

SOC6811: Seminar in Teaching

Winter 2022

Instructor

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Email

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Class Meetings

Thursdays
2:00-4:00 pm
Room 385

Class is currently planned to meet in person, unless public health conditions change.

The classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy.

-bell hooks

Course Overview

Becoming effective teachers of sociology is both an art and a science. It requires us to combine evidence-based practices, pedagogical theory, reflective work, and creativity as we establish our personal teaching philosophies and bring them to life in the classroom. This seminar is designed to help you through this process, whether you already have experience teaching or have never stood in front of a classroom before. We will come together collaboratively as a learning community to discuss, debate, and share feedback.

The seminar covers four primary areas: 1) pedagogical theory, with an emphasis on critical pedagogies, 2) course design, 3) student engagement, and 4) articulating your teaching philosophy and experiences to others. Those who successfully complete the course will have engaged in (virtual) classroom observations, developed a course syllabus with at least one accompanying sample assignment, received feedback on a teaching demonstration, and prepared a teaching dossier including a statement of teaching philosophy.

Required Texts

All readings for the course will be available online and posted on Quercus.

CR/NC

This course is offered solely as CR/NC. In order to earn credit for the course, you must regularly attend and participate in our weekly meetings and complete all of the assignments. I will record our sessions for those who are in time zones that make it difficult to attend and for those who may have to miss a session due to illness or other personal circumstances. If you will not be able to attend regularly in real-time, speak to me about setting up an alternative for participating in class discussions.

Individual Consultations

I am happy to set up individual meetings with you to discuss your work or teaching in general. We can meet either in person or on Zoom/Teams.

Course Schedule

January 13 Introductions and Overview

Thinking about teaching exemplars and setting goals for the semester

January 20 Philosophies & Identities

Who are we (or who are we going to be) as teachers? What values and pedagogies shape our practices? Why is identifying these factors crucial to our teaching and our professional development?

Berg, Maggie, and Barbara Karolina Seeber. 2016. "Pedagogy and Pleasure." Chapter 2 in *The Slow Professor: Challenging the Culture of Speed in the Academy*. University of Toronto Press, 2016.

Freire, Paulo. 1997. Chapter 2 in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.

Gannon, Kevin M. 2020. "Classrooms of Death" and "Cultivating Transformative Teaching." Chapters 1 (pp. 9-27) and 3 (pp. 39-51) in *Radical Hope: A Teaching Manifesto*. West Virginia University Press.

hooks, bell. 1994. "Engaged Pedagogy." Chapter 1 in *Teaching to Transgress*. Routledge.

hooks, bell. 2003. "Heart to Heart: Teaching with Love." Chapter 11 in *Teaching Community: A Pedagogy of Hope*. Routledge.

Palmer, Parker J.. 1997. "The Heart of a Teacher: Identity and Integrity in Teaching." Chapter 1 in *The Courage to Teach: Exploring the Inner Landscape of a Teacher's Life*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons.

January 27 Supporting our Students

How do our relationships with students shape their learning? What ethical and power issues do we need to consider? How do we support student well-being, including ensuring equity in all of its forms? Why is trauma-informed teaching important especially during a pandemic?

Bain, Ken. 2004. "How Do They Treat Their Students?" Chapter 6 in *What do the Best College Teachers Do?* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gannon, Kevin. 2020. "The Things We Tell Our Students" and "Teaching and Learning Inclusively." Chapters 2 and 4 in *Radical Hope: A Teaching Manifesto*. West Virginia University Press.

Rose, Ellen and Catherine Adams. 2014. "'Will I ever connect with the students?': Online Teaching and the Pedagogy of Care." *Phenomenology & Practice* 7(2): 5-16.

Schwartz, Harriet. 2019. "What Is Connected Teaching?" Chapter 1 in *Connected Teaching: Relationship, Power, and Mattering in Higher Education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

Whynacht, Ardath, Emily Arsenault, and Rachael Cooney. 2018. "Abolitionist Pedagogy in the Neoliberal University: Notes on Trauma-Informed Practice, Collaboration, and Confronting the Impossible." *Social Justice*. 45(4): 141-162.

February 3 The Science of Learning

What evidence-based knowledge exists about the ways that people learn? How can we translate this knowledge into our teaching practices? How can sharing this knowledge with our students enhance their learning?

Sousa, David A. 2012. "How Science Met Pedagogy." Chapter 1 in *Mind, Brain, and Education : Neuroscience Implications for the Classroom*. Solution Tree.

