2018

SOCI 101: Introduction to Sociology—A Peer Review of Teaching Portfolio

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Benchmark Portfolio

for

SOCI 101: Introduction to Sociology
Spring 2018

prepared by

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Peer Review of Teaching Program 2017-2018
Introduction

The Peer Review of Teaching program at the University of Nebraska Lincoln is a competitive year-long program that supports faculty members as they document and assess student learning at UNL. One tangible product of the program is the “benchmark portfolio:” a document that provides a snapshot of a faculty member’s pedagogical practice by examining course objectives, instructional practice, and evidence of student learning.

Abstract
This benchmark portfolio targets the Spring 2018 semester of SOCI 101: Introduction to Sociology, a large-enrollment course that combines lecture and recitation classes. It describes course objectives (my goals for the course); an overview of course content and a description of the students enrolled (the target audience); teaching methods (assignments and classroom activities); and assessment of student learning (analyzing quantitative and qualitative data of student performance). In order to evaluate course objectives and their relationship to teaching methods and student learning, I collected data from student feedback following each exam (a post-exam questionnaire). I then compared this feedback with assignment grades in order to understand broad patterns on the relationship between lecture and recitation attendance and student demonstration of course objectives. I also analyzed a series of student writing assignments to qualitatively assess different student trajectories and the scaffolding of writing assignments to help students demonstrate course objectives. The portfolio concludes with a summary and list of planned changes for the future.

Key words
large classes, lecture, recitation, concept learning, social science

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Objectives and Goals of the Current Course Portfolio

Objectives
For most students who enroll in SOCI 101: Introduction to Sociology, it is their only experience taking a sociology course. For a minority, it is the first of many sociology courses and thus shapes their future understanding of the discipline. For these reasons, I consider the course to have high stakes. It is, I believe, the most important class I teach and one of the most important courses offered by my department.

The primary objective of this benchmark portfolio is to help me draw from empirical evidence as well as personal reflection to refine and improve this course to the best of my ability. A second objective is to disseminate useful information to instructors who teach Introduction to Sociology or other similar introductory-level survey courses. I anticipate this portfolio will contribute to department conversations and assessment of curriculum development.

Guiding Questions
My participation in the Peer Review of Teaching project was motivated by several initial questions about teaching the large-enrollment, semester long class, SOCI 101:

- How do I teach a broad overview of the discipline of sociology while still offering clear “take-aways” for students?
- How can I encourage students to participate in their own learning in the setting of a large lecture class?
- How can I optimize the “hybrid” class format that relies on a digital textbook and assignments as well as face-to-face class meetings?

Key Goals
The first time I taught this course (Fall 2017), I adapted the course objectives created by a past instructor as well as many of the course assignments. This semester (Spring 2018), I have personalized and changed the course objectives and many assignments. Thus, the key goal of creating this benchmark portfolio is to assess to what extend course activities and assignments help students achieve course objectives. I used this course portfolio to address and document two key goals:

- Effectiveness of lectures and recitation class activities on achieving course objectives
- Scaffolding of assignments and whether this impacts improvement over time on achieving course objectives

Course Description

Context
Introduction to Sociology is the foundational course offered in the undergraduate program in Sociology. The sociology department expects this course to introduce students to major concepts and theories of the discipline, research methods, and an overview of topics commonly investigated by sociologists.
The course serves a general education requirement (or ACE requirement) and thus attracts many students outside of Sociology. In particular, one large-enrollment section each semester hosts a “learning community” of students who are on track for pre-med or pre-law. Particular for students interested in pursuing medical school, sociology is now tested on the MCAT.

The department and the college also expect this course to help recruit majors and minors. This course provides the foundation for sociology courses that follow, wherein instructors can assume a basic level of knowledge about the field of sociology.

For several years, the instructors of the large sections of the course have coordinated course objectives, syllabi, and class schedule. Many course sections taught in the department use the same textbook. I have benefited from previously taught sections of the course where instructors shared their materials with me. My intention as an instructor for this course is to continue to share my materials with other instructors (including graduate instructors and instructors of online sections) so that the department may continue to develop a strong and consistent large-enrollment introductory course. To my knowledge, there has been no systematic review of this shared curriculum and its effectiveness.

Introduction to Sociology is also important for the department’s graduate program as usually all first-year graduate students and some second-year graduate students serve as graduate teaching assistants (GTA’s). For first-year graduate students, this is often their first experience teaching at a college level, and this course serves to socialize students in the professional teaching practices of the discipline and allows them to independently direct weekly class sessions (recitations) in a supervised experience. Depending on the undergraduate enrollment for the class, this course includes up to eight GTA’s.

The weekly format includes two days of large lecture (led by the professor) and one day of recitation section (a small, activity based class led by recitation instructors). The course uses an electronic textbook and assigns online chapter quizzes produced by the textbook publisher. The course uses Canvas for all other assignments.

See Appendix A for the complete syllabus.

**Enrollment**

SOCI 101 is usually the first course taken by interested majors and minors and as an ACE course also attracts students from across the university from a wide range of interests (business administration, pre-nursing, bio-chemistry, etc.). Most students are first-year freshman and have varying levels of preparedness. There is great variation in general preparedness for college-level curriculum (varied skills when it comes to reading and writing) and exposure to sociology as a science (a small number of students, for example, have completed a high school sociology course). Class size in the courses I teach vary between 160-250.

Figures 1, 2, and 3 offer details about students enrolled in the course in Spring 2018. Consistent with other sections of the class I have taught, this course attracts students from across the university. As indicated in Figure 1, there are students from every college enrolled in the course, with the majority of students coming from the College of Arts and Sciences or General Studies.
Despite high representation from Arts and Sciences, there are relatively few declared sociology majors and minors at the time students are enrolled in the course (Figure 2). Sociology majors represent only 4 percent (7 students) of those enrolled, with a larger number of minors (14 students, or 8 percent).

Most students in this class are first-year freshman, though there are also many sophomores (the number of sophomores enrolled in this section of the class is higher than the other section I taught at an earlier time). There are relatively few junior and seniors.

![Figure 1: Number of students enrolled in SOC 101 004 by college of declared major, Spring 2018](image1)

![Figure 2: Representation of sociology majors and minors for students enrolled in SOCI 101 004 Spring 2018](image2)
Course Objectives
On the first day of class, I introduce students to sociology using a metaphor and brief French lesson. I describe the phrase, *jamais vu*, literally meaning “never seen” and explain that it refers to those times we experience something that is familiar as unfamiliar (like when you look long enough at a common word and begin to question its spelling). This is the work of sociology, I explain, to take a step back from what we take for granted in the world—whether it be the food we eat, the clothes we wear, or deeply held values and traditions—and try to examine it as unfamiliar (this we call a sociological lens). Because the course material often focuses on what students experience in their everyday lives, it can be challenging as an instructor to encourage them to think using sociological reasoning rather than their common sense. The three objectives I developed for the course attempt to capture this process.

**Objective 1: Explain the impact of social processes (social institutions, social structure, culture, groups, etc.) on the lives of individuals, including yourself**

The first objective captures what makes sociology unique as a science: explaining human behavior by looking to external social forces. This is often counter-intuitive for students, especially American students, who often have a highly individualistic understanding on why people make certain choices, act in particular ways, etc. For example, we examine the topic of “deviance,” the term sociologists use to describe violations of social norms. Students tend to understand deviant behavior as pathological or psychological, so this objective emphasizes how what is considered deviant changes over time and in different cultural contexts as a result of differing social norms.

**Objective 2: Define and apply fundamental sociological theories and concepts to human behavior**

As an introductory survey course, I consider it my responsibility to introduce students to the “jargon” of sociology: those terms and theories that are fundamental to how sociologists research and theorize about the world. The textbook describes three broad theoretical frameworks that are discussed in every chapter to apply to different topic (this model is very common for Introduction to Sociology textbooks). This objective emphasizes that students can define and
apply these theories: functionalism that looks to how social phenomena contribute to a stable and maintained status quo of any given society; conflict theory that emphasizes how people in power work to maintain that power often at the expense of others; and symbolic interactionism that looks to micro-level interactions to understand how people draw meaning from their worlds. In addition to these theories, this objective emphasizes core concepts that we discuss through the semester.

**Objective 3: Identify patterns and causes of social inequality in the United States related to social class, race and ethnicity, and gender**

Social inequality is at the heart of sociology as a discipline and thus an important objective of this introductory course is for students to begin to understand it. This objective focuses on what Bloom’s taxonomy describes as the simplest—remembering and understanding—and emphasizes that students be able to identify both patterns (for example, that the wealth gap between white and black families in the U.S. is increasing) and causes (for example, that housing policies treated white and black families differently throughout much of the 20th century and therefore allowed white families to acquire more generational equity). This objective also focuses on the nexus of inequality most common to sociological research: social class, race and ethnicity, and gender.

**Approach to Teaching: Methods, Materials, and Activities**

**Teaching Methods**

This course draws from two primary teaching methods: (1) interactive lectures (2) activities and discussions in small class sections led by recitation instructors. I assess both of these methods through student reflection, feedback, and evaluation (see Appendix D) and comparison of self-reported attendance in lecture and documented attendance in recitation with course grades (see Figure 6).

Because this is a large-enrollment class, interactive lectures make up the majority of class time. Lecture is important for this kind of course because objectives center on acquiring knowledge that is basic and fundamental to sociology. The textbook guides the lectures each class: I repeat the learning objectives of the text as a way to frame the lecture and I use keywords or concepts from the textbook to set up examples and topics that I describe. I also intentionally diverge from the textbook when I use examples so that students receive multiple perspectives related to the same concept or theory. I use PowerPoint slides with care: attempting to place only key words and definitions on the slides and reminding students that these should be the skeletons or outlines for their notes: they must fill in the details in their own words. I also interject my lectures with short video or audio clips pertinent to class topics.

