Teaching Portfolio

Tracy E. Ore. Ph.D.

Saint Cloud State University
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Teaching Philosophy

Tracy E. Ore
Saint Cloud State University

My approach to teaching involves a critical perspective, utilizing methods that foster accessibility of the educational process and that engage students to be agents in their learning process. This involves the development of effective teaching pedagogy as well as research into the conditions that best promote student learning. Through this research as well as my experiences in the classroom I have come to understand that learning is only meaningful when there is a transformation in the student, not through simply learning new concepts and ideas. I attempt to bring about this change through my own passion as an educator and by employing a teaching pedagogy that involves active participation of the student.

Perhaps the most important element of my approach to teaching is critical thinking. In essence, I expect students to always challenge the material, others, and themselves. A critical focus of sociology requires students to closely examine how the social structure has affected their values, attitudes, and behaviors. When teaching, my object is not to negate the students’ belief systems and provide them with a new one, but rather to provide them with an environment which allows them to think critically about the attitudes and opinions they have been given. By doing so, I expect that they will develop a belief system that they can claim as their own.

It is important that students be able to relate what often can be very abstract concepts or distant ideas to their own lives. As a result, my approach to teaching incorporates introducing students to areas and issues of importance to the field of sociology, providing a very essential “map” to the sociological world. This map is coupled with a variety of pedagogical tools in an effort to make the material personal, relevant, educational, and engaging. Thus, the student is provided with a classroom experience that is useful to them in both future careers as well as in their general lives.

Finally, as an educator and a sociologist I have a strong commitment to praxis and social justice. Thus, I see my role not only to foster students’ understanding of social inequality but also to desire to transform those conditions. As a result, in order to be an effective educator, I carefully consider how the material I present to my students can be useful to them in understanding how to bring about positive change for conditions of social inequality.
In the coming weeks, you will find that this course relies heavily on communication. This syllabus is provided to you as a means of beginning and facilitating this process. In the following pages, I share some of the bases for my teaching philosophy as well as my expectations of you in this course. Please be sure to read this over very carefully.

In general, sociology is the study of groups within society. While this course is intended to give you an introduction to various concepts in sociology, we will be doing more than making ourselves aware of how sociologists study our world. Rather, we will be spending a great deal of time using sociological tools to analyze and critique the various ways that we see ourselves as well as the way we see others. The concepts and issues to be examined this semester are not concrete or factual. As a result, it will be our task not only to learn specific information or concepts but also to learn to think critically about the determinants of social behavior.

Each of us brings to this class a collection of socialization experiences gathered over our lifetimes. We have been taught the appropriate behavior for ourselves according to our place in society. This has had an effect on our lives that we often don’t examine closely enough. Furthermore, we have been taught to respond, often unconsciously, to one another with a pattern of attitudes and behaviors. In turn, we have acquired the power to be sexist, homophobic, heterosexist, racist, classist, ageist, ableist, etc., even though we are often unaware that we hold these beliefs. It is important that we understand how these processes create inequality, their effects on different people, and how this inequality can be addressed. This semester we will focus on many of these processes, bringing them into the open, examining them closely, and studying how they impact our lives. To make this process personal, as well as to contribute to our sociological knowledge, we will continually seek to connect our personal experiences to societal structures.

To successfully complete the goals of this course, we must establish and develop a foundation of respect. To help institute this, I will conduct many exercises and we will engage in many discussions. Your experiences in this class will help to broaden and enrich your educational and social experiences this semester. Please keep in mind that when discussing issues in this class, all opinions will be respected and accepted as long as they are argued critically, and I ask that you respect the opinions expressed by myself as well as your classmates.
The following are our goals for this term:

1. To introduce you to the concepts of Sociology and Social Psychology, including the Sociological Imagination, the theory of Social Construction and some of the dominant sociological frameworks.
2. To understand the connections between our lives and those of others.
3. To help you gain an understanding of the elements of inequality in terms of class, race, ethnicity, sex, gender, sexuality, and sexual identity.
4. To raise our consciousness toward people and experiences that are different from our own.
5. To engage in debates around current social issues. Much of our time in this class will be spent discussing and debating these issues. Different perspectives will be addressed and the expression of all beliefs is encouraged and welcomed.

