

SOCI 5311-13840: Professional Development in Sociology Proseminar
Wednesdays 6-8:50pm
Location: PSYC 306

PROFESSOR:

Aurelia Lorena Murga, Assistant Professor of Sociology
Contact information: Old Main 317; 915-747-7343; almurga@utep.edu
Office Hours: Mondays 2:00-4:00 & 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:

- 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.
- Develop skills in writing and in providing substantive and constructive feedback.
- Reflect on your own academic strengths and develop your professional teaching and leadership styles.
- Explore connection between your academic expectations and community relations.

REQUIREMENTS:

Books & Readings:

Mills, C. Wright and Todd Gitlin. 2000. *The Sociological Imagination*. (Afterword copy). Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0-19-513373-8

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

Sword, Helen. 2017. *Air & Light & Time & Space: How Successful Academics Write*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. ISBN: 9780674737709

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

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

Attendance: Missing a graduate seminar is not acceptable. Attendance is required at every class session, as one day in the seminar equals an entire week of the class. 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” (2.5%)
- Curriculum Vitae (CV) (2.5%)
- Reaction papers (50%)
- Pre-proposal & Rough Draft (10%)
- Personal Statement & Rough Draft (10%)
- Ford Dissertation Grant & Rough Draft (10%)
- Mini-lecture & syllabus (5%)
- Mini-presentation (5%)
- Final Reflection Paper (5%)

Grading Scale

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	60-69%
F	59%-below

Final Grade 100%

Reaction Papers & Questions: Students are required to write up 2-3 page 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 providing a critical reflection of the material you were assigned. In a separate section, include questions (2-3) that may have developed as you were reading the assignment in order to help foster fruitful class discussions. Please proof read your work and use the University Writing Center (UWC) if you need

assistance with your writing. Points will be deducted for legibility, including spelling and grammar errors.

Pre-proposal: You will complete 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

Mini-Lecture & Syllabus: You will be required to give a 15-20 minute mini-lecture/power point presentation during the Teaching portion of the course. You will introduce us to basic concepts/information and receive feedback from your peers on your instruction (use introduction to sociology textbook). As part of this assignment, you will also submit a practice syllabus (take a look at some of your old syllabi). 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. 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 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, 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

Week 1: Sociology

Aug 30

Introduction to Course / "Every Semester Needs a Plan"

Week 2: Sociology

Sep 6

Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 1 and
Liberation Sociology, Preface and Acknowledgements + Chapters 1-4

Due: Reaction paper—*Liberation Sociology* and submit your "Every semester needs a plan" schedule

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 3: Sociology

Sep 13

Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 2 and
Liberation Sociology, Chapters 5-9

Due: Reaction paper—*Liberation Sociology*

Discussion Leader(s): _____

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

Sep 20

Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 3 and
Destination Dissertation, pages 1-73

Due: Reaction paper—*Destination Dissertation*
AND Rough Draft of Pre-proposal (bring 2 copies for in-class feedback)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

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

Sep 27

Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 4 and
Destination Dissertation, pages 293-359

Due: Reaction paper—*Destination Dissertation*
AND Pre-proposal (staple feedback notes to your submission for full credit)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 6: Becoming an Academic Writer

Oct 4 Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 5 and
Air & Light & Time & Space, pages ix-101

Due: Reaction paper—*Air & Light & Time & Space* (respond to readings and include a reflection of your own writing process) AND personal statement (bring 2 extra copies for in-class feedback)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 7: Becoming an Academic Writer

Oct 11 Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 6 and
Air & Light & Time & Space, pages 103-219

Due: Reaction paper—*Air & Light & Time & Space* AND personal statement (staple feedback notes to your final submission)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 8: Getting Funded

Oct 18 Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 7 and
Grant writing reading, TBA

Due: Reaction paper—Grant writing reading and rough draft of Ford grant proposal (bring 2 copies for feedback)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 9: Getting Funded

Oct 25 Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 8 and
Grant writing reading, TBA

Due: Reaction paper—Grant writing reading and Ford grant proposal (staple feedback notes to your final submission)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 10: Teaching

Nov 1 Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 9 and
Teaching to Transgress, pages 1-92

Due: Reaction paper—*Teaching to Transgress*
Teaching: Mini-lecture presentations

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 11: Teaching

Nov 8

Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Chapter 10 and
Teaching to Transgress, pages 93-207

Due: Reaction paper—*Teaching to Transgress*
Teaching: Mini-lecture presentations

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 12: Teaching

Nov 15

Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Appendix
Teaching: Mini-lecture presentations

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 13: Public Sociology

Nov 22

Readings: *The Sociological Imagination*, Appendix and
Public sociology readings, TBA

Due: Reaction paper—Public sociology readings

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 14: Public Sociology

Nov 29

Public and Applied Sociology (Outside class assignment)

Week 15: Public Sociology

Dec 6

Reflection paper: Interview with applied sociologist/organization

Due: Mini-presentations and CV (submit electronically)

Final

Dec 13

Final Reflection paper (drop off hard copy of paper in Old Main 317
between 7:00pm-9:45pm)

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