Interactive lecture means that I use a variety of strategies to interrupt my monologues in front of the class. These include:

- “Think, Pair, Share” exercises: students respond to a question prompt by first writing their answer independently (think), then pairing up and discussing with a peer. I think as for volunteers from 3-4 groups to share with the large class
• “Divide and conquer” exercises: I assign discussion topics to different sections of the room and ask students to form small groups to discuss and then ask each section to share back with the large class.

• Questions to target areas of the classroom: I often pose questions or ask for examples from the class. I typically start by asking a volunteer from the back right or left of the room. My eye contact with them seems to encourage class response.

• “Put on your sociologist hat” exercises: Usually using a short video (but sometimes a written prompt), I ask students to discuss in pairs how they would sociologically analyze some social phenomena and then ask for volunteers to share back.

Recitation class sessions meet most Fridays and are led by GTA’s. I meet with GTA’s weekly to describe the week’s lesson plans. GTA’s are then responsible for personalizing these lesson plans but all sections share the same class objective and similar class activities that I create. The goal for these classes is to get students “doing” sociology in a way that is more student-driven than the large class meetings allow. Class activities for recitation sections include:

• Small groups that create study guides
• Short videos followed by student led discussion
• Interactive websites that students engage and discussion

Course Material
In addition to these teaching methods, the course relies on a textbook along with minimal supplemental electronic reading to supply information relevant to the course. I chose the textbook because other instructors in the department recommended it and because of its relatively low price point for students. I assign only the digital version of the textbook, which also includes chapter quizzes created by the publisher. Students can opt to purchase a loose-leaf hard copy of textbook chapters if they wish.

Course Assessments
In the course, there are two categories of assessments: (1) writing and (2) multiple-choice quizzes and exams.

Student Writing:
I use a scaffolding model for writing assignments in this course.

First, students are responsible for completing a number of discussion board posts throughout the semester. These are relatively low-stakes (10 points) with minimal items on the grading rubric (students can receive full credit, half credit, or no credit depending on what extent they answer the question prompt and include sociological knowledge; see Appendix B for instructions and rubric). Question prompts ask students to reflect on their own lives in relation to sociological concepts and thus reflects a key component of course objective #1.

Second, students must write two short essays that respond to a question prompt related to an assigned reading. These are higher stakes (30 points) than discussion board posts. The first deadline for a short essay is several weeks after the first discussion post is due. The rubric used to assess this assignment includes items related to course objectives #1 and 2. This assignment
also includes additional requirements related to formatting (citations, etc.). See Appendix B for instructions and rubric.

Third, students must complete a final long essay called the Sociological Analysis Paper (SA Paper). Students are required to turn in a draft and final version of this assignment. This paper is similar to short essays in that they must respond to a prompt, but this prompt is more complex. It is also the only assignment that requires students look up and read outside journal articles and watch a documentary film to inform their response. The rubric used to assess this assignment includes items related to course objectives #1, 2, and 3 (see Appendix B for instructions and rubric).

This model of scaffolding assignments allows students to practice writing about topics in a sociological way. Discussion posts give students nearly weekly feedback on their writing and to what extent they adequately incorporate sociological knowledge. Short essays give students repeated feedback on whether they correctly and appropriate apply sociological concepts and theories. Finally, the SA Paper assumes that students have received individualized feedback on their earlier writing in order to improve their writing and ability to hand in a final paper that meets all three learning objectives.

Multiple-Choice Quiz and Exam Assessments
For every textbook chapter I assign, students must complete an online quiz created by the textbook publisher on content of that chapter (a total of 13 quizzes).

Students also must complete 3 non-cumulative multiple-choice exams. Before each exam, students attend a review session in recitation.

Both formats allow students multiple opportunities to answer questions in order to encourage comprehension over rote memorization. There is no time limit for chapter quizzes and students can revise their answers before they submit the quiz before the deadline. For exams #1 and 2, students have more than one opportunity to take the exam. Multiple-choice questions draw from a large test bank so students are unlikely to receive many of the same questions.

These quizzes and exams partially assess all course objectives (see Appendix C for example exam questions that reflect each course objective).

Extra Credit
Until I began teaching this large-enrollment class, my classes rarely included extra credit opportunities. I once thought these to be overly soft and accommodating since students know at the beginning of the semester how I will evaluate and calculate their grades. Now that I teach SOCI 101, I have decided to incorporate extra credit into the course design in order to support student success and encourage student engagement. Extra credit opportunities vary and include ways for students who miss recitation sessions or an assignment due date to make up some missed points. Ways to receive extra credit include:

• Coming to office hours early in the semester: because many first-year students do not know how valuable coming to office hours can be and they may be intimidated by
coming to the office of their professors, I want students to know I am approachable and care about their success even if I may not interact with them directly during class.

- Participating in “quick polls:” I implemented this activity to replace in-class “clickers” that I used in a previous semester so that I could still incorporate student perspectives into my lectures but that didn’t require students have electronic devices in class and also did not disrupt class time. These quick polls as for student opinions and experiences and are administered via Canvas 1-2 weeks before the lecture topic in which student responses are incorporated

Achieving Course Objectives
Table 1 illustrates how teaching methods, course material, and course assignments enable students to achieve the course objectives. Students who successfully achieve course objectives have likely used many or all of the strategies outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method, material, or assessment</th>
<th>How students should use…</th>
<th>…to achieve which objective(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Lecture | -Monday and Wednesday class periods  
-Listen for comprehension  
-Actively take notes  
-Ask and answer questions | -Develop knowledge to achieve all 3 course objectives |
| Recitation session | -Friday class period  
-Actively participate  
-Ask and answer questions | -Develop knowledge to achieve all 3 course objectives |
| Revel textbook chapter quizzes | -Weekly  
-to test comprehension after reading the assigned chapter | -Demonstrate all 3 course objectives |
| Multiple choice exams | -Participate in recitation review sessions  
-3 non-cumulative units after weeks 5, 10, and 15  
-For the 1st and 2nd exams, multiple attempts  
-Test individual ability to recall and apply knowledge developed during the preceding unit | -Demonstrate all 3 course objectives |
| Discussion posts | -On an almost weekly basis, practice connecting concepts and theories with everyday life  
-Use the textbook and in-class notes as a reference | -Demonstrate all 3 course objectives, with emphasis on objective #1 (explain the impact of social forces on the lives of individuals) |
Short essays
- In weeks 4, 8, and 12, practice articulating knowledge from the course
- Use the textbook and in-class notes as a reference
- Demonstrate all 3 course objectives, with emphasis on objectives #1 and #2

SA paper
- Near the end of the semester, demonstrate the ability to answer a question prompt to demonstrate sociological thinking
- In preparation, practice finding academic journal articles
- Use the textbook, in-class notes, and supplemental journal articles as a reference
- Demonstrate all 3 course objectives, with emphasis on objective #3 (identify patterns and causes of social inequality in the United States)

Table 1: Course methods, materials, and assessments and prescribed use for achieving course objectives

Analysis of Student Learning
I analyze student learning using quantitative data based on post-exam student evaluations and grades to assess broad patterns and trends and qualitative data to provide “snapshots” of the varying degrees to which students met course objectives.

After each exam, I sent an anonymous poll (see Appendix D) to students via Canvas to respond to 10 multiple choice questions and 1 open-ended question about their class engagement leading up to that exam.

Effectiveness of Teaching Methods
Lectures
In order to assess effectiveness of lectures and recitations to help students achieve course objectives I rely on two forms of data: student evaluation of the effectiveness of lectures to help them prepare for exams and students grades of the final paper assignment (SA Paper) compared with recitation attendance. I discuss the limitations of each measure below, but overall, believe these data provide me with some basic knowledge that lectures improve students’ ability to be successful with examinations and that there is a strong relationship between recitation attendance and grades.

Figure 4 reports averages for student responses to two questions for which the answer categories are usually (4), sometimes (3), rarely (2), and never (1):

“When attending lecture, it is clear to me how the lecture content connects to the broader theme of the week.”

“When attending lecture, it is easy for me to follow what the instructor is saying and talking about.”
Considering both questions, the average responses range from 3.50 to 3.85 (somewhat to usually) over the course of the semester. Figure 4 shows this variation. Overall, students report that they are able to connect lecture content to broader themes of the course and that they are able to understand the lecture topic. There is slight decline in their responses over the course of the semester, and Exam 3 has the lowest average. One possible explanation is that students answer these questions after they learn their grades for the exam. Because they are allowed multiple attempts for exams 1 and 2, most grades are higher for these exams than the last one. This question could reflect students’ understanding of lecture effectiveness in hindsight, in other words: they give more credit to lectures when their exam grades are higher.

![Figure 4: Average responses for student evaluation of lectures following each exam, SOCI 101 Spring 2018](image)

Figure 4 considers how students evaluate lectures compared with assigned readings to help them prepare for the exams. Overall, both readings and lectures seem to help students prepare for exams, with average responses ranging from 3.14 to 3.50 for lectures and 3.23 to 3.34 for readings (somewhat to usually). For Exam 1, the student average rating is higher for lecture than for readings (3.5 compared to 3.29); for Exams 2 and 3, the student average rating is slightly higher for readings than lecture. One explanation of these trends is that over time, students learn to more effectively and independently acquire knowledge from course readings and depend less on lectures.