Perhaps the most important element of this course is critical thinking. To think critically means:

**First**, we must identify and challenge assumptions. We should try to identify the assumptions that are at the foundation of the concepts, values, beliefs, and behaviors that we deem important in our society. Having identified these assumptions we need to then explore their accuracy and legitimacy, considering whether or not what we take for granted does indeed reflect the realities that we experience.

**Second**, to think critically we need to be aware of our place and time in our culture. When asking questions about aspects of our culture we need to be aware of our own standpoint—the position from which we are asking these questions. In other words, we need to be aware of our own location at a particular intersection of culture and history, and how that is impacted by our own race/ethnicity, social class, sex/gender, sexuality, ability, age, etc. and how that in turn influences the questions we ask as well as the answers we accept. Our standpoint also influences what we see as “normal” or “ordinary” behavior. This relates to the concept of enculturation—immersion in our own culture to the point where we assume our way of life is “natural” or “normal”. Because we are so enculturated into our own societal standards and practices we often assume that they are the only options and, as a result, we are unaware of alternatives. Furthermore, as a result of this lack of awareness we often view those who have other cultural standards or practices as behaving in a strange or unnatural manner.

**Third**, when thinking critically we need to imagine alternative ways of thinking. In doing so, we must examine the assumptions that are at the foundations of our ideas and ways of behaving. Considering alternatives to current ways of thinking can often provide us with new insights about widely accepted ideas.

**Fourth**, to think critically one must develop a reflective analysis. Such an analysis requires that we be skeptical, not in the sense that we don’t believe anything we see but rather that we question what are seen as fixed belief systems now that we know there are possible alternatives to these beliefs. A reflective analysis requires that we challenge dominant ideas as well as popularly held notions regarding solutions to social problems.
Thinking critically frees us from personal, environmental, and institutional forces that prevent us from seeing new directions. Furthermore, as critical thinkers we are no longer passive recipients of knowledge and products of socialization. Rather, after thoughtful scrutiny and continuously asking questions we become active participants in arriving at our own ideas and commitments. As a result, our ideas are based on a solid and informed foundation, all the while keeping in mind that we may still be wrong. When we face challenges to our ideas we will be better prepared to provide justification for and evidence in their support.

As you will come to notice, a fundamental aspect of sociology is to be critical of the status quo. This will require you to think critically about how the social structure has affected your values, attitudes, and behaviors. When teaching this course, my object is not to negate your belief system and provide you with a new one, but rather to provide you with an environment which allows you to think critically about the attitudes and opinions you have been given. By doing so, it is my expectation that you will develop a belief system that you can claim as your own. I will continually push you to challenge yourself. Thus, memorization is not the intent of this course. Rather, I ask you to understand the material presented to you and to think about how it either challenges or reinforces your ideas of how the world works.

### Course Books

There are two required books for this course.


The books may be purchased at the SCSU Husky Bookstore or at Campus Book and Supply. In addition to these texts, additional readings will be distributed in class. Books for this course will be also available on reserve at Learning Resources and Technology Services (LRS) in the Miller Center. Please note that readings may be assigned in addition to those listed in the course schedule and reading list.

### Some Tips on Reading for Class

Students have often given me feedback that they have difficulties in getting their reading done for all of their classes. In an effort to help you get things read for this class I provide you with the following tips for reading:

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1. Ask “Why am I reading this article”
   Before you begin reading an article, think about why you are reading it:
   
   ? Are you reading to get ideas for your own paper? If so, read the abstract and/or introduction to see what has been done and the discussion/conclusion to see what questions remain.
   
   ? Are you looking for information related to supporting your own ideas? Pay particular attention to how the author did her or his research. Take notes.
   
   ? Are you reading it to increase your general knowledge? Consider how the article fits into your own understanding and how, if at all, it changes your ideas.
   
   ? Are you reading it just because it was assigned to you? Consider what you think the instructor wants you to get out of it and how it fits with the particular section of the course. In addition, keep in mind the total amount of readings assigned. If there are 10 readings assigned, don’t spend all of your time on the first few and skip the remaining readings. Distribute your time evenly. Also, don’t assume short readings will take less time! Finally, the assignment of a large amount of readings is an opportunity to learn to efficiently extract information.