Cavanagh, Sarah Rose. 2016. "The Well-Spring: Emotions Enhance Learning." Chapter 2 in *The Spark of Learning: Energizing the College Classroom with the Science of Emotion*. West Virginia University Press.

Barkley, Elizabeth F.. 2018. "Lectures vs. Active Learning: Reframing the Debate" and "Integrating Lectures and Active Learning." Chapters 1 and 2 in *Interactive Lecturing: A Handbook for College Faculty*. John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Harrington, Christine and Todd Zakrajsek. 2017. "The Lecture as a Teaching Strategy" and "Types of Lectures." Chapters 1 and 2 in *Dynamic Lecturing: Research-Based Strategies to Enhance Lecture Effectiveness*. Virginia: Stylus Publishing.

February 10 Structuring a Course

Due: Brief course description

How do we move from setting course goals to establishing concrete expectations, setting schedules, and choosing instructional materials? How does our teaching context shape our choices?

Atkinson, Maxine P. and Kathleen S Lowney. 2016. "Learning Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes," "Syllabus Construction," and "How Much Content to Cover." Pp. 3-29 in *In the Trenches: Teaching and Learning Sociology*. New York: Norton.

Nilson, Linda B. 2010. "Understanding Your Students and How They Learn," "Outcomes Centered Course Design" and "The Complete Syllabus." Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in *Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*. Wiley.

Davis, Barbara Gross. 1993. "Preparing or Revising a Course" and "The Course Syllabus." Section 1.1 and 1.2 in *Tools for Teaching*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

February 17 Instructional Techniques

Due: Report on teaching observation

How do we choose techniques that are a good match for our courses? How do our teaching contexts impact our choices? How can we use technology to support student learning?

Pike, Diane L., et. al. 2017. *The Sociology Major in the Changing Landscape of Higher Education: Curriculum, Careers, and Online Learning*. Washington, DC: American Sociological Association.

- Focus in particular on Table 1 (p. 23) and "The Sociological Literacy Framework" (pp. 52-61)
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Nilson, Linda B.. 2010. "Matching Teaching Methods with Learning Outcomes." Chapter 11 in *Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*, Wiley.

- Skim the headings of chapters 12-22 to get a sense the teaching methods available. Choose at least one additional chapter (besides chapter 11) to read more closely.

February 24 Reading Week

No Class

March 3 Assessments

How do we choose assessments that match our course goals and contexts? What are best practices for marking and providing feedback? How do we address issues of academic integrity?

Nilson, Linda B. 2010. "Assessing Student Learning in Progress," "Constructing Summative Assessments," "Preparing Students for Tests," and "Grading Summative Assessments." Chapters 28-31 in *Teaching at Its Best: A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*. Wiley.

March 10 Writing & Critical Thinking

Due: Annotated Assessment

What are strategies for teaching writing and critical thinking, particularly in the discipline of sociology? Why does it matter?

Atkinson, Maxine P. and Kathleen S. Lowney. 2016. "The Importance of Writing for Learning" and "Critical Thinking." Chapters 8 and 10 in *In the Trenches: Teaching and Learning Sociology*. New York: Norton.

Roberts, Keith A. 1993. "Toward a Sociology of Writing." *Teaching Sociology* 21(4): 317-24.

Mannon, Susan E., and Eileen K. Camfield. 2019. "Sociology Students as Storytellers: What Narrative Sociology and C. Wright Mills Can Teach Us about Writing in the Discipline." *Teaching Sociology* 47(3): 177-90.

Nilson, Linda B.. 2010. "Writing to Learn Activities," "Getting Students to Do the Readings," and "Teaching Students to Think & Write in Your Discipline." Chapters 17, 23, and 24 in *Teaching at Its Best : A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*, Wiley.

Barkley, Elizabeth F.. 2009. "Analysis and Critical Thinking." Chapter 13 in *Student Engagement Techniques : A Handbook for College Faculty*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

March 17 Progress Reports on Course Design

More details will be provided at a later date.

March 24 Challenges & Heartbreaks

How do we manage the inevitable challenges and heartbreaks that we will face – including microaggressions, difficult students, poor (and/or unfair) teaching evaluations, classroom management issues, and making difficult decisions.

Atkinson, Maxine P. and Kathleen S Lowney. 2016. “Teaching Failures” Chapter 12 in *In the Trenches: Teaching and Learning Sociology*. New York: Norton.