Taken together, Figures 4 and 5 suggest that as the semester goes on, students may benefit from lecture material that digs deeper into topics than does the textbook.
Recitations
Evaluating recitation class activities is somewhat challenging given these classes are taught by different GTA’s, who having varying levels of teaching experience and differing teaching styles. I attempt to maintain consistency across recitation sections by meeting each week with GTA’s to discuss lesson plans. As I discuss in the future improvements section of this portfolio, I think this course would benefit from a separate inquiry into assessing the effectiveness of recitations with the hope of improving them.

Figure 6 shows the relationship between recitation attendance and student grades on the SA paper final. It is likely depicting a somewhat spurious relationship, as motivated students who receive top marks are likely to both attend recitations and receive a high final grade. Nonetheless, this figure confirms my assumption that the more often students attend recitation, the higher their final SA paper grade is likely to be. Given that recitation sessions spend the most time discussing and preparing students for this assignment, these data confirm what is to be expected.
Effectiveness of Assessments

Quantitative Trends

Figures 7 and 8 show grade trends over the course of the semester. Figure 7 shows change over time for each form of assessment that is included throughout the semester (excluding, therefore, the final SA paper). It shows slight increase in average grade percentages over time for discussion posts, chapter quizzes, and short essays, which suggests that students improve their ability to demonstrate course objectives over time. The notable exception is for exam grades, where Exam 3’s average score is significantly less than Exams 1 and 2 (70% compared to 79% and 77%). This is likely due to the constraints associated with taking Exam 3: students are allowed multiple attempts for Exams 1 and 2 but only one attempt for Exam 3.

![Figure 7: Average grades for course assessments over time, SOCI 101 Spring 2018](image)

![Figure 8: Percentage of students who received an “A” on course assessments who did not receive an “A” on Exam 1, SOCI 101 Spring 2018](image)
Figure 8 controls for students who received an “A” on Exam 1 to examine grade change over time. This attempts to exclude those motivated students who will receive high marks regardless of teaching method to attempt to assess the effectiveness of scaffolding assignments and how early assignments encourage student improvement in later ones. Overall, these data demonstrate that for students who did not receive an “A” on Exam 1, they did experience some improvement over time. For example, 36% of students who did not receive an “A” on Exam 1 received an “A” on the first short essay assignment. This number increased to 45% for the final SA Paper.

On the other hand, these data show that it is extremely unlikely for students who did not receive an “A” on the first exam to go on to receive an “A” on the second or third. Only 2% of students for Exam 2 and 6% of students on Exam 3 received an “A” who did not receive an “A” on Exam 1. One take-away from these trends is that it is important for these students who seem not to improve their exam grade to be able to demonstrate course objectives in other ways and therefore it is important to keep other forms of assessment as part of the course requirements.

**Qualitative Snapshots**

I present writing examples from three students to showcase semester-long trajectories for the writing assessments in the class-discussion posts, short essays, and final SA paper (all assignment details, including instructions and rubrics are included in Appendix B).

**Student A**

Student A consistently received higher than average marks for writing assignments. For each discussion post this student completed, they received 100%, meaning they answered the question and included relevant sociological information. Below is an excerpt from these posts. As is evident form this example, Student A demonstrates course objective #1: To explain the impact of social processes on the lives of individuals (including your own). This student demonstrates their knowledge of key sociological concepts (macrosociological and microsociological) and explains the impact of social forces (social class and family members) on their own life and the decision they made to go to college.

**Discussion Post excerpt:** “Using the macrosociological approach I would say that my decision to attend college is in large part due to the socioeconomic class I was born into. Having been raised in an upper middle class family it is hard to see anything other than attending college as sufficient to sustain my current lifestyle. […] Using the microsociological approach I think my attending college is due to interactions with my parents. Both of my parents grew up in working class families and experienced hardships surrounding money their entire lives. They both worked very hard to build themselves up and knew the importance of having a degree in the professional world.”

For the first short essay Student A completed, they received an 80%. Below is an excerpt from this first essay. This essay did not receive full marks on the grading rubric items related to course objectives 1 and 2: To explain the impact of social processes on the lives of individuals (including your own) and To define and apply fundamental sociological theories and concepts to human behavior. For both of these items, the student offered an adequate but not exceptional response.
Short Essay excerpt: “There are two main theories that discuss how women became a minority group in the first place. The first argues that females were pigeonholed into the role of submissive homemaker because they are the ones who bear children. During more primitive times it was necessary to have many children, as people did not live very long and having many children ensured that a group would survive. Infants were entirely dependent on being breastfed by their mother, making it difficult for women to stray far from home. Consequently, the men hunted and engaged in trade with other groups, which gave them the autonomy and power of which men still have disproportionate possession. The second theory suggests that men were the ones who engaged in physical confrontations due to having more physical strength than women. Women were then given as rewards to the men who risked their lives in battle. According to this theory, this led to sex, labor, and reproduction as the only valuable components of a woman (11.2).”

For the final SA paper, Student A incorporated feedback from earlier written assignments (including a draft of the SA paper) and received a 96% on this assignment. In particular, this student incorporated suggestions from an earlier draft on how to demonstrate course objectives in a masterful way. Below is an excerpt from this paper. This student synthesizes empirical evidence to make broad connections. This student demonstrates course objectives 1 and 2, as well as 3: Identify patterns and causes of social inequality in the United States related to social class, race and ethnicity, and gender. In particular, this student’s writing shows clear integration of social inequalities, discussing race, gender, and social class simultaneously.

SA Paper excerpt: “Eviction rates are another statistic that clearly show a pattern of discrimination against minorities, namely African American women. Empirical research on the topic finds that there are two main reasons for women being disproportionately likely to be evicted. The first has to do with structural constraints which refers to discrimination, most likely on the basis of race or gender, that leads to the inability to find a job that can support adequate housing (Desmond 2012). The second states “interactional patterns” as a culprit. This is referring to how a woman reacts to being evicted, and the research in this study indicates that women react in a more submissive manner, which makes them more susceptible to eviction (Desmond 2012). It is also true that “Families headed by both a mother and father are the least likely to be poor,” (Henslin 2017, 10.5). One may assume that the reason for this is that the family is better able to sustain itself with two incomes. This is true, but only in part. The main reason for this is that women average only 72 percent of what men earn, making single mothers extremely likely to be poor, and single African American mothers the most likely to experience poverty (Henslin 2017, 10.5). This is a classic example of intersectionality at play and how it is having detrimental effects on a specific group. The historical factors that implemented institutionalized racism as well as institutionalized sexism are being perpetuated today in the form of unequal pay and unfair housing, both of which contribute greatly to instances of poverty.”

Student B
Student B shows clear improvement over time. This student received full credit for almost all discussion posts they completed, though their answers were not sophisticated. Even though they received full credit for these low stakes assignments, they received feedback on how they could
improve and strengthen their sociological writing. Below is an example of a discussion post that received full credit and adequately, though not exceptionally, demonstrated course objective #1. The response draws from sociological ideas but does not adequately connect each separate point within a broader theoretical framework. This student does not incorporate any sociological concepts or theories or discussion of inequality and thus fails to demonstrate course objectives #2 and 3.

Discussion Post example: “For me being a male can be sometimes difficult in aspects of the perceived behaviors, attitudes, and or appearances that are associated with it. First of all, I feel as males are made out to have little to no visible emotions, and to act as if were superior to others. However, I wish this was not the case. I personally don’t do this for I am a person who will wear their emotions and express them freely. I also never put my self above others for my gender, for that is not fair and me being a male doesn’t make me better in any aspect. I think that this is something our generation is continuing to change with from prior generations. We seem to be more accepting of these types of behaviors which were once standard in all males. I am glad to see that we can accept males, females, and others for who they are not what gender they classify as, for were all humans in this world and deserve equal opportunity.”

Student B received a 66% on their first essay, a below average score. In addition to writing and grammatical errors and failure to follow formatting and citation instructions, the student did not adequately demonstrate any course objectives, in particular course objectives #1 and 2. Below is the concluding paragraph of their essay, which relies on vague descriptions to contrast sociological reasoning with common sense. The student introduces some key concepts but has not correctly defined or applied them. The student received this feedback along with their grade.

Short Essay excerpt: “More so without the use of sociological research we would not be able to know the real answer that have scientifically research. With the hypothesis and research of these researchers we are able to more accurately predict the unpredictable in our society. Which ultimately helps our world become more well equipped to how society works and effects each one of us in our specific society. Although times are constantly changing and common sense always changes we are more accurately able to interpret the oncoming time with sociological research.”

Despite low grades on short essays 1 and 2, Student B incorporated feedback from a draft of their SA Paper to hand in a strong final. This student’s grade on this assignment was a 93%. This paper demonstrated all three course objectives, as the excerpt below illustrates. Though their writing could do more to bring together separate points into an overall thesis, this student adequately identifies social processes that affect the lives of individuals, key sociological theories, and explanations of social inequality related to social class and race.

SA Paper excerpt: “One of the greatest factors that contributes to the poverty rate in today’s society is race. Race has been a problem in our history due to events such as segregation and the Jim crow laws to recent events such as undocumented immigrants and their lack of knowledge for jobs or whites being born into a low-income household. These events have led to the suppression of racial groups which is largely influencing
the poverty rate. [...] Women of African American decent are even more likely to face poverty due to the implications set on women and African Americans combined. “In Black neighborhoods, women were more than twice as likely to be evicted as men.” (Desmund, M, 2012) For immigrants, they face a hard time moving to the United States because they find themselves lacking education and the necessities to secure a well-paying job. This causes the families of these immigrants to be under the poverty-line created by the government also making the rate much larger. “[Latino] family income averages only three fifths that of whites, and they are twice as likely to as whites to be poor.” (Henslin, 2017, 12.5)”

Student C
Student C’s writing performance declined over the course of the semester. The below example represents the general quality of response for discussion posts. While this student received full credit for all the posts they completed, they demonstrated only adequate knowledge when it came to correctly defining and applying sociological concepts and theories (course objective #2). For instance, the below response includes key terms (gatekeepers, sick role) but does not adequately connect their perspective (“it wasn’t really my fault”) to sociological thinking (that this assumption is a result of cultural norms, another cultural system may in fact lead this student to believe that it was their carelessness that was to blame).

