

SOCI 5311-13605: Professional Development in Sociology Proseminar
Thursdays 6-8:50pm
Location: Classroom Bldg - C 201

PROFESSOR:

Aurelia Lorena Murga, Assistant Professor of Sociology
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Office Hours: Mondays 2:00-4:00pm and 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:

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

NOTE: Additional readings (articles & book chapters) will be distributed through Bb, via email, or in class.

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 readings.

ASSIGNMENTS:

“Every Semester Needs a Plan” (2.5%)

Curriculum Vitae (CV) (2.5%)

Discussion Questions (50%)

Pre-proposal & Rough Draft (10%)

Personal Statement & Rough Draft (10%)

Ford Dissertation Grant & Rough Draft (10%)

Mini-lecture (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%

Discussion Question: This semester you will write one substantive discussion question on that week’s assigned readings. You will provide context for your question by writing 2-3 paragraphs that help us (your reader and classmates) understand the origin of your question. That is, why did you ask this particular question? What was it about the readings for the week that helped you generate it? Please make your question and explanation concise. Your submission should be at least 450-500 words (1 page, single-spaced, 1-inch margins).

1. Email your substantive question to your professor Wednesday by 5:00pm. If the question is submitted on Wednesday after 5pm there will be 10 points deducted from your assignment. If the question is submitted at any time on Thursday there will be 20 points deducted from your assignment. (see “Attendance” section for more information about late assignments)

2. Each Thursday, come to class prepared to discuss your question, the interpretive context for your question, as well as your preliminary responses to your own question. Also, be prepared to engage your peers in a fruitful discussion about the readings for the week.
(Assignment based on idea from Patricia Hill Collins' syllabus on Intersectionality)
3. 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 pre-proposal early on in the semester. Follow the recommendations provided in *Destination Dissertation* for the assignment. This assignment will prompt your research interests/questions, assist in the development of those ideas, and provide a framework for other class assignments.

Grant Proposal: You will complete a 3-page 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: 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 your audience to basic concepts/information found in an introductory to sociology textbook 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. 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.

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: *Liberation Sociology*, Preface and Acknowledgements + Chapters 1-4

Due: Discussion Question (DQ) for *Liberation Sociology* and submit your "Every semester needs a plan" schedule

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 3: Sociology

Sep 13

Readings: *Liberation Sociology*, Chapters 5-9

Due: DQ *Liberation Sociology*

Discussion Leader(s): _____

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

Sep 20

Readings: *Destination Dissertation*, pages 1-73

Due: DQ for *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: Chapter 4 and *Destination Dissertation*, pages 293-359

Due: DQ for *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: *Air & Light & Time & Space*, pages ix-101

Due: DQ for *Air & Light & Time & Space* AND personal statement (bring 2 extra copies for in-class feedback)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 7: Becoming an Academic Writer

Oct 11 Readings: *Air & Light & Time & Space*, pages 103-219

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

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 8: Getting Funded

Oct 18 Readings: Grant writing reading, TBA

Due: DQ for 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: Grant writing reading, TBA

Due: DQ for Grant writing reading and Ford grant proposal (staple feedback notes to your final submission)

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 10: Teaching

Nov 1 Readings: *Teaching to Transgress*, pages 1-92

Due: DQ for *Teaching to Transgress*
Teaching: Mini-lecture presentations

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 11: Teaching

Nov 8 Readings: *Teaching to Transgress*, pages 93-207

Due: DQ for *Teaching to Transgress*
Teaching: Mini-lecture presentations

Discussion Leader(s): _____

Week 12: Teaching

Nov 15 Readings:
Teaching: Mini-lecture presentations

Week 13:

Nov 22 University closed, Thanksgiving holiday

Week 14: Applied Sociology

Nov 29 Public and Applied Sociology (Outside class assignment)

Week 15: Applied Sociology

Dec 6 Due: Reflection paper & mini-presentation (Interview with applied sociologist/non-profit organization or private sector) + E-mail CV (word document)

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.