Nilson, Linda B.. 2010. “Preventing and Responding to Classroom Incivility” and “Preserving Academic Integrity.” Chapters 9 and 10 in *Teaching at Its Best : A Research-Based Resource for College Instructors*, Wiley.

Schwartz, Harriet. 2019. “Disappointment and Failure: When Teaching Almost Breaks Your Heart.” Chapter 8 in *Connected Teaching: Relationship, Power, and Mattering in Higher Education*. Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing.

March 31 Teaching in Academia Due: Teaching demonstration recording and reflection

What does the academic teaching landscape look like? How can you ensure your continued professional development? How can you participate in the Scholarship of Teaching & Learning?

Vick, Julia Miller, Jennifer S. Furlong, and Rosanne Lurie. 2016. “Structure of Academic Careers,” “Hiring from the Institution’s Point of View,” and “Becoming a Job Candidate: The Timetable for Your Search.” Chapters 1, 2, and 3 in *The Academic Job Search Handbook*. University of Pennsylvania Press.

Links on academic job searching, institutional classifications, salaries, and teaching stream positions:

- <https://career.berkeley.edu/PhDs/PhDhiring>
- <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/resources-for-graduate-students/academic-careers/conduct-effective-academic-job-search>
- <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/sites/default/files/2020-11/Senior%20Admin%20Org%20Chart%202020-2021.pdf>
- <https://www.asanet.org/research-and-publications/research-sociology/trends/average-salary-full-time-sociology-faculty-members-four-year-colleges-and-universities-rank>
- https://carnegieclassifications.iu.edu/classification_descriptions/basic.php
- <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/features/feature-article/five-teaching-stream-professors-tell-stories/>

Other recommended books:

Rockquemore, Kerry., and Tracey A. Laszloffy. 2008. *The Black Academic’s Guide to Winning Tenure Without Losing Your Soul*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

Mack, Dwayne, Elwood Watson, Michelle Madsen Camacho, and Hector Y. Adames. 2015. *Beginning a Career in Academia : a Guide for Graduate Students of Color* . New York, New York: Routledge.

April 7 TBA Due: Annotated Course Outline

Assignment Schedule

Due **Assignment**

Jan 27 **Teaching Philosophy Draft**

When I say "draft" -- I really mean *draft*. **Resist futile attempts at perfection.** :-)

That said, your individual levels of experience and individual needs will influence what that looks like. If you've never begun writing a teaching philosophy, get as far as you are able to get. If that's a full draft, great. If you get parts of it finished but you're stuck on how to attack other parts -- give me what you've got and let me know what's challenging. At a minimum, submit an outline of what you're planning to cover, what kinds of examples you're going to provide, etc.

If you are someone who already has a fully written teaching philosophy, go ahead and submit it. Feel free to ask specific questions about what you'd like feedback on - otherwise I will give you my general assessment.

Please use the resources that I've posted for you in Quercus which explain what a teaching philosophy should include, offer exercises to complete as you gather your thoughts, and provide examples.

Aim for about 2-5 pages single spaced. I will give you feedback to incorporate into your teaching dossier that will be submitted at the end of the course.

Feb 10 **Brief Course Description**

Provide a title and a brief, informal description (1-2 paragraphs) about your proposed content. Things to consider:

- Size/format of class (large lecture, seminar, etc.)
 - Key questions that your course will address
 - Teaching approach (discussion based, interactive lecture, lab, etc.)
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March 17 Annotated Sample Assignment

Create a summative assessment for the course that you are designing. It can take any of the following forms: Major writing assignment (essay, literature review, research paper), exam (if choosing this one, please do a mixture of question types), group project, presentation, or other creative assessment format.

Write up the instructions as you would provide them to students in your class. Be sure that you include:

- Assignment objective
- All necessary logistical details (% of grade, format to use, where to submit, extension policy, etc.)
- Detailed instructions on how to complete the assignment
- Rubric or other descriptive information about how it will be assessed
- Links to any recommended resources
- Pay attention to making the document easily readable -- headings, bolding, lists, etc. are things students find helpful.