Discussion post example: “I played the sick role when I fractured my foot. It was necessary for me to recover, I had to wear a cast over my foot for six weeks. Because of this injury, I was temporarily excused from obligations (school) while I had X-rays and a cast put on. While it was healing, I was also excused from some other obligations/policies. For example, I was permitted to be a few minutes late to class without being marked as tardy. My 'illness' was generally not blamed on me, considering it really wasn't my fault. My gatekeepers would probably be my parents and doctor, knowing what's best for me, and how I could get back to normal as soon as possible.”

For their first short essay, Student C received a perfect score, demonstrating strong writing and the ability to offer a sophisticated answer demonstrating course objectives 1 and 2. As the below excerpt illustrates, this student illustrates how the social world influences our common sense (objective #1) and uses “common sense” as a key sociological concept. The student then goes on to describe very clearly how scientific reasoning differs and incorporates another key term, “scientific method.”

Short Essay excerpt: “Common sense, things that everyone seems to “know” or believe, can often be true, but can also be completely false in some situations. Our common sense reasoning is based on our personal micro-sociological interactions that shape our views of the world. For example, many years ago, it was common sense that the earth was flat. Everyone “knew” that it was flat, it was shared knowledge (Henslin 2017). Our experiences shape the assumptions, stereotypes, expectations, and inferences that we make about ourselves and others. Since common sense is so often flawed, it is important to take other factors and possibilities into considerations. One other good source of information is scientific reasoning. Where common sense reasoning lacks, scientific reasoning makes it up. Scientists use a specific way of coming to conclusions called the
scientific method. This method is a way to make sure that the conclusions made are
based off of solid evidence and reasoning, as opposed to personal experiences and
biases. Scientific informations is backed by studies and carefully curated data, more
likely to be true than our intuition or assumptions.”

Student C did not had in a draft of their SA paper and so their final paper grade was penalized. In
addition, their SA paper final did not meet the length requirements and therefore could not
adequately develop a thesis or demonstrate course objectives. The grade for this paper was 50%.
The below example illustrates how this student chose to address causes of inequalities. Though
the student does include some descriptive statistics, this student failed to incorporate empirical
evidence from assigned reading in order to demonstrate course objective #3. Although it is clear
that this student is capable of strong writing and sociological thinking, this paper fails to
demonstrate this.

SA Paper excerpt: “While a primary education is free in the United States, housing is not. Over 11 million people in the U.S. spend over half of their income on rent (PBS, 2017). Although there are government programs and vouchers to help those in need of housing assistance, often times there is not enough to go around, and not everyone is able to acquire this assistance. According to PBS’s documentary, “Poverty, Politics, and Profit, Frontline, Arlington, VA.” the government spends more than $50 Billion every year in housing assistance, but only 25% of households in need actually receive assistance. PBS estimates that there are over 2.5 million evictions every year in the U.S. (2017). Shelter is one of our basic human needs, yet millions in the U.S. struggle to afford a home (PBS, 2017). This struggle to pay often leads to eviction, and many times homelessness, thus perpetuating the devastating cycle of poverty (Desmund 2012).”

Summaries of Student Snapshots
The above examples demonstrate different levels of student learning and different trajectories of
learning that took place over the course of the semester. Student A demonstrated consistently
high writing abilities and thus ability to meet course objectives but still showed improvement in
the transition from short essay assignments to the final SA paper. Student B began with below-
average marks on writing assignments and showed significant improvement by the final SA
paper. Student C began with strong marks on writing assignments but failed the final SA paper
assignment.

Though not representative of all students in the course, these examples suggest that the
scaffolding model of writing assessment does contribute to student improvement, so long as
students participate in the opportunities available to them (Student C, for example, who failed the
final paper did not hand in a draft, whereas Students A and B incorporated feedback from their
drafts to improve their final scores). These examples also illustrate that course objectives are
designed to assess basic levels of knowledge and this means that students might receive similar
scores but demonstrate anywhere from adequate knowledge (Student B) to highly advanced
(Student A). This aligns with the introductory nature of the course where students can be
successful even if they have not yet developed advanced or critical thinking and the ability to
demonstrate this in their writing.
Summary Assessment

The process of creating this benchmark portfolio has allowed me to gain insight into several components of my teaching SOCI 101: Introduction to Sociology. First, it prompted me to revise my course objectives to those that I deemed manageable and achievable in this kind of course. Second, it allowed the opportunity to evaluate whether my assessments made these course objectives achievable. My overall conclusion is that the teaching methods, materials, and assessments are largely effective but can be improved. Thus, I conclude with several planned changes for the future, along with potential for additional inquiry projects.

1. It is unclear how and to what extent recitation class sessions contribute to course objectives. It would be fruitful to dedicate an inquiry project to recitation sections and teaching performed by GTA’s in order to improve mentorship of these new instructors and improve student learning experiences in these settings.
2. A revision of writing assignments so that discussion post grades could more clearly inform students for their later writing assignments. This includes revising the grading rubric.
3. Different ways to assess interactive lectures would benefit the course evaluation. At present, this evaluation is based on student feedback following exams, whereas exam grades likely bias student perspective on the effectiveness of lecture.
4. I plan to revise lectures in the future so that lectures taking place later in the semester include more complex material and material that is less similar to the textbook than earlier in the semester. It appears, based on student feedback, that students are prepared for this.
Appendix A: Syllabus

SOCI 101-004: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY Spring 2018
UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN
Lectures: CBA 143 M/W 10:30-11:20; Recitation F 10:30-11:20

Dr. Kelsy Burke
Office: 742 Oldfather Hall
Email: kburke@unl.edu; Phone: 402-472-3009
Office Hours: M/W 1:30-2:30 or by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW

Description: In this course, we will investigate connections between our personal experiences and our social environment, what C. Wright Mills calls the “sociological imagination.” You will be introduced to the discipline of sociology—what sociologists study, how they study it, and what they find. You will learn what theories sociologists use to explain social trends—such as those related to crime, health, and education—and you will learn how to interpret data, like the statistics presented in online articles shared on your Facebook feed. You will learn and be encouraged to think critically about social categories like gender, race/ethnicity, social class, and families. Together, we will explore the world around us through a sociological lens.

Achievement Centered Education (ACE) Designation: As an Achievement-Centered Education (ACE) certified class, Introduction to Sociology (SOCI 101) will facilitate Learning Outcome #6 (using knowledge, theories, methods, and historical perspective appropriate to the social sciences to understand and evaluate human behavior). ACE learning outcomes will be assessed by writing assignments, exams, and in-class (recitation) activities.

Objectives: Following the completion of this course, students will be able to:
✓ Explain the impact of social processes (social institutions, social structure, culture, groups, etc.) on the lives of individuals, including yourself
✓ Define and apply fundamental sociological theories and concepts to human behavior
✓ Identify patterns and causes of social inequality in the United States related to social class, race and ethnicity, and gender

Required Electronic Textbook:

Note: We use a digital product (Revel) for this text that must be purchased from the University Bookstore or Pearson Publishing. Revel is required and allows you to take “self-check” quizzes and graded quizzes. Revel also allows you can access the text through any mobile device or computer. There are numerous computer labs on campus (including in the Sociology department). Students may also choose to purchase a loose-leaf hardcopy of the textbook.

Additional electronic readings are also required and available via Canvas.
**Canvas:** The Canvas portal will be used for posting of syllabi, grades, and other important course information and updates. Make sure you receive notifications for announcements sent through its email/messaging system as this is how I and your recitation instructor will regularly communicate with the class. You will also hand in assignments and complete exams in Canvas.

**Weekly Format:** This course usually consists of lectures on Mondays and Wednesdays, and a recitation on Fridays. PowerPoint slides will not be shared with students, so make sure to do the reading before class and expect to take notes during class. Our class will be a community focused on supporting each other’s learning. We will do this by being on time, staying until the end of class, and staying alert during class.

Please note the electronic device policy described in detail on pg. 5 of the syllabus: unless special accommodations have been made, students should not use laptops, smart phones, tablets etc. during lectures.

The purpose of recitation is to “do” Sociology by applying theories, concepts, and critical analysis of data and research. Students will discuss lectures and readings plus do activities designed to reinforce key ideas. Each student will be assigned to a recitation group led by a Recitation Instructor. Recitation sections will be posted in Canvas after the first week of class.