2. Don’t just read the article
   Many students approach academic reading assignments as they would reading a novel; trying to read and understand each word. As a result, they often get frustrated, confused, or just plain bored. Keeping in mind why you are reading the article, focus on the relevant sections. Skim the article, looking for key points or interesting ideas.

3. Put the article in context
   Think about who the author is, why s/he wrote the article, when it was written, how it contributes to other articles of similar topics, how it is useful, etc.

4. Read actively
   Don’t read lying down. If the article is putting you to sleep, you won’t get anything out of it. Rather, read in a place where you can think about what you are reading. Be prepared to take notes (see below).

5. Don’t highlight
   Using a highlighter encourages passive reading. Rather than using a highlighter, try using a pen or marker (in a color that stands out) to underline key phrases, make notations in the margins, and to note any questions or ideas that come to you.

6. Summarize
   Finally, after finishing an article take a few moments to summarize the article. Using a single sheet of paper, write on the top half of the paper what the author said. Use the bottom half of the paper to write what you think about what the author said, including any questions or ideas that came to mind.

**Course Requirements**

**PLEASE NOTE: A PASSING GRADE IN THIS COURSE REQUIRES SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF EACH COMPONENT OF THE COURSE REQUIREMENTS.**

Your final grade will consist of the following components:

- Written Exercises (2) 30%
- Reading Responses 15%
- Class Attendance & Participation 15%
- Mid-Semester Paper 20%
- Final Paper 20%
The Written Exercises

The books and readings that I have selected this semester are very important and they should all be read. You will note that 30% of your final grade is based on written exercises. The purpose of these exercises is to encourage critical thinking with regard to the issues raised in the course readings. Approximately once a week in class you will receive an exercise that is due in class the following week. You must do two (2) of these three- to five-page written exercises as part of your course requirements. A sign-up sheet will be made available in class where you will sign-up for two weeks out of the semester in which you will be responsible for writing an exercise.

Your exercises may be written using the first-person pronoun “I,” but these are not simply “opinion papers.” You should express your opinion, but think of opinion as less a matter of individual taste or preference. Rather, see your view as a perspective shaped by your subject-positioning, the politics of your own location at a particular intersection of culture/history/sex/gender/race/class/ethnicity/(trans)nation/identity/etc. Work these considerations into your exercise in light of our examination of sociological issues.

Keep in mind the following:
In the exercises you will be asked to develop an argument, which consists of the following components:

- A claim or thesis.
- reasoning to support that claim.
- evidence to support it.
- conclusion about the claim.
- Be clear about your point. Avoid leaving your reader in confusion.
- Push your analysis to explore the implications of your argument.
- There are many effective styles and strategies for writing papers. Write in a style that you find most effective.

Some additional guidelines:

- Your papers must be typed or word processed and free of spelling and grammatical errors. If for any reason you feel that you need help with your writing, please feel free to see me in my office hours or after class. You may also consult with The Write Place for assistance (Riverview 118, Phone: 308-2031, Web: http://leo.stcloudstate.edu, e-mail: writeplace@stcloudstate.edu).
- Be sure to keep an extra copy of all work handed in to me.

Finally, as outlined in the Saint Cloud State University Code of Conduct, it is your responsibility to refrain from academic dishonesty, including but not limited to.²

² For additional information on academic integrity, go to: http://www.academicintegrity.org.
Cheating: Intentionally and knowingly using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids or electronic data in any academic exercise.

Plagiarism: Includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement; unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in selling or otherwise providing term papers or other academic materials; and commercialization, sale, or distribution of class notes without the instructors’ permission.

Fabrication: Intentional or unauthorized falsification of any information or citation in an academic endeavor.

Grading Criteria

Your written exercises (as well as your exams) will be graded according to the following criteria:

Content

- Presenting a main point and using information to support your argument.
- Demonstration of your understanding of relevant concepts.
- Incorporation of course and outside reading.
- Incorporation of original insights.
- Responding fully to all questions.
- Developing a discussion that incorporates interesting details from multiple sources (personal experience, readings, and/or outside primary or secondary sources).
- Demonstrating critical thinking by moving in thought beyond merely summarizing, defining, or reporting to analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, drawing conclusions, or gaining insight.
- Engaging the reader through topic choice, original approach, thorough development, etc.