Annotate your assignment to show me your thought processes and reflections as you made choices. See Quercus for a sample. Specifically:

- Include a paragraph written to me that explains generally why you are choosing this type of assessment for your course and what kind of preparation students will be given relevant to the assessment. This can be informal in tone and you don't need to include formal citations.
- Supplement that paragraph with more specific annotations within your set of instructions that explain particular choices you are making due to pedagogical considerations.
 - You can make the annotations either as comments or you can insert text below an item that you are commenting on. (If you're doing the latter, please use bold or italic to flag that it is your commentary.)
 - You do not have to annotate everything (e.g., I don't need a justification for why you are requiring 12-point font or double-spaced papers :-). Focus on bigger kinds of questions.

I'm looking to see evidence that you are engaging with our readings and conversations and approaching your course design with pedagogy and evidence-based practices in mind.

March 31 Recorded Teaching Demonstration and Reflection

Record yourself doing a teaching demonstration of about 20 minutes. You can do this in a variety of ways:

- If you are currently leading a tutorial as a teaching assistant, you can request permission from the instructor and the students in the tutorial to record a session.
- I have space for some brief guest lectures in SOCA03 (online). If you are interested, let me know as soon as possible.
- Otherwise, you can record yourself without an audience.

Watch your teaching demo yourself, even though this may feel very uncomfortable. Then write a brief, informal self-reflection. Think of this as an example of a teaching journal entry -- a useful tool that many of us use as part of our regular practice to reflect on our teaching practices and pedagogies. Possible things to discuss:

- Were there things you would do differently next time?
- What were you particularly happy/unhappy about?
- What challenges did you face in putting it together?
- Have you made any realizations about teaching in this process?
- Or whatever else is meaningful to you

April 7 Annotated Course Outline

Please submit a complete course outline (syllabus) for the course that you've been creating this semester. This should be as close as possible to what you would distribute to students before the first day of class. Remember to look back to the readings and resources in the module on structuring a course to be sure you are including all necessary information in your syllabus.

Include a paragraph written to me that explains your general approach to creating the course and rationale behind its structure. This can be informal in tone and you don't need to include formal citations.

Supplement that paragraph with more specific annotations within your syllabus that explain particular choices you are making due to pedagogical considerations. You do not have to annotate everything. Focus on bigger kinds of questions.

April 30 Teaching Dossier / Portfolio

In preparation for putting your portfolio together, please see examples and resources provided on Quercus. Your finished portfolio should include:

- CV
- Teaching philosophy (revised taking into account my comments)
- Teaching experience
 - list of courses taught (and TA'd) – including those not at U of T
 - Any undergraduate advising or extra-curricular activities
 - Any teaching outside of the university context
- Evidence of Teaching Effectiveness
 - Contextualizing statement for any available evaluations
 - Quantitative evaluation summary (best presented in a table)
 - Narrative summary of qualitative responses
 - If you don't yet have any evals, look at the FAQ for grad students on this in the U of T guide on Quercus and indicate what alternatives you would use.
- Leadership in Teaching – Optional
 - This is unusual at your stage in the program, but I those who taught previously may have relevant experience. Look at the list on page 29 of the U of T handbook.
- Evidence of Professional Development
 - A list of anything you've done to advance your teaching -- workshops, TATP training, CTSI, our course, conference sessions, etc.
 - A statement of how this training helped to you become a more effective teacher.
 - Plans for what kinds of training/prof development you want to pursue in the future
- Appendix -- see page 34 of the U of T guide for how to label and introduce:
 - at least one sample syllabus (it's okay if you haven't yet taught it)
 - at least one sample summative assessment with associated rubric
 - Selected set(s) of qualitative evaluations if available. Include all comments from a given class and be specific that you are including all of them. You can contextualize criticisms in your context statement above.
 - Any available external assessments from peers or faculty.
 - If you've received a non-official communication from a student about your teaching, you can include it with the student's permission and using anonymization. Only include it when it is very specific and speaks to your effectiveness.
 - Copies of teaching-related awards or certificates of completion for trainings
 - Copies of conference presentations or articles on teaching

Guidelines and Policies

Learning, Discomfort, and Trauma

By its nature, learning is often uncomfortable. We will sometimes cover controversial topics. We will disagree sometimes. We will have emotions. That's all okay. I ask you to join me in creating a space where we do so respectfully without attacking or insulting individuals.

I also ask you to approach our class as a space for curiosity and inquiry. It can be easy to slip into the role of critic, pointing out all of the flaws in an argument or method to the exclusion of any possible merits. Try to approach the readings and discussions with an eye toward understanding where ideas are coming from and what possible strengths are, in addition to your critiques.