### RECITATION INSTRUCTORS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Grace Kelly</th>
<th>Angela DeLuccia</th>
<th>Maia Behrendt</th>
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<td><a href="mailto:Angela.deluccia@huskers.unl.edu">Angela.deluccia@huskers.unl.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:Maia.behrendt@huskers.unl.edu">Maia.behrendt@huskers.unl.edu</a></td>
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<tr>
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<th>Josey VanOrsdale</th>
<th>Kate Pennington</th>
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<td>Email</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Andrea.johnson@huskers.unl.edu">Andrea.johnson@huskers.unl.edu</a></td>
<td><a href="mailto:vanorsdale@huskers.unl.edu">vanorsdale@huskers.unl.edu</a></td>
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## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### Overview of Grades:

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<th>Possible Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Recitation Participation (12 @ 15 points)</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>Chapter Quizzes using REVEL (10 @ 15 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sociology Application (SA) Paper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short Essays (2 @ 30 points)</td>
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<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Posts (6 @ 10 points)</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### Grading Scale:

- **A+** 97-100% (970-1000 pts)
- **A** 93-96% (930-969 pts)
- **A-** 90-92% (900-929 pts)
- **B+** 87-89% (870-899 pts)
- **B** 83-86% (830-869 pts)
- **B-** 80-82% (800-829 pts)
- **C+** 77-79% (770-799 pts)
- **C** 73-76% (730-769 pts)
- **C-** 70-72% (700-729 pts)
- **D+** 67-69% (670-699 pts)
- **D** 63-66% (630-669 pts)
- **D-** 60-62% (600-629 pts)
- **F** 0-59% (0-599 pts)

**Note:** For majors and minors, passing this course requires getting a C (73%) or higher.

### Exams:

There are a total of **three (3) exams for this course**. The format is multiple choice and closed book/no notes. Each exam is non-cumulative and will cover specific topics from that unit’s assigned textbook chapters, lectures, and recitations. All exams will be administered on-line through Canvas at the Digital Learning Center (DLC), which is located in the Adele Coryell Hall Learning Commons. During exam weeks, there is no lecture on Mondays and all instructors will have open office hours during class time. Except for the third exam scheduled for finals week, you have a seven (7) day window during which to take the exam.

You will receive a study guide one week before the exam is scheduled. You have 75 minutes to complete the exam, and you are allowed multiple attempts to take Exams 1 and 2. See an instructor if you earn a lower score than you desire on your first attempt. Students who review their first score with an instructor do SUBSTANTIALLY BETTER on subsequent attempts. Each exam attempt involves a random sample of **60 questions** from a larger test bank (over 120 questions). Each question is worth 2.5 points. Students are only allowed to attempt an exam once per calendar day (24 hours) within scheduled timeframe.

**Exam Procedures and Guidelines:**

- ✓ All testing times must be pre-scheduled by students. Early sign-up is recommended as time slots fill up quickly. Students who are unable to schedule an exam due to last-minute sign-up will not be allowed to make-up the exam.
- ✓ All students are required to have their current N-Card to test. Other forms of ID will not be accepted as a substitute for N-Cards. DLC staff reserve the right to ask for a second ID if needed for identity verification.
✓ All students will receive two pieces of barcoded scratch paper for their exam. This paper will be scanned in to students upon check-in and scanned out upon check-out.

✓ Only permitted items are allowed at your computer station during testing, including your N-Card, DLC provided barcoded scratch paper, and writing utensils. Nothing else is allowed at your computer station unless your instructor has made prior arrangements with the DLC. For students whose first language is not English, translation devices are permitted.

✓ All exams must be submitted for grading at the posted closing time. Students will not be given additional time to finish their exams past the posted closing time.

Exam Schedules: To schedule your exam, please visit http://dlc-reserve.unl.edu. For more information about the Exam Commons location, operating hours and student guidelines, please visit http://dlc.unl.edu.

Make-up Exams are only allowed under extreme circumstances, and at the instructor’s discretion. Students must also provide documentation for medical emergencies. Make-up exams may be different from the exam administered at the Testing Center (for example, essay format).

Recitation Participation: You will be assigned a recitation section and are expected to attend Friday recitation every week. During each recitation, students have the opportunity to receive 15 participation points from graded assignments and activities. To receive full points toward your final grade, you must attend and fully participate in 12 recitation sessions. Students can miss 2 recitations without penalty, or participate in all 14 recitations for extra credit points.

Chapter Quizzes: For each assigned chapter, there is a reading quiz you will complete through the Revel interactive media application for the textbook. You will learn about revel on the first day of class. Do quizzes early and look up answers in the chapter – these are open book quizzes. All quizzes must be done the morning before class begins (10:29am) on the due date to receive credit. Your quiz grade is worth 150 points (or 10 quizzes with perfect scores)—you can complete 13 quizzes to make up points or receive extra credit.

Sociological Analysis (SA) Paper: Students will write an analysis integrating journal articles, chapter content, and a documentary. Students are required to submit a draft and a final version in Canvas where the paper will be checked using “Turn It In” (an online plagiarism detection tool) to ensure academic integrity. The paper should be a comprehensive answer to a question about the topic and include your application of sociological theory and evidence. A grading rubric and detailed instructions will be discussed in class and are available on Canvas.

Short Essays: Students must write two short essays (between 300 and 500 words) responding to a question prompt to showcase interpretation and application of sociological ideas. These essays must be properly formatted and uploaded as a word document in Canvas before 10:29am on their due dates. They will be checked using “Turn It In” (an online plagiarism detection tool) to ensure academic integrity. A grading rubric and detailed instructions will be discussed in class and are available on Canvas.
**Discussion Posts:** There are 8 scheduled opportunities to write discussion posts on Canvas to practice sociological thinking and respond to a question prompt—**students must write a total of 6** that will be graded by recitation instructors for full points. You can complete a total of 8 discussion posts to make up points or receive extra credit. A grading rubric and detailed instructions will be discussed in class and are available on Canvas.

**EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES**

**Why Extra Credit?** Because this class enrolls such a large number of students, the course policy does not accommodate individualized make-up assignments for absences due to illness or extracurricular activities (see pg. 4 on policy regarding make-up exams). Instead, if you miss a recitation session or the due date for an assignment, the options outlined below allow students to make up missed points. You can also take advantage of these options to improve your overall grade. There are approximately 150 extra credit points available (the equivalent of 1 exam). There is no limit to the number of extra credit a student completes, though many opportunities take place early in the semester or require advance planning.

**Extra Credit Built into Course Requirements:** For most course requirements, there is an opportunity to complete more assignments than what is required. For example, there are 8 discussion posts scheduled for the semester. You must complete 6 of them to fulfill the course requirements. If you choose to complete additional discussion posts, these will be considered extra credit and added to your overall grade. This option is also possible for chapter quizzes, recitation participation, and short essays (see section above).

**Syllabus Quiz:** The syllabus is the most important resource for student success in this course. It outlines all deadlines, requirements, and policies and serves as a contract between instructor and students. Before approaching the professor or your recitation instructor with a question about the course, it is a good idea to check the syllabus first. To encourage you to read the details of the syllabus, there is a syllabus quiz available in Canvas during the first two weeks of the semester. Students who complete and receive 100% on this quiz before the end of the day on **January 19** will receive 5 extra credit points. You have an unlimited number of attempts to take the quiz.

**Office Visit with Professor or Recitation Instructor:** Visiting office hours is often a new concept for first-year students because it is not an expectation in most high schools. Students visit instructors for a variety of reasons, for example, to seek guidance on early drafts of essays/papers, review information that is not clear, find out topics that they failed on exams, to let instructors know about barriers in the class to their learning, becoming a major, to discuss career plans, plus more. To learn more about the benefits of going to office hours at least once, see: [http://cas.unl.edu/undergrad-success-plan](http://cas.unl.edu/undergrad-success-plan). You can earn 5 extra credit points in this course by coming to office hours or meeting by appointment with the professor or your recitation instructor by **February 2**. In order to receive these points, you must do more than introduce yourself: ask a question about the course or discuss something pertinent to sociology.

**Quick Polls:** During select weeks, you will receive an emailed invitation via Canvas to complete a short anonymous poll with questions related to course topics. Following the email invitation, students will have 72 hours (3 days) to answer all questions to receive 2 extra credit points. The instructors can see whether you answered a question but not your specific answer.
CALCULATING YOUR GRADE
This course uses the Canvas gradebook to keep track of all graded assignments. You can refer to your grades in Canvas to see each individual item and the grade you have received (note: points you receive from the Revel chapter quizzes are added to Canvas after the quiz due date). The Canvas gradebook does not recognize requirements vs. extra credit options available for the course, and this is why you cannot see a “total grade column.” Instead, you can use Canvas to add up the points you have received and use the syllabus to add up the points available so far.

EXPECTATIONS AND COURSE POLICIES
When you are in class, you are expected to focus on the course material at hand. If you are distracted or distracting (like if you do not comply with the electronic devices policy below), an instructor may ask you to leave.

Electronic devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc.) must be silenced and put away during lecture. Unless special arrangements have been made, this includes laptops for note-taking, video- or audio-recording, and picture taking. I am convinced by scientific evidence that taking notes by hand is the best way to remember and understand information and that laptops and electronic devices cause distraction to their users and those around them.

Email is the best way to get in touch with me. I generally do not check or reply to emails during the evenings or over the weekend but will respond within 24 hours during the week so long as you follow basic email etiquette. This means your message includes a subject, has a proper greeting (e.g. Hi Dr. Burke,), follows rules of standard written English, and has a closing (e.g. Thank you.). Messages that do not follow these guidelines may not receive a reply.

Unless already approved by the instructor, late assignments will not be accepted. If a technology problem in Revel or Canvas prevents your submission of an assignment, you must contact the appropriate technical support and document that you attempted to fix the problem in advance of an assignment due date (this includes ticket number with timestamps, and screen shots with timestamps). It is your responsibility to ensure your online assignments are successfully submitted on time.

You are not able to take an exam early or late, except for extreme emergencies. You are expected to notify me as soon as possible (ideally, in advance) and provide documentation. Travel over break or at the end of the semester is not considered an emergency.

If you are worried about your grade, talk to me well before the end of the semester. I encourage you to meet with me and your recitation instructor early and often. If you are unsure of your grade, please calculate points using Canvas and the syllabus before asking an instructor. Grade checks/reports for student athletes, scholarships, Greek society membership, etc. are handled in person by appointment with your Recitation Instructor.

