

SOC 497

Syllabus

Spring 2009

SENIOR SEMINAR

1:00-2:40 Mondays & Wednesdays

Faner 3410 and Various Sites in the “Real World”

Professor Rob Benford

rbenford@siu.edu

Faner 3426 & 3396

Office Hours: 9:30-11:30 & 2:45-4:45 Mon. & 9-11 Wed., or by appointment

453-7614

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Congratulations! Enrollment in this seminar indicates that you are nearing completion of your undergraduate studies in sociology. You will soon be embarking on a new stage in your life. As with any life course transition, ending one facet of your life and beginning a new one spawns anxiety, ambivalence, uncertainty, and excitement. One major uncertainty looming on the near horizon is what you’ll do next. More specifically, you have no doubt wondered, “What will I do with my sociology degree?” That’s where this capstone course comes in.

I designed this course to help you envision the range of ways you might put your sociological training to good use. More specifically, the goals of this course are to:

1. enhance your sociological imagination;
2. identify various venues, including careers, where you can apply sociology on a daily basis;
3. encourage you to apply your sociological knowledge, skills, and imagination to the “real world;”
4. stimulate thinking and discussion about ways to put your sociological knowledge, skills, and ideas to good use, that is toward making the world a better place; and
5. facilitate your transition from being a sociology major to being a practicing sociologist.

The course requirements, which include readings, seminar discussions, maintaining a journal, a research practicum, assignments, and a final paper, have been devised so as to maximize the likelihood that you will complete this course with a better sense of what you can do with your sociology degree.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Required Reading:

Korgen, Kathleen and Jonathan M. White. 2007. *The Engaged Sociologist: Connecting the Classroom to the Community*. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Langston, Phyllis Ann and Dianne Anderson Kammerer. 2005. *Practicing Sociology in the Community: A Student’s Guide*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Stephens, W. Richard, Jr. 2004. *Careers in Sociology*, 3rd Ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

Lectures, seminar discussions, guest speakers, assignments, your research practicum, and readings are organized so as to complement and supplement each other. You are therefore

expected to remain current with the reading schedule (outlined on pages 5-6) in order to maximize your benefits from and contributions to the course.

2. Seminar Participation: The vitality of any course depends on student questions, comments, and discussions. Since this course will be conducted in a seminar format, it is essential that all voices be heard. (10% of grade)

3. Research Practicum: For a period of 10 weeks, beginning February 4 and ending April 19, you will be required to spend 2 hours per week in the field either engaging in participatory action research by volunteering for a community organization. You must select a single organization as the site for your research practicum. You may select one of the following types of organizations: a social service agency, a government agency, a voluntary association, a social movement organization, or a registered student organization. I will provide you with a list of potential sites. (15%)

4. Journal: You will be required to keep a journal in which you record your sociological observations, ideas, and experiences related to your research practicum. Personal and critical reflections are encouraged. (20%)

5. Assignments: Considerable emphasis will be placed on learning by doing. You will be required to complete 5 challenging but enjoyable assignments. (20%)

6. Oral Presentation: The last two weeks of the course have been set aside for you and your fellow students to present your research practicum experiences, observations, and recommendations. (15%)

7. Term Paper: You will be required to prepare a term paper (10-12 double-spaced, typed pages) based on your research practicum. Details regarding the paper will be distributed by the 3rd week of the course. A draft of your paper is due at the beginning of class on April 13. I will provide you with written comments on your draft on the day you present your findings to the class. Your final draft is due one week after your presentation. One letter grade will be deducted from the paper's grade for each day it is late. (20%)

GRADING

<u>Category</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Scale</u>
Seminar Participation	100	900-1000 = A
Assignments (40 points each)	200	800-899 = B
Journals (20 points each)	200	700-799 = C
Practicum	150	600-699 = D
Presentation	150	0-599 = F
Term Paper	<u>200</u>	
Total	1000	

IMPORTANT POLICIES

1. Make-Up/Late Policy: Grades on term papers, journals, and assignments will be reduced by 10% per calendar day you submit them late. When you know in advance that you will be missing a seminar meeting, it is your responsibility to find out what you will be missing and to make arrangements accordingly. Should you miss unexpectedly, find out what you missed.