Organizational Factors

- Creating a coherent structure with an effective introduction/body/conclusion.
- Providing a clear introduction that identifies the topic/main point that establishes your intent in the paper.
- Using transitions where necessary within paragraphs and to introduce new ideas.
- Concluding in a way to draw main points together.

Language Use and Expression

- Using accurate and mature vocabulary to make the writing clear and appropriate for conveying your main points.
- Using clear, direct, complete, varied sentence structure (e.g., free of fragments or run-ons).
- Maintaining consistent verb tense and pronoun reference.
- Avoiding slang, colloquialisms, clichés, and jargon.
- Applying grammar and usage according to acceptable standards for writing.
- Applying correct mechanical skills (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc.)

Elements of Style

- Paper is typed or neatly word-processed.
- Paper is proofread and corrected for typos and other errors.
- Paper is printed on clean paper and stapled.

An ‘A’ Essay...

- Addresses the topic of the assignment fully and explores each aspect thoughtfully.
- Has a clear and substantial thesis.
- Shows substantial depth, fullness and complexity of thought.
- Expresses ideas clearly and commands the reader’s attention.
- Demonstrates clear, unified and coherent organization.
- Is fully developed and detailed with ideas supported by persuasive reasons and well chosen examples or references to class material.
- Has a superior style (interesting sentence patterns, smooth transitions between ideas, excellent use of vocabulary).
- Has few, if any, minor errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

An ‘A-/B+’ essay:

- Strongly addresses and explores each aspect of the assignment.
- Has a clear thesis explored fully in the essay.
- Shows some depth and complexity of thought.
- Expresses ideas clearly and in an interesting manner.
- Demonstrates effective organization.
- Is well developed with supporting details and appropriate examples or references to class material.
- Has an effective style (good sentence patterns, transitions between ideas, accurate use of vocabulary).
- Has few errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

A ‘B-/B-’ essay:

- Addresses and explores each aspect of the assignment in a satisfactory way.
- Has a clear thesis explored adequately in the essay.
- Shows clarity of thought, but may treat the topic simplistically or repetitively.
- Clearly communicates ideas.
- Is adequately organized.
- Is developed with sufficient examples, reasoning, or references for most of the ideas.
- Has an adequate style (some variety in sentence patterns, transitions between most ideas, vocabulary accurate for the most part).
- Has some errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

A ‘C+/C’ essay:

- Inaccurately responds to or neglects part of the assignment.
- Has a simplistic thesis that may show limited knowledge of the issues involved in the assignment.
- Lacks focus or demonstrates confused, stereotyped or simplistic thinking.
- May not always communicate ideas clearly.
- Is ineffectively organized.
- May not provide adequate or appropriate details or references to support generalizations, or may provide details without generalizations.
- Has stylistic weaknesses (little variety in sentence patterns, few transitions, imprecise vocabulary).
- Has occasional major errors in grammar, usage or mechanics or frequent minor errors.

A ‘C’ essay:

- Indicates confusion about the assignment or neglects important aspects of the assignment.
- Has an unclear or confusing thesis which shows little understanding of the assignment or which demonstrates a misinterpretation of the assignment.
An essay containing one or more of the following would be considered unsatisfactory:

- Demonstrates confused thinking.
- Often fails to communicate ideas clearly.
- Has very weak organization.
- Has very little development of ideas; uses very few examples or references to support points.
- Has an ineffective style (monotonous or fragmented sentence structure, no transitions, simplistic or inaccurate vocabulary).
- Has many repeated errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

An indication of an inability to comprehend or to respond meaningfully to the assignment.
- No thesis or has an incomprehensible thesis.
- Deliberately off-topic.
- An inability to communicate ideas clearly.
- Incoherent organization.
- Incomplete or inappropriate development of ideas.
- Incoherent style (difficulties with sentence structure, pattern of vocabulary errors).
- Pervasive pattern of errors in grammar, usage and mechanics.

If you have any questions regarding my grading process, please feel free to see me.

Reading Responses

15% of your final grade will be based upon written responses in class to brief questions on the readings. These questions will be asked at five (5) random times throughout the semester and will relate to the readings assigned for that particular week. This is a mandatory assignment and cannot be made-up if you miss class.