If you believe an error was made in grading an assignment or exam, you may address the situation in a type-written memo within 48 hours of receiving your grade. For a request to be considered, you must provide relevant evidence that warrants re-grading. Please note that re-grading means that the grade on the assignment or examination may increase, not change at all, or
decrease. The score on the re-graded assignment or examination will then be considered the student’s final score. Requests for re-evaluation of re-graded assignment or examination will not be accepted. If a student is not satisfied with the response to a request for re-evaluation of an assignment or examination grade, the student may contact the chair of the Undergraduate Program in Sociology, in writing, to detail the complaint. Please note, however, that the chair of the Undergraduate Program should be contacted only after a student has submitted a request for re-evaluation, as explained in the above paragraph, and only in the case that the student is unsatisfied with the Recitation’s and/or Instructor’s response to the initial request.

By attending this class, you agree to the UNL student code of conduct (http://stuafs.unl.edu/dos/code). It is your responsibility to know what constitutes academic dishonesty. The penalty for the first act of academic dishonesty will be an automatic failing grade on the assignment or exam. A second offense will result in automatic failure of the entire course. Students committing academic dishonesty may also be subject to additional university disciplinary sanction.

I am committed to a learning environment that supports varied thoughts and perspectives and respects diverse backgrounds and identities. For further information regarding UNL policies in this regard, please visit http://www.unl.edu/equity/ or call (402) 472-2322. If you feel like your experiences outside of class are affecting your performance in class, please come and talk to me. I may be able to help find resources to support you.

In particular:

- Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) works with students to develop academic accommodations to meet their needs, including for mental health disabilities such as depression and anxiety. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide individualized accommodations to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with SSD which is located in 232 Canfield Administration (472-3787).

- UNL Sociology welcomes students from around the world and recognizes the unique perspectives international students bring to enrich the campus community. If your first language is not English and/or you are an international student, please come and talk to me about specific ways I can support you. For more information on campus-wide resources, visit https://isso.unl.edu/.

- This course affirms people of all gender expressions and gender identities. If you prefer to be called a different name than what is indicated on the class roster, please let me know. Feel free to correct me on your preferred gender pronoun. The closest gender-neutral bathroom to CBA is Love Library 449. See other gender-neutral bathrooms on campus at involved.unl.edu/unl-gender-neutral-bathrooms.

- If you are a parent or child’s primary guardian, please talk to me about extenuating circumstances that may require that you on occasion bring a (healthy) child to class with you. There is a lactation space in Love Library 415. More information is available at http://www.unl.edu/chancellor/policymemoranda/20090901-Lactation-Policy.
**Course Outline and Schedule #1:**

All readings should be completed before class on the week they are assigned. Assignments are due via Canvas or Revel at 10:29 most Mondays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading/Assignments/Exams</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1/8</td>
<td>What is Sociology?</td>
<td>Review Canvas, course syllabus, &amp; Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>1/10</td>
<td>Sociological Imagination</td>
<td>C.W. Mills Essay (via Canvas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1/12</td>
<td>Ch 1: Sociological Perspective</td>
<td>Ch. 1 (Discussion Post #1 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1/15</td>
<td>MLK DAY (no class)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>1/17</td>
<td>Ch 2: Culture</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1/19</td>
<td>Recitation # 1</td>
<td>Ch. 1 &amp; 2 (Revel Quizzes both chapters due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>1/22-24</td>
<td>Ch. 3 Socialization</td>
<td>Ch. 3 (Revel Quiz and Discussion Post #2 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>Recitation # 2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>1/29-31</td>
<td>Ch.4 Social Structure &amp; Interaction</td>
<td>Ch. 4 (Revel Quiz &amp; Discussion Post #3 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2/2</td>
<td>Recitation # 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>2/5-7</td>
<td>Ch. 5 Research Methods</td>
<td>Ch. 5 (Revel Quiz and Short Essay #1 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2/9</td>
<td>Recitation # 4 (Exam Review)</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 1 OPENS TOMORROW @1PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>Exam Day (No lecture)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>2/14</td>
<td>Ch. 10 Social Class</td>
<td>Ch. 10 (Revel Quiz due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2/16</td>
<td>Recitation # 5</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 1 ENDS TODAY @5PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>2/19-21</td>
<td>Ch. 11 Sex &amp; Gender</td>
<td>Ch. 11 (Revel Quiz and Discussion Post #4 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>2/23</td>
<td>Recitation # 6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>2/26-28</td>
<td>Ch. 12 Race &amp; Ethnicity</td>
<td>Ch. 12 (Revel Quiz and Discussion Post #5 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3/2</td>
<td>Recitation # 7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>3/5-7</td>
<td>Intersectionality</td>
<td>Peggy McIntosh Essay (via Canvas) (Short Essay #2 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3/9</td>
<td>Recitation # 8 (Exam Review)</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 2 OPENS TOMORROW @1PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>Exam Day (No lecture)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>3/14</td>
<td>Reading Empirical Research</td>
<td>Joseph DiGrazia article (via Canvas)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3/16</td>
<td>Recitation # 9</td>
<td><strong>EXAM 2 ENDS TODAY @5PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W/F</td>
<td>3/19-23</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>3/26-28</td>
<td>Ch. 6 Societies &amp; Social Networks</td>
<td>Ch. 6 (Revel Quiz and Discussion Post #6 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3/30</td>
<td>Recitation #10</td>
<td><strong>SA Draft due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>4/2-4</td>
<td>Ch. 8 Deviance &amp; Social Control</td>
<td>Ch. 8 (Revel Quiz and Discussion Post #7 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4/6</td>
<td>Recitation # 11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>4/9-11</td>
<td>Ch. 19 Health &amp; Medicine</td>
<td>Ch. 19 (Revel Quiz and Discussion Post #8 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4/13</td>
<td>Recitation # 12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>4/16-18</td>
<td>Ch. 17 Education</td>
<td>Ch. 17 (Revel Quiz and Short Essay #3 due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4/20</td>
<td>Recitation # 13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/W</td>
<td>4/23</td>
<td>Ch. 16 Family</td>
<td>Ch.16 (Revel Quiz due)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4/25</td>
<td>Ch. 16 Family</td>
<td><strong>SA Final due</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4/27</td>
<td>Recitation # 14 (Exam Review)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EXAM 3 OPENS MON 4/30 @8AM AND ENDS THURS 5/3 @10PM**

**Note:** Exam 1 (3 attempts); Exam 2 (2 attempts); Exams 3 (1 attempt)
### Course Outline and Schedule #2: (All assignments are due by 10:29am CST)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Portal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #1 <em>(required)</em></td>
<td>Jan. 12</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes: Chapter 1 &amp; 2</td>
<td>Jan. 19</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 3</td>
<td>Jan. 22</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #2</td>
<td>Jan. 22</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 4</td>
<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #3</td>
<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 5</td>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Essay #1</td>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXAM 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Feb. 10-16</strong></td>
<td><strong>Canvas @ Testing Ctr</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 10</td>
<td>Feb. 14</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 11</td>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #4</td>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 12</td>
<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #5</td>
<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Essay #2</td>
<td>Mar. 5</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXAM 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mar. 10-16</strong></td>
<td><strong>Canvas @ Testing Ctr</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 6</td>
<td>Mar. 26</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #6</td>
<td>Mar. 26</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft SA paper</td>
<td>Mar. 30</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 8</td>
<td>Apr. 2</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #7</td>
<td>Apr. 2</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 19</td>
<td>Apr. 9</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Post #8</td>
<td>Apr. 9</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 17</td>
<td>Apr. 16</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Essay #3</td>
<td>Apr. 16</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz: Chapter 16</td>
<td>Apr. 23</td>
<td>Revel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final SA Paper</td>
<td>Apr. 25</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXAM 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Apr. 30- May 3</strong></td>
<td><strong>Canvas @ Testing Ctr</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Be a Sociology Major

Sociology gives real-world skills that employers look for, including how to:
✓ Conduct research and analyze data
✓ Communicate skillfully
✓ Practice critical thinking
✓ View the United States and the world through a diverse and global perspective

Sociology is relevant for a wide range of careers, including:
➢ Human services: Counseling, advocacy, administration
➢ Criminal justice: Corrections, law enforcement, victims services
➢ Education: Teach (all levels), research, alumni relations
➢ Government: Statistics, demography, policy analysis, college
➢ Research: Data analyst, market research, BOSR
➢ Environment: Public policy, green-energy, non-profit
➢ Business: HR, management, sales, marketing, PR, computer science, networks
➢ Law: Logic, critical analysis, diverse perspective
➢ Medicine/Health: Sociology & medical training, MCAT, MPH
➢ Graduate school: Census, CDC, NSA, Colleges & Universities

A Sociology major includes:
• Individualized attention - personalized course and career advising
• Foundation Courses
  o Introduction to Sociology, Theory, & Methods
• Foci Areas or Eclectic Paths
  o Inequality, Family, Health, Research Methods, Crime & Deviance
• Electives
• Opportunities to work in a research lab & with researchers; see examples at https://www.facebook.com/unlsoc
• Opportunities to go to Sociology conferences and to be on the Sociology Undergraduate Advisory Board
• Community-based participatory research with local groups (e.g. through middle school afterschool programs)

Sociology is a flexible major/minor with opportunities for synergies with other disciplines:
▪ Combine with languages, math, computer science, global studies, etc.
▪ Earn money and practice research skills (USTARS, UCARE, REU – ask your advisor)
▪ Graduate with honors – do a senior thesis

Join our department and help us to do even more. Begin by meeting with Kara Brant, our advisor:
http://soc.unl.edu/kara-brant
How Do I Know If a Sociology Major Is Right For Me?
You Just Might Be a Sociologist If...

By Nicki Lisa Cole Updated September 04, 2015. Downloaded 8/16/2016 from:
http://sociology.about.com/od/Sociology101/fl/How-do-I-know-if-a-sociology-major-is-right-for-me.htm

“Is sociology the field for you too? If one or more of these statements describe you, then you just might be a sociologist.