Some of you may be recovering from traumas and find certain material triggering beyond the typical discomfort associated with learning. I try to announce when content might include such triggers, but I'm imperfect and I can't predict all of them. Feel free to step away from sessions if necessary or speak to me if you have any concerns. If you are experiencing trauma currently, please take advantage of the resources available through U of T or in the wider community. At U of T, you can access resources for graduate students here: <https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/graduate-wellness-services-at-sgs/>

Extensions

Life sometimes throws unexpected curve balls, especially in the midst of a pandemic. If you need an extension, just communicate with me and I will try to be as flexible as possible.

Accessibility

Diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the accessibility office (<https://www.sgs.utoronto.ca/resources-supports/resources-support-accessibility/>) as soon as possible.

Code of Student Conduct

Offenses under the Code of Student Conduct include: Sexual assault, or threats of sexual assault; Assault, threats of assault or bodily harm; Creating a condition which unnecessarily endangers the health or safety of other persons; Damage or threats of damage to personal property; Unauthorized entry or presence; Unauthorized use of University facilities, equipment or services; Bringing a false Code charge against another student; Aiding in the commission of an offence; Refusal to comply with sanctions; Unauthorized possession or use of firearms or ammunition; Stalking; Discriminatory harassment; and disturbances that obstruct an activity organized by the University or by any of its divisions, or the right of other members of the University to carry on their legitimate activities, to speak or to associate with others.

Religious Accommodations

If you anticipate a conflict due to a religious observance, please let me know as early in the course as possible, and with sufficient notice, so that we can work together to make alternate arrangements.

Academic Integrity

Copying, plagiarizing, falsifying medical certificates, or other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Any student caught engaging in such activities will be referred to the Dean's office for adjudication. Any student abetting or otherwise assisting in such misconduct will also be subject to academic penalties. Students are expected to cite sources in all written work and presentations. See this link for tips for how to use sources well: (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>).

According to Section B.I.1.(e) of the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters it is an offence "to submit, without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has

previously been obtained or is being sought in another course or program of study in the University or elsewhere.” By enrolling in this course, you agree to abide by the university’s rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar. You are expected to be familiar with the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/The-rules/code/the-code-of-behaviour-on-academic-matters>) and Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/codeofstudentconduct.htm>) which spell out your rights, your duties and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offences at the University of Toronto.

All of your submitted assignments will automatically be run through a new plagiarism detection tool, Ouriginal, for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. (Ouriginal replaces Turnitin.) In doing so, you will allow your assignments to be included as source documents in the Ouriginal reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Ouriginal service are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation website: <https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>

Accessibility Services

It is the University of Toronto’s goal to create a community that is inclusive of all persons and treats all members of the community in an equitable manner. In creating such a community, the University aims to foster a climate of understanding and mutual respect for the dignity and worth of all persons. Please see the University of Toronto Governing Council “[Statement of Commitment Regarding Persons with Disabilities](https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/statement-commitment-regarding-persons-disabilities-february-25-2021)” at <https://governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/secretariat/policies/statement-commitment-regarding-persons-disabilities-february-25-2021>.

In working toward this goal, the University will strive to provide support for, and facilitate the accommodation of individuals with disabilities so that all may share the same level of access to opportunities, participate in the full range of activities that the University offers, and achieve their full potential as members of the University community. We take seriously our obligation to make this course as welcoming and accessible as feasible for students with diverse needs. We also understand that disabilities can change over time and will do our best to accommodate you.

Students seeking support must have an intake interview with a disability advisor to discuss their individual needs. In many instances it is easier to arrange certain accommodations with more advance notice, so we strongly encourage you to act as quickly as possible. To schedule a registration appointment with a disability advisor, please visit Accessibility Services at <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>, call at 416-978-8060, or email at: accessibility.services@utoronto.ca. The office is located at 455 Spadina Avenue, 4th Floor, Suite 400.

Additional student resources for distressed or emergency situations can be located at distressedstudent.utoronto.ca; Health & Wellness Centre, 416-978-8030, <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>, or Student Crisis Response, 416-946-7111.

Equity and Diversity Statement

All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect. It is our collective responsibility to create a space that is inclusive and welcomes discussion. Discrimination, harassment and hate speech will not be tolerated; please alert me to any behaviour that undermines the dignity or self-esteem of any person in this course or otherwise creates an intimidating or hostile environment. You’ll find additional information and reports on Equity and Diversity at the University of Toronto online at <http://equity.hrandequity.utoronto.ca>.