Contact information: Old Main 317; 915-747-7343; almurga@utep.edu
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00-4:30 pm & by appointment

About this class (catalog course description)

This course introduces students to major components of their professional roles as MA students and MA degree graduates. These include: (1) developing a professional CV, surveying the job opportunities for Sociology MAs, and engaging in a professional job search; (2) engaging in professional writing, such as abstracts, peer reviews, job applications, professional papers, and applied documents; (3) developing skills at substantive and constructive criticism, such as peer reviews; (4) applying social sciences in public and private sector settings; (5) developing teaching skills, such as goal setting, syllabus construction, lecture, and discussion strategies, and assessment strategies.

Learning Objectives

1. Discuss topics, issues, and concerns graduate students face as part of their academic and professional training, including but not limited to their actual experiences in graduate school to publishing and getting a job as a professional sociologist
2. Develop skills in writing and in providing substantive and constructive feedback
3. Reflect on your own academic strengths and develop your professional teaching and leadership styles
4. Explore connection between your academic expectations and community relations

REQUIREMENTS

Books & Readings

Feagin, Joe R., Hernan Vera, and Kimberley Ducey. 2015. *Liberation Sociology*. (3rd ed). Boulder: Paradigm Publishers. ISBN: 978-1-61205-724-8

Foss, Sonja K. and William Waters. 2007. *Destination Dissertation: A Traveler's Guide to a Done Dissertation*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. ISBN-13: 978-0-7425-5440-5

Goodson, Patricia. 2013. *Becoming an Academic Writer: 50 Exercises for Paced, Productive, and Powerful Writing*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications. ISBN: 978-1-4522-0386-7

hooks, bell. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge. ISBN: 0-415-90808-6

Additional *required* readings (articles & book chapters) will be distributed in class or via e-mail.

Attendance

Missing a graduate seminar is not acceptable. Attendance is required at every class session since one day in the seminar equals an entire week of a traditional undergraduate course. Still, everyone will have one (1) day of absence from the course as a free-be. With that said, even if you don't attend class, you should still e-mail me your assignment for that day. In the case of excused absences (e.g., serious

illness, school-sanctioned activity, or academic conference presentation), students will be allowed to turn in weekly work for full credit. In the case of unexcused absences, late work will not be accepted. For students attending class but not turning in work, I will accept late work with point deductions: -5 points for work submitted on the due date (but after the due time), and -10 points per day after that (FYI, 10 points is one letter grade).

Reading and Class Participation

Readings are mandatory for each class session. This class will be entirely seminar-style and so the class will be rewarding and beneficial only if you have read the material and are ready to discuss it. I expect that each student will speak a minimum of several times during each class session. Students that have not spoken will be called upon. In this class, there are no silly questions; please feel free to ask anything. You must bring the assigned readings and any due assignments to class each night.

Discussion Leaders

Each student will sign up to be a discussion leader for two classes this semester. This means that you will take the lead on starting off class discussion for the day. *Your main focus should be to engage your peers on a focused discussion about the reading.*

Assignments

“Every Semester Needs a Plan” (5%)	<u>Grading Scale</u>
10 Reaction papers (50%)	A 90- 100%
CV, Pre-proposal & Rough Draft (10%)	B 80-89%
Personal Statement & Rough Draft (10%)	C 70-79%
Ford Dissertation Grant & Rough Draft (10%)	D 60-69%
Syllabus and Mini-lecture (5%)	F 59%-below
Mini-presentation (5%)	
Final Reflection Paper (5%)	

Final Grade 100%

Reaction Papers & Questions

Students are required to write up 2 page (minimum) reaction papers in response to assigned readings (listed under *Fall Schedule*). Responses should include a brief introductory summary (one-paragraph) with the main body of the written assignment addressing the strengths and weaknesses of the material you were assigned. In addition, you should include questions (2-3) that may have developed as you were reading the assignment in order to help foster fruitful class discussions.

Curriculum Vitae (CV) and Pre-proposal

You will be creating (if you haven't already) a curriculum vitae (CV) this semester. This will provide folks with an overview of your experience and qualifications. You will also be completing a 2 page (maximum) pre-proposal early on in the semester. Follow the recommendations provided in *Destination Dissertation* for the assignment. The assignment is meant to get you thinking about your research interests/questions, developing those ideas, and using the information as a framework for other class assignments.

Grant Proposal

You will complete a 3 page (maximum) grant proposal this semester following the requirements set by the Ford Foundation Fellowship Program's Dissertation Fellowship. You will only be required to complete the essay segment of the dissertation application that requires students to submit an "essay explaining the plan and timeline for completing the dissertation and describing the applicant's long-range career goals (maximum 3-pages, double-spaced, avoid technical jargon)" and keeping 1-inch margins all around using Times New Roman font. Go to the following link for complete Ford Foundation application requirements: http://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/FordFellowships/PGA_047959

FYI: I will distribute examples of Ford (Pre-) Dissertation proposals that you may use as models for your own work.

Personal Statement

Personal statements should follow the guidelines set by the Ford Foundation Fellowship Program's Dissertation Fellowship.