1. You often find yourself asking why things are the way they are, or why traditions or “common sense” thinking persist when they don’t seem rational or practical.

2. People look at you like you’re nuts when you ask questions about the things that we typically take for granted, as if you’re asking a very stupid question, but to you it seems like a question that really needs to be asked.

3. People often tell you that you are “too critical” when you share your perspective on things like news stories, popular culture, or even the dynamics within your family. Maybe they sometimes tell you that you take things “too seriously” and need to “lighten up.”

4. You are fascinated by popular trends, and you wonder what makes them so appealing.

5. You frequently find yourself thinking about the consequences of trends.

6. You like talking to people about what is going on in their lives, what they think about the world and the issues that course through it.

7. You like digging into data to identify patterns.

8. You find yourself concerned or angry about society-wide problems like racism, sexism, and wealth inequality, and you wonder why these things persist, and what can be done to stop them.

9. It upsets you when people blame individual victims of crimes, discrimination, or those who suffer the burdens of inequality rather than seeing and blaming the forces that do the damage.

10. You believe that humans have the capacity to make meaningful, positive changes to our existing world.

If any of these statements describe you, then talk to a fellow student or professor at your school about majoring in sociology. We’d love to have you.” Can you add to this list?
Appendix B: Writing Assessment Instructions and Rubric

Discussion Posts
There are 8 scheduled opportunities to write discussion posts on Canvas to practice sociological thinking and respond to a question prompt—students must write a total of 6 that will be graded by recitation instructors for full points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Description of criterion</td>
<td>10.0 pts Full completion</td>
<td>10.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answered all parts of the question and clearly connected a sociological idea or concept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.0 pts Partial completion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did not answer all parts of the question and/or did not clearly connect a sociological idea or concept</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.0 pts Incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Did not complete assignment or make any attempt to answer the question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points: 10.0

Figure 9: Discussion Posts Grading Rubric, SOCI 101 Spring 2018
Short Essays

SOCI 101 Short Essays

Submission Requirements:
You must complete 2 out of 3 essays to receive full points toward your final grade. Your essay
must be handed in as a Word document (.doc or .docx) electronically in Canvas by the deadline
below. Your document will be assessed using “Turn It In” which checks for plagiarism.

You will find the question prompt for each essay
within the assignment in Canvas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#1</th>
<th>February 5</th>
<th>Material from Ch 1-5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Material from Ch 10-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>April 16</td>
<td>Material from Ch 8 &amp; 17</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Late Assignments will only be accepted with prior permission and for documented reasons
provided to the instructor before the due date.

Your essay should demonstrate your use of sociological theories and concepts derived from the
textbook. You must properly cite your textbook in APA format in the text of your paper using
parenthetical citations and at the end of the paper in a separate References section. Direct quotes
should be used minimally and selectively. If you do quote the textbook, you should include the
chapter and section instead of page numbers, for example: (Henslin 2017, 1.2).

Your paper does not need to include any citations other than the textbook. However, if you
choose to supplement your paper with other sources, please keep in mind the following: (1) You
will be graded on your ability to respond to the prompt based on the discussion presented in the
textbook; (2) You must properly cite any additional sources you use.

Formatting Instructions
✓ Times New Roman, 12 point font
✓ Double-spaced
✓ 1 – inch margins on all sides
✓ 300-500 words (not including a title or references)
✓ References should be formatted according to APA style
✓ Save and upload your paper as a WORD DOCUMENT (.doc or .docx file)

Please review the grading rubric in Canvas before you start to draft your
essay. If you have question, ask your instructor or schedule a free
appointment with The Writing Center.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment requirements  Does the essay meet requirements related to length and formatting?</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts  Meets all requirements, or has one insignificant error related to requirements</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts  Some errors related to length and formatting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts    Disregard for assignment requirements with significant errors related to formatting and length</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References and citations  Does the essay meet requirements related to references and in-text citations?</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts  Meets all requirements or includes 1 small error</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts  Some errors or inconsistencies related to citations and references</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts    Many significant errors related to citations and/or references missing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language / mechanics  What is the quality of writing and structure of the essay? This includes paragraph transitions, sentence flow, grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts  Writing includes clear topic sentences in each paragraph; smooth transitions between sentences and paragraphs and virtually no errors related to grammar, punctuation or spelling</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts  Room for improvement related to paragraph structure and transitions and/or some errors related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts    Significant problems with writing structure and mechanics; poorly organized paragraphs and sentences and/or many errors related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course objective 1  Does the essay explain the impact of social processes (social institutions, structures, culture groups) in answering the essay question?</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts  Clearly conveys with sophistication the significance and impact of social processes (as opposed to individual-level processes) in order to answer the essay question</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts  Uses sociological language but could strengthen claims to convey the significance of social processes (as opposed to individual-level processes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts    Lacks accurate description of the impact of social processes in relation to the essay question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objective 2  Does the essay correctly define and apply fundamental sociological theories or concepts?</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts  Incorporates at least one sociological concept or theory to answer the essay question with accurate and sophisticated definition and application. If only one concept or theory is used, it is describe with sufficient detail and complexity. If more than one concept or theory is used, it is clear how they connect to one another</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts  Uses at least one sociological concept or theory but could improve in the definition and application, by either making the concepts/theory more complex, more precise, or better connected to the essay question</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts    Does not incorporate sociological concepts or theories, or includes significantly inaccurate definitions and applications of them</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis statement  Does the essay offer a statement that clearly answers the essay question and that shapes the overall focus of the essay?</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts  Offers a clear and sophisticated thesis statement that directly answers the essay question and that guides the focus of the essay overall</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts  Thesis statement may be difficult to identify, or it may be indirectly related to the essay question, or unrelated to other parts of the essay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts    Does not include a thesis statement or includes one that is significantly unrelated to the rest of the essay or the question prompt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Points: 30.0

Figure 10: Short Essays Grading Rubric, SOCI 101 Spring 2018
SA Paper

SOC 101: Sociological Analysis (SA) Paper Instructions

**Submission Requirements:**
The SA draft and final must be handed in ELECTRONICALLY in Canvas by the deadline below. 
Your paper will be assessed using “Turn It In” which checks for plagiarism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Draft</th>
<th>10:29am Friday, March 30</th>
<th>Canvas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>10:29am Wednesday, April 25</td>
<td>Canvas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Late Assignments will only be accepted with prior permission and for documented reasons provided to the instructor before the due date.

If you fail to hand in a draft of your paper that is at least 3 full pages long (not including title page or references), your final SA Paper grade will automatically be reduced by 15%. If your draft contains plagiarism that reduces the length of the paper to below 3 pages, your final paper grade will be reduced by 15%.

To submit papers in Canvas, go to the Module ‘SA Paper’ then upload your paper to the appropriate assignment (for more information email your Recitation Instructor).

**Content Instructions:**

**PROMPT:** In the United States, rates of poverty have varied over time and are higher for some groups of people than others. Imagine that you are in charge of reducing rates of poverty. You must first provide an evidence-based argument of the key sociological explanations for differences in poverty rates. Because you have limited resources, you must then pick one key sociological explanation to justify an intervention to reduce poverty rates. Provide an evidence-based argument for why your intervention focus will have the greatest impact on lowering poverty.

Your answer to this prompt must show information from the following sources.

1. The movie: PBS Frontline’s *Poverty, Politics, and Profit* (available to stream on Canvas in the Week 11 module)
2. Information from THREE Henslin chapters.
3. The required article (that you must look up using a library database):
4. ONE of the following two articles (that you must look up using a library database):

Or

*IMPORTANT*: These articles will be challenging to read for many of you. Our goal is to show you the kind of original research that your textbook author summarizes in the book. Focus on reading the abstract, the introduction, the literature review, the discussion and conclusion and skim the findings, analysis, and methods sections.

Your paper should demonstrate your use of sociological theories and concepts derived from the text and the two original sociological articles (from above). Your paper does not need to include any citations other than these. However, if you choose to supplement your paper with other sources, please keep in mind the following: (1) You will be graded on your ability to respond to the prompt based on the above required sources; (2) You must properly cite any additional sources you use.

The structure of the paper should follow a standard format (e.g. introduction, body and conclusion). The majority of the paper will be a critical analysis of the content (video presentation, articles, and information from the textbook) from a sociological perspective as well as the use of the sociological imagination. With that in mind, here are some guiding questions to consider as you work on your paper:

a. What sociological theory/theories can be best applied to the narratives and points raised in the video?
b. What do the videos, articles, and chapters have in common in their depiction of the causes of poverty? Where do they diverge?
c. What evidence presented in the video, articles, and chapters do you find most compelling? Why?

References
Citations should be in APA style. You must cite all references in the text of your paper using parenthetical citations and at the end of the paper in a separate References page.

Your paper must have the following references: (1) PBS Frontline documentary (full citation below) (2) Henslin textbook, (3) Desmund (2012) article, and (4) one of the other two articles mentioned above. You are responsible for checking the formatting for all text sources. The APA citation for the video can be copied from below:


Direct quotes should be used minimally and selectively. If you do quote the textbook, you should include the chapter and section instead of page numbers, for example: (Henslin 2017, 1.2).

---

**Formatting Instructions**

✓ Times New Roman, 12 point font  
✓ Double-spaced  
✓ 1 – inch margins on all sides  
✓ 4-5 pages maximum in length (not including the cover page or reference page)  
✓ Cover page should include a title, your name, and the date  
✓ References should be formatted according to APA style
✓ Save and upload your paper as a WORD DOCUMENT (.doc or .docx file)

**Tips for Success:**

✓ We urge students to meet with their recitation instructor if they do not understand the feedback from the draft paper.
✓ Apart from your Recitation Instructors, please feel free to visit the UNL Writing Center for assistance in writing your paper.