2. Academic Dishonesty: We welcome you to this classroom community with the assumption that the work you do will be your own. However, distinguishing your work from the work of another can be tricky at times, for both you and your instructor. You should know that presenting another's work as your own, even if by accident, is a serious violation of the Student Conduct Code. The *Student Conduct Code* identifies the following as acts of academic dishonesty: "Plagiarism, representing the work of another as one's own work; preparing work for another that is to be used as that person's own work; cheating by any method or means; ...soliciting, aiding, abetting, concealing, or attempting conduct in violation of this code" (p. 18). Whether quoting or paraphrasing (or even summarizing) someone else's work, you should cite your sources; failure to do so constitutes an act of plagiarism. This policy applies to papers and speeches. Buying a paper online, copying text from several web sites, and turning in someone else's paper (even with a few words changed) are all examples of plagiarism when you claim such work as your own. (Note: As services selling such papers have increased in number, so have services that track plagiarism using sources from the internet.) All SIUC policies regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty will be upheld in this course. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be investigated following Article V of the *Student Conduct Code*; if plagiarism is substantiated, the perpetrator may face failing the assignment, failing the course, disciplinary censure, and/or suspension from the university, depending on the details of the case (see Article III of the *Student Conduct Code*). When in doubt, cite where the information is coming from. If you are uncertain whether you are citing sources sufficiently and appropriately enough to avoid plagiarism, please consult your instructor or a tutor at the Writing Center.

3. Grade Appeals: Any student who believes that she or he has been graded unfairly may appeal that grade following standard university procedures. Certain procedural rights are guaranteed to all students charged with academic dishonesty who are subject to disciplinary action. These rights are outlined in the *Student Conduct Code*.

4. Professional Comportment: You are expected to act in a professional manner throughout your research practicum. Please familiarize yourself with the American Sociological Association's *Code of Ethics* (<http://www.asanet.org/members/ecoderev.html>), and follow it carefully as you interact with people in the field.

5. Extra Credit: You may earn extra credit by bringing a current event to class and leading a brief discussion regarding the sociological significance and/or implications of the event. (10 extra points per current event presented up to a maximum of three.)

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT TRANSCRIPT

I have made arrangements with SIUC Student Development Office's Saluki Volunteer Corps program for your research practicum hours to be counted on your Student Involvement Transcript. Students who complete a total of 30 or more service hours in an academic year receive a notation on their SIUC transcript. When you are ready to graduate, you can request a Student Involvement Transcript listing all your service, leadership experience, and organizational involvement. It's a great addition to your résumé! Studies have shown that employers prefer to hire students with experiences in out-of-classroom activities over those who focused only in class. (www.stddev.siu.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=57)

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on the BERT'S website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Public Safety's website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down), and in the Emergency Response Guidelines pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. **It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency.** The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Reading/Assignments</u>
Jan. 12	Sparking the Sociological Imagination via Immersion	
" 14	Core Values	Korgen & White: Preface & Ch.1 <i>Assignment 1 (What Matters to You) Due</i>
" 21	Liberation Sociology	Langston & Kammerer: Ch. 1 Korgen & White: Ch. 2 Guest Speaker: Mythili Rundblad, Coordinator Saluki Volunteer Corps
" 26	Practicing Sociology	Langston & Kammerer: Ch. 2 Korgen & White: Ch. 3
" 28	Exploring Community Cultures	Langston & Kammerer: Ch. 3 Korgen & White: Ch. 4 <i>Assignment 2 (Description of Organization) Due</i>
Feb. 2	Doing Field Research	Langston & Kammerer: Ch. 4 & 5
" 4	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 9	Social Institutions	Korgen & White: Chs. 5, 6, & 7 <i>Journal 1 Due (Getting In)</i> <i>Assignment 3 (Social Issues) Due</i>
" 11	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 16	Sociologist as Activist	Korgen & White: Ch. 8 <i>Journal 2 (First Impressions) Due</i>
" 18	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 23	Engaging in Social Justice	Langston & Kammerer: Ch. 6 Korgen & White: Ch. 9 <i>Journal 3 Due</i>
" 25	Research Practicum (No Class)	

Mar. 2	Sex, Gender, & Power	Korgen & White: Ch. 10 <i>Journal 4 Due</i>
" 4	Research Practicum (No Class)	
Mar. 16	Race & Ethnicity	Korgen & White: Ch. 11 <i>Journal 5 Due</i> <i>Assignment 4 (Assessing Diversity) Due</i>
" 18	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 23	Whose Environment? Environmental Justice Movement	Korgen & White: Ch. 12 <i>Journal 6 Due</i>
" 25	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 30	Sociology in the Global Community	<i>Journal 7 Due</i> <i>Assign. 5 (Prelim. Organizational Assessment) Due</i>
Apr. 1	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 6	Graduate School Opportunities	Guest Speakers: Stacia Creek & Stephen Hagan SIUC Sociology Alumni & Doctoral Candidates <i>Journal 8 Due</i>
" 8	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 13	Careers in Sociology	Guest Speaker: Cindy Jenkins, Assistant Director, SIUC's Career Services <i>Journal 9 Due</i> Stephens (choose any 3 careers discussed) DRAFT of PAPERS DUE
" 15	Research Practicum (No Class)	
" 20	Student Presentations	<i>Journal 10 Due (Evaluation see p. 74 of L&K)</i>
" 22	Student Presentations	
" 27	Student Presentations	
" 29	Liberation & Course Evaluation	
Apr. 27-May 4	FINAL DRAFT of PAPERS DUE 1 WEEK AFTER PRESENTATION	