The Ford Foundation's Dissertation Fellowship application has set the following requirements for personal statements: Personal statement (maximum 2 pages, double-spaced) that describes the applicant's background and experience and commitment to the goals of the Ford Foundation Fellowships program by addressing *all* of the following that apply: the applicant's capacity to respond in pedagogically productive ways to the learning needs of students from diverse backgrounds, the applicant's sustained personal engagement with communities that are underrepresented in the academy and ability to bring this asset to learning, teaching and scholarship at the college or university level, the applicant's likelihood of using the diversity of human experience as an educational resource in teaching and scholarship, the applicant's membership in one or more of the following groups whose underrepresentation in the American professoriate has been severe and longstanding:

Alaska Natives (Aleut, Eskimo or other Indigenous People of Alaska)

Black/African American

Mexican Americans/Chicanas/Chicanos

Native American Indians

Native Pacific Islanders (Hawaiian/Polynesian/Micronesian)

Puerto Ricans

Go to the following link for complete Ford Foundation application requirements:

http://sites.nationalacademies.org/PGA/FordFellowships/PGA_047959

Syllabus and Mini-Lecture

You will be creating an Introduction to Sociology course (or to another course that you would be interested in teaching). I encourage you to take a look some sample syllabi, think about your own classroom experiences, and talk to others when creating this syllabus. Likewise, you will be required to give a 20 minute mini-lecture/powerpoint presentation during the *Teaching* portion of the course. You may want to take a look at an Introduction to Sociology textbook and pick a topic to cover during your lecture. You will introduce us to basic concepts/information and receive feedback from your peers on your instruction. This is meant to be a learning experience for all in the class.

Mini-Presentation

This semester we will be discussing the connection between the academy and community. What relationships are created between the two? You will set up an appointment with the director or member of an organization that you are interested in learning more about in our community. Develop a

set of questions (we will go over possible questions in class) and then present your findings and thoughts about the connection (or disconnect) between the academy and community. You are not required to do a formal presentation for this assignment, or a write-up. The assignment is meant to get us thinking about our growth as sociologists and our engagement with community. What could the relationship between the academy and community be like, etc.?

Final Reflection paper

Your final assignment for the semester is a 5 page reflection paper that focuses on your growth through the semester. The assignment is not meant to be difficult, and how you wish to approach it is left up to you. The assignment is meant to encourage you to reflect on your experience as an MA student, where you see yourself going, and what goals you will set for yourself throughout your tenure as an MA student at UTEP.

***Note: All paper submissions should be double-spaced, Times New Roman/Calibri, 12-point font, 1 inch margins all around. Please edit your work and pay attention to grammar. ***

Copying and Plagiarism

The materials used in this course are copyrighted. Course materials include and are not limited to: syllabi, quizzes, exams, course assignments, review sheets, outlines, lecture notes, and power points. Since these materials are copyrighted you do not have permission to copy them, unless I expressly grant you permission.

Plagiarism is commonly defined as passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., that belong to another. Therefore, you are committing plagiarism if you copy someone's work without attributing it to the original author, and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of that person. Plagiarism is one of the most serious academic sins, because it destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated.

Exceptional Circumstances

Please inform me of any medical conditions you believe I should be aware of (if you feel it is appropriate/or feel comfortable doing so), so that proper measures can be taken in the unlikely event that an in-class emergency may occur.

ADA Policy

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS' Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Fall Schedule 2014

Week 1: Sociology

Aug 27

Introduction to Course & "Every Semester Needs a Plan"

Week 2: Sociology

Sep 3

Reading: Liberation Sociology, pages vii-xiii + 1-141

Due: Reaction paper—Liberation Sociology
AND “Every Semester Needs a Plan”

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 3: Sociology

Sep 10

Reading: Liberation Sociology, pages 141-284

Due: Reaction paper—Liberation Sociology

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 4: Where are you going and how will you get there?

Sep 17

Reading: Destination Dissertation, pages 1-73
Graduate Handbook, Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Due: Reaction paper—Destination Dissertation
AND Rough Draft of Pre-proposal (bring 1 extra copy for in-class feedback)

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 5: Where are you going and how will you get there?

Sep 24

Reading: Destination Dissertation, pages 293-359

Due: Reaction Paper—Destination Dissertation
AND Final Pre-proposal (staple feedback notes to your submission)

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 6: Becoming an Academic Writer

Oct 1

Reading: TBA

Due: Reaction paper—TBA
AND rough draft of personal statement (bring 1 extra copy for in-class feedback)

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 7: Becoming an Academic Writer

Oct 8

Reading: Goodson, pages xiii-75; Becker, pages vii-67; TBA

Due: Reaction paper (respond to readings and include a reflection about your own writing process) AND personal statement (staple feedback notes to your submission)

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 8: Becoming an Academic Writer

Oct 15 Reading: Delgado, pages 259-270; Williams, pages 3-14; TBA

Due: Reaction paper

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 9: Getting Funded

Oct 22 Reading: Chapter 6 by Pamela Richards, pages 108-120; Goodson, pages 77-94

Due: Rough draft of Ford grant proposal (bring 1 extra copy for in-class feedback)

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 10: Getting Funded

Oct 29 Reading: TBA, Richards, pages 108-120; Goodson, pages 77-94

Due: Ford grant proposal (staple feedback notes to your final submission)

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 11: Teaching

Nov 5 Reading: Teaching to Transgress, pages 1-92

Due: Reaction Paper—Teaching to Transgress

Teaching: Mini-Lecture Presentations

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 12: Teaching

Nov 12 Reading: Teaching to Transgress, pages 93-207

Due: Reaction Paper—Teaching to Transgress

Teaching: Mini-Lecture Presentations

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 13: Public and Applied Sociology

Nov 19 Reading: Greenwood, pages 319-340; Pulido, pages 341-365; TBA

Guest Lecturer(s)

Due: Reaction paper

Discussion Leaders: _____

Week 14: Public and Applied Sociology

Nov 26 Public and Applied Sociology (Outside class assignment)

Week 15: Public and Applied Sociology

Dec 3

Public and Applied Sociology

Due: Mini-Presentations

Final Reflection paper is due in Dr. Murga's office on Wed, Dec 10th 9:00am-6:45pm

Portions of syllabus and ideas for course requirements were provided by: Drs. Sara Grineski, Gina Nuñez, Isabel Ayala, and Cristina Morales.