Please visit the following web page for details on locations and hours.
http://www.unl.edu/writing/hours-locations
Students can sign up for appointments by visiting our online scheduling system at http://www.unl.edu/writing/about/contact

**Evaluation**

The paper is worth **100 points.** A portion of your grade will come from spelling, grammar, writing style, and overall organization of your ideas. The majority of the SA Paper grade will come from your ability to apply a sociological perspective to your understanding of the prompt.

A detailed grading rubric is available on Canvas in the MAP Module.

**Allocation of Points**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment formatting and length</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References and Citations (4; textbook, 2 articles listed, documentary)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-text citations</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References list</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language/Mechanics</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Objective 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain the impact of social processes</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Objective 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctly defines and applies sociological theories or concepts</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Course Objective 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correctly identifies patterns and causes of social inequality</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Ratings</th>
<th>Pts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment requirements</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts Meets all requirements, or has one insignificant error related to requirements</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the essay meet requirements related to length and formatting?</td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts Some errors related to length and formatting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts Disregard for assignment requirements with significant errors related to formatting and length</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-text citations</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts Meets all requirements or includes 1 small error</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the essay meet requirements related to in-text citations?</td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts Some errors or inconsistencies related to in-text citations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts Many significant errors related to citations and/or references missing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts Meets all requirements or includes 1 small error</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the essay meet requirements related to references at the end of the paper?</td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts Some errors or inconsistencies related to references</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts Many significant errors related to citations and/or references missing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organization and structure</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts Writing includes clear topic sentences in each paragraph; smooth transitions between sentences and paragraphs</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the quality of organization and structure of the essay? This includes paragraph transitions, sentence flow, and sentence construction.</td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts Room for improvement related to paragraph and sentence structure, transitions, and/or organization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts Significant problems with writing structure and mechanics; poorly organized paragraphs and sentences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar, punctuation, spelling</td>
<td>5.0 to &gt;3.0 pts virtually no errors related to grammar, punctuation or spelling</td>
<td>5.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the quality of writing? This includes grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td>3.0 to &gt;1.0 pts some errors related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.0 to &gt;0 pts many errors related to grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thesis</td>
<td>15.0 to &gt;12.0 pts Offers a clear and sophisticated thesis statement that directly answers all parts of the question prompt and that guides the focus of the essay overall</td>
<td>15.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the essay answer all parts of the question prompt? Is there a clear statement that presents the paper’s overall argument and that shapes the focus of the overall paper?</td>
<td>12.0 to &gt;9.0 pts Thesis statement is present but not all parts of the paper reflect its focus, or thesis statement addresses most but not all parts of the question prompts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.0 to &gt;5.0 pts Thesis statement may be difficult to identify, or may be only indirectly related to the paper’s questions, or unrelated to other parts of the paper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.0 to &gt;0 pts Does not include a thesis statement or includes one that is significantly unrelated to the rest of the paper or the question prompt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objective 1</td>
<td>20.0 to &gt;17.0 pts Clearly conveys with sophistication and drawing from multiple sources the significance and impact of social processes (as opposed to individual-level processes) in order to develop a comprehensive answer to the question prompts. Intervention identified clearly reflects social processes.</td>
<td>20.0 pts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the paper explain the impact of social processes (social institutions, structures, culture groups) in answering the question prompt?</td>
<td>17.0 to &gt;13.0 pts Uses sociological language but could strengthen claims to convey the significance of social processes especially in relation to intervention (identified as opposed to Individual-level processes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.0 to &gt;8.0 pts Inconsistently uses sociological language that largely overlooks significance of social processes, and/or does not address social processes in intervention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0 to &gt;0 pts No Marks Lacks accurate description of the impact of social processes in relation to the question prompts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Objective 2</td>
<td>Course Objective 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Does the paper correctly define and apply fundamental sociological theories or concepts?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Does the paper correctly identify patterns and causes of social inequality in the United States related to social class?</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0 to &gt;17.0 pts</td>
<td>20.0 to &gt;17.0 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporates at least sociological concepts or theories from 3 Henslin chapters and to answer the question prompts with accurate and sophisticated definition and application. In addition, there is clear connection between these concepts and the other sources required for the paper.</td>
<td>Clearly conveys with sophistication and drawing from multiple sources the patterns and causes of social inequality in order to develop a comprehensive answer to the question prompts. Intervention identified clearly reflects this sociological evidence.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.0 to &gt;13.0 pts</td>
<td>17.0 to &gt;13.0 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporates at least sociological concepts or theories from 3 Henslin chapters and to answer the question prompts with accurate and sophisticated definition and application. The connection between these concepts and theories and the other required sources could be stronger.</td>
<td>Uses sociological language drawing from multiple sources but could strengthen claims to convey the sociological patterns and causes of social inequality in relation to intervention identified (as opposed to individual-level processes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.0 to &gt;8.0 pts</td>
<td>13.0 to &gt;8.0 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporates at least one concept or theory from Henslin but could improve in definition and application.</td>
<td>Includes only a single source or explanation of social inequality and/or offers little sociological language to explain patterns and causes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.0 to &gt;0 pts</td>
<td>8.0 to &gt;0 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Marks</td>
<td>No Marks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses few or inaccurate definitions of concepts and theories and offers little to no connection between sources.</td>
<td>Lacks accurate description of the patterns and causes of social inequality in relation to the question prompts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0 pts</td>
<td>20.0 pts</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 11: SA Paper Grading Rubric, SOCI 101 Spring 2018**
Appendix C: Sample Exam Questions

The follow exam questions demonstrate course objective #1: Explain the impact of social processes (social institutions, social structure, culture, groups, etc.) on the lives of individuals, including yourself

Attempts: 51 out of 51

A criminal record can prevent a person from getting a job, house, and from other opportunities long after they have served a jail sentence. The long-term effects of a criminal record are an example of...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deviance Type</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informal Deviance</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stigma</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Relativity of Deviance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicalization of Deviance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Attempts: 80 out of 80

Fred and Morris are brothers. Fred has been married for 25 years. Morris has never been married, but he has been in a long-term relationship with the same woman for the past 27 years. Which of the following statements is most likely true?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fred and Morris can be expected to live the same amount of years.</td>
<td>11 respondents</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fred will likely outlive Morris.</td>
<td>42 respondents</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris will likely outlive Fred.</td>
<td>19 respondents</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morris will eventually marry his partner of 27 years.</td>
<td>8 respondents</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12: Sample exam questions for course objective 1, SOCI 101 Spring 2018

The follow exam questions demonstrate course objective #2: Define and apply fundamental sociological theories and concepts to human behavior

Attempts: 78 out of 78

John desires the best things in life – a fast car, designer clothes, and membership in exclusive clubs. But rather than work his way through the system, he has discovered he can have all these things by selling crack cocaine in the inner city. How would Merton classify John?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role</th>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Ritualist</td>
<td>4 respondents</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Anarchist</td>
<td>12 respondents</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A Rebel</td>
<td>24 respondents</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>An Innovator</td>
<td>38 respondents</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Edinboro University of Pennsylvania welcomes students in wheelchairs in all of their programs and has wheelchair programs in sports competitions. This university is engaging in _________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mainstreaming</th>
<th>Acculturation</th>
<th>Segregation</th>
<th>Leveling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>respondents</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

65% answered correctly

Figure 13: Sample exam questions for course objective 2, SOCI 101 Spring 2018

The following exam questions demonstrate course objective #3: Identify patterns and causes of social inequality in the United States related to social class, race and ethnicity, and gender.

The symbolic interactionist research by Rist demonstrated that kindergarten teachers assigned students to reading groups based upon social class, not intellectual capability. The students in the lower group _______________.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>respondents</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learned to read as the “high” group by the end of the year</td>
<td>5 respondents</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eventually showed their intellectual ability and were put in more appropriate groups</td>
<td>7 respondents</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued to be rated as “slow” for many years after and suffered from the effects of tracking</td>
<td>63 respondents</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenged the teacher and eventually obtained the American dream</td>
<td>3 respondents</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

81% answered correctly

Figure 14: Sample exam questions for course objective 3, SOCI 101 Spring 2018
Appendix D: Post-Exam Student Evaluation Questionnaire

The following questionnaire was sent electronically to students following their completion of each exam.

How would you characterize your attendance in lecture in these weeks leading up to this exam?
I never missed a lecture
I missed one or two lectures so far
I have missed several (3-5) lectures so far
I’ve missed many lectures (more than 5)

To what extent did lectures prepare you for the exam?
Completely
Mostly
Some
A little
Not at all

How would you characterize your reading practices for assigned readings up to this point? Do you read the chapter when it is assigned…
Always
Usually
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

How would you characterize your reading practices for assigned readings up to this point? Do you take notes when you read…
Always
Usually
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

To what extent did reading the textbook prepare you for the exam?
Completely
Mostly
Some
A little
Not at all
How many hours did you study for the exam?
0
1-2
3-4
5-6
More than 6

When attending lecture, it is clear to me how the lecture content connects to the broader theme of the week.
Usually
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

When attending lecture, it is easy for me to follow what the instructor is saying and talking about.
Usually
Sometimes
Rarely
Never

I have trouble spotting the clues in lecture that indicate information could be used in a likely test question.
Yes, definitely
Yes, sometimes
Not usually
Never

I have trouble spotting the clues in assigned readings that indicate information could be used in a likely test question.
Yes, definitely
Yes, sometimes
Not usually
Never

(Essay question) Please share any additional information you would like your instructor to know.