

**The University of Texas at El Paso**  
**Fall 2021**  
**SOCI 5311-12940: Professional Development in Sociology Proseminar**  
**Thursdays 6-8:50pm**  
**Location: Education Building 110**

**Instructor**

Aurelia Lorena Murga, Associate Professor of Sociology

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Student hours w/ Professor: 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, 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:**

**Readings:**

Readings will be distributed electronically (Pdf) via Bb.

**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: -10 points per day (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. Let's

be courteous and respectful of each other as we work through ideas and support each other's learning. Be sure to have readings and assignments with you each night.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Grading Scale

Discussion Questions & Reflection (60%)	A	90- 100%
Leading class discussion (10%)	B	80-89%
Mini-lecture (10 %)	D	60-69%
Curriculum Vita (CV) (10%)	F	59%-below
Final Reflection Paper (10%)		

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Final Grade 100%

**Discussion Question and Reflection:** This semester you will write one substantive discussion question on that week's assigned readings. You will provide context for your question by writing a reflection that helps 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 (2 pages, single-spaced, 1-inch margins).

1. Email your substantive question to your professor Wednesday by 11:59 pm. If the question is submitted after that time, there will be 10 points deducted from your DQ assignment.
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. Papers should include a brief introductory summary of the reading, address the strengths and weaknesses of the material (provide examples from within the text or from cases not assigned), explain what you found interesting in the reading.
4. Please proofread 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.

**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 and facilitating class discussion for the day. Your main focus should be to engage your peers on a focused discussion about the readings.

**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.

**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.

**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](mailto: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](http://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 2021

Please note: Changes to any part of the syllabus will be announced during class.

#### Week 1: Sociology

Aug 26 Introduction to the course and MA sociology program at UTEP

#### Week 2: Sociology

Sep 2 Reading: *Liberation Sociology*, Preface and Acknowledgements + Chapters 1-4  
Due: Discussion Question (DQ) for Liberation Sociology Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

#### Week 3: Sociology

Sep 9 Reading: *Liberation Sociology*, Chapters 5-9  
Due: Discussion Question (DQ) for Liberation Sociology Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

#### Week 4: The Academy

Sep 16 Reading: *The Scholar Denied*, Preface (p. ix-xxiii), Introduction-Chapter 4 (p. 1-118)

Due: Discussion Question (DQ) for *The Scholar Denied* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 5: The Academy**

Sep 23 Reading: *The Scholar Denied*, Chapters 5-8 (p. 119-223)  
Due: DQ for *The Scholar Denied* by Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 6: Where are you going and how will you get there?**

Sep 30 Reading: *Destination Dissertation*, pages 1-73  
Due: DQ for *Destination Dissertation* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 7: Where are you going and how will you get there?**

Oct 7 Reading: Chapter 4 and *Destination Dissertation*, pages 293-359  
Due: DQ for *Destination Dissertation* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 8: Becoming an Academic Writer**

Oct 14 Reading: *Writing for Sociology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition  
Due: DQ for *Writing for Sociology* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

Bring a copy of your CV on a flash drive.

**Week 9: Becoming an Academic Writer**

Oct 21 Reading: *Air & Light & Time & Space*, pages ix-101  
Due: DQ for *Air & Light & Time & Space* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 10: Becoming an Academic Writer**

Oct 28 Reading: *Air & Light & Time & Space*, pages 103-219  
Due: DQ for *Air & Light & Time & Space* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 11: Grant Writing**

Nov 4 Reading: Grant writing, TBA  
Due: DQ for Grant writing Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 12: Teaching**

Nov 11 Reading: *Teaching to Transgress*, pages 1-92  
Due: DQ for *Teaching to Transgress* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 13: Teaching**

Nov 18                      Reading: *Teaching to Transgress*, pages 93-207  
Due: DQ for *Teaching to Transgress* Wednesday at 11:59 pm.  
Reflection paper due Thursday at 6:00 pm via email.

**Week 14: Thanksgiving**

Nov 25                      University closed, no class

**Week 15:**

Dec 2                        Mini-lectures

Final reflection paper due during the scheduled date/time during the week of Finals.