Class Attendance & Participation

15% of your final grade will be based upon your attendance at and your participation in each class. Attendance is mandatory in this class. Each time you are absent I will deduct 3 points from your final grade. Four (4) or more absences will result in an ‘F’ for the course. Consistently arriving late will also detract from your grade. If for any reason you need to miss class, please let me know.

Mid-Semester Paper

To evaluate your understanding of the material and your ability to think critically as this course progresses, you will submit a mid-semester paper on Wednesday, October 19th. This paper will require you to apply the theories that we are learning to current events occurring in our world. More details on this assignment will be given in class. The paper is worth 20% of your final grade.

The Final Paper

The final portion of your grade (20%) will be a revision of your English 191 Documented Social Phenomenon Analysis. For this assignment you are to utilize the sociological imagination and other relevant concepts from this and your English 191 class to analyze how a particular social phenomenon or social group is represented in a particular text. This assignment will be due in class on Monday, December 12th. Details of my expectations for this assignment will be distributed later this semester.
Late Policy

I do not accept late papers. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date indicated in this syllabus.

Some Final Notes

I encourage you to make use of my office hours. They are devoted to you so don’t feel as if you are disturbing me when you come by. If they are inconvenient for you, please feel free to set up an appointment with me.

I know that the above rules and regulations may seem like a bit much, and it may appear that this class is more structured than you thought. This syllabus is provided as merely a guideline for how this course will be run. I ask all of you to feel free to give me feedback about this course. It is important that this learning experience be multidirectional; that we learn from each other. This can not happen unless we all participate. Remember to communicate with me; let me know what's going on. If for any reason you have a problem coming to class or meeting a deadline, please let me know.

Course Schedule and Reading List

Assigned readings are listed directly below the weekly topic. On some weeks there are many readings listed as required reading. Don’t panic. When there are numerous readings listed, they are relatively short. Please be aware that this schedule is tentative and subject to change. Additional readings may be assigned in class. All readings for each week must be completed prior to coming to the first class meeting of the week.

Reading Key:   Mapping the Social Landscape = MAP
                Additional Readings = AR

Week of September 7th: Course Introduction & Definitions

Required Reading:
1. Read the syllabus carefully so that you understand my perspectives, expectations, goals, and your responsibilities.

Week of September 12th: Theories & Concepts of Sociology

We begin this course focusing primarily on fundamental concepts in sociology. Using a sociological perspective changes how we perceive the surrounding world, even ourselves. Thinking sociologically is like entering an unfamiliar society, according to Berger—something like culture shock. This semester you may experience a great deal of this as you are made aware of new and unsuspected elements of human existence in society. Through learning the basic concepts and theories of sociology, we will acquire the tools necessary to begin this process.

Required Reading:
Week of September 19th: Socialization & Constructing the “Center”/Constructing the “Other”

This week we will begin to examine the means by which we become fully human, the process of socialization. This is a life-long process which teaches us the standards and expectations of the culture to which we belong. In addition, we will examine how socialization aids in the process of the social construction of reality; defining what is the norm and, as a result, what is outside this norm.

**Required Reading:**
2. Granfield, R. “Making It By Faking It.” p. 147-160 MAP

Week of September 26th: Social Stratification, Groups & Social Structure

In our examination of groups and social structure we will pay particular attention to the issues of status and role and how they impact the life chances of people at various locations in our socially stratified society.

**Required Reading:**

Week of October 3rd: Social Institutions & Maintaining the Social Order

This week we take an introductory look at how social institutions help maintain the social structure and the social order. We will focus our attention on the institutions of the government and education.

**Required Reading:**

Note: Class will not meet Wednesday, October 5th

Week of October 10th: Culture, Language & the Media

This week our focus is on language and how it serves as a link between all of the different elements of culture and thus serves to perpetuate the social order. In addition, this section will address the institution of the media which is responsible for supplying members of society with information, for reinforcing the policies of other institutions, and socializing members of society with regard to appropriate ways of behaving and accepted cultural values. Finally, the purpose of this section is to illustrate how the media serves as a mechanism for connecting and supporting other institutions in society.

**Required Reading:**
8. Bosch, T. “Loss of Language.” AR
Week of October 17th: Maintaining Social Order through Defining Deviance

Due to the existence of norms, deviant acts occur with great frequency. According to sociology, deviance is not a property inherent in certain forms of behavior; it is a property conferred upon particular behaviors by social definitions. In other words, deviance is what people say it is. Whether such activities are sufficient to define us as mentally ill or criminal depends on how others perceive, define, and respond to a given situation. More importantly, norms and their application are linked to social inequality. In our analysis of deviance and social control we will review how the different sociological paradigms view these issues, discussing the different theories for why it occurs. Later we will discuss some of the ways in which our society attempts to control what it views as deviant.

**Required Reading:**

*Mid-Semester Paper due Wednesday, October 19th*

Week of October 24th: Work, Class & Socioeconomic Status

The U. S. society is highly stratified in terms of class. The privileges of the rich contrast sharply with the poverty of millions of women and men who struggle day to day to simply survive. This section will reveal that the popular portrayal of the U. S. as a “middle-class society” does not agree with many important realities.

**Required Reading:**
5. Leidner, R. “Over the Counter: McDonald’s.” p. 501-516 MAP

**Recommended Reading:**

Week of October 31st: Life Chances & Access to Resources

During this week of the course, we will examine the impact that access to resources—or the lack thereof—impacts one’s life chances. We will do this by closely examining the role that race, class and socioeconomic status play in the lives of Lafayette and Pharoah Rivers in Alex Kotlowitz’ *There Are No Children Here*.

**Required Reading:**
1. *There Are No Children Here* (in its entirety)

Week of November 7th: History & Constructions of Race

This week we shift our focus and begin discussing issues of race, ethnicity and intergroup relations. It is important to remember the information that we have been discussing up to this point. All of the sociological concepts, as well as issues of language and class, will relate very directly to the topic of this week and next. It is also important to keep in mind that when we discuss race, we are discussing all races. We all belong to a racial community, but often those of us that are in the majority in the U. S. tend not to be aware of our membership in the community of whites. We will begin by discussing concepts, and then move on to discuss patterns of intergroup relations.

**Required Reading:**
Week of November 14th: The Social Construction of Gender & Sexuality: Defining our “Places”
This section of the course will focus on the concepts and theories with regard to sex, sexuality and gender. It is important that you understand these concepts and theories, reflecting on how the perspective you hold impacts how you see sex and gender relations.

Required Reading:
1. Lorber, J. “‘Night to His Day.’” p. 119-131 MAP
5. Steinem, G. “If Men Could Menstruate.” AR

Week of November 21st: Maintaining the Sex/Gender Hierarchy
Regardless of how we view sex and gender inequality, or how widespread we think it is, there are several ramifications of a system that is stratified on the basis of sex and gender. This week we will discuss the ramifications of such a system.

Required Reading:
2. Risman, B. “Gender as Structure.” p. 3332-341 MAP

Note: Class will not meet Wednesday, November 23rd—Fall Break

Week of November 28th: Heterosexism, Homophobia & Social Control
In this section of the course we focus on how we maintain a system stratified on the basis of sexuality and sexual identity through institutional, interpersonal, and internalized heterosexism and homophobia. We will explore how the existence of these forms of oppression impact the lives of all members of society, regardless of sexual identity.

Required Reading:
1. Stacey, J. “Gay and Lesbian Families are Here.” p. 601-613 MAP
4. Pharr, S. "Homophobia as a Weapon of Sexism." AR

Week of December 5th: Where Do We Go From Here? Societal Transformation
Having completed our discussion of a variety of sociological issues we are now able to move forward and discuss the possibilities and potential for making improvements with regard to social problems. As a way of discussing these possibilities, we will consider what needs to be in place for social change to occur, some of the perspectives on social change, as well as social movements that have brought and have the potential to bring about social change.

Required Reading:
A. Ritzer, G. "The McDonaldization of Society." p. 637-645 MAP
C. Derber, C. “The Wilding of America: Iraq and the War Against Terrorism.” p. 654-664 MAP
D. Etzioni, A. “Community Building: Steps Toward a Good Society.” p. 665-672 MAP
E. Johnson, A. G. “What Can We Do?” p. 673-684 MAP

December 12th: Semester Review
Required Reading:
1. None.

Final Paper Due Monday, December 12th
Exercise #1, Week of September 19th
Due Monday, September 26th

Below you will find two possible exercises on which to write. Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper. If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your "style" you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 5 and 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. Socialization & the Other
As discussed in lecture, socialization is a lifelong process. Robert Granfield's article "Making It by Faking It" offers an example of the socialization process through the discussion of law students from working class backgrounds. Considering his description of this process, answer the following questions:

A. Define the concept of socialization, as offered in lecture.
B. How does Granfield's article demonstrate the effects of resocialization on a person's self-identity?
C. How would a Symbolic Interactionist (e.g., Mead, Cooley, Goffman) explain the struggle of these students?
D. Describe a personal experience when your identification with a group was challenged. How did this influence your sense of self and how did this affect your membership in that group? Did you choose to maintain your identification with that group or assimilate into the other group? Explain the factors that influenced your decision. Be sure to support your answer with at least three (3) course readings, lecture material, etc.

2. The Sociological Imagination
In the reading "The Promise," C. Wright Mills discusses how the sociological imagination helps us to make a very important distinction between "personal troubles" and "public issues." Considering Mills' discussion, as well as the explanation of the sociological imagination offered in lecture, answer the following questions:

A. In our daily lives we all experience personal troubles (e.g., unemployment, financial difficulties, being cut from a team, etc.). For this exercise I ask you to select a situation that a) you have recently faced which presented a personal trouble for you, or b) a friend faced that was a personal trouble for her/him. Describe this personal trouble fully so that I will understand it. Include in your description information about how the personal trouble was resolved.
B. Define the Sociological Imagination and its the three components: Biography, History and Culture. Explain how these components influenced the situation for you/your friend.
C. Are these components universal (does everyone face them)? Or do they vary by race, class, gender, sexual orientation, culture and/or historical period? If they vary, how and why do they? If they don't vary, why not? How would this situation and solution be different for someone who lived in another era or culture or who had a different identity (sexual, racial, ethnic or other)?
D. Finally, how can the Sociological Imagination be helpful to you in your understanding of others? Be sure to support your answer with at least three (3) course readings, lecture material, etc.
Below you will find three possible exercises on which to write. **Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper.** If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your "style" you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 5 and 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

**1. Social Stratification**

We have been discussing in lecture that we live in a stratified system. In this essay I ask you to consider the concepts related to social stratification and draw connections to this week’s reading as well as the film.

A. Define stratification, as offered in lecture, and explain how at least three (3) readings for this week are related to this concept.

B. One’s class, race, gender, and sexual orientation affect life chances. Select a hypothetical person of your age whose class/race/gender/sexual orientation differs from yours. For example if you are a middle-class African-American heterosexual male, picture a working-class white bisexual female. Using your sociological imagination, describe how social stratification would impact this person’s life chances.

C. Discuss how structural functionalist and conflict theorists would interpret social stratification. Which explanation do you think provides the most accurate description? Explain your answer and be certain to support it with readings (at least three), the film, lecture material, etc.

**2. Power, Privilege and Prestige**

Sex, race, and ethnicity relate to class in terms of Weber’s concepts of wealth, prestige, and power (discussed in lecture). Select a hypothetical person of your age whose sex, race/ethnicity and class differs from yours and answer the following:

A. Discuss how one of the sociological perspectives (e.g., structural functionalism, social conflict, or symbolic interactionism) would explain the relationship between sex, race/ethnicity, and class using the hypothetical person you chose.

B. Demonstrate the aspects of social structure (e.g., norms, status, roles, groups, institutions) that inhibit the social mobility of the person you chose. Incorporate examples from at least three (3) of your readings and demonstrate how life chances are shaped by wealth, prestige and power.

C. Reflect on your own position in the system of social stratification. How do your experiences compare to the person you chose? Be certain to support your answer with readings, lecture material, etc.

**3. Campus Life & Life Chances**

In lecture we have been discussing that we live in a stratified system. In this essay I ask you to consider the concepts related to social stratification and draw connections to your own experiences on this campus.

A. Define social stratification as offered in lecture. In general, what factors can determine stratification?

B. Within the student population at Saint Cloud State University is there a system of stratification? What appear to be the criteria used in the ranking of individuals and groups in this system? What are the consequences of this system of stratification on students’ opportunities on this campus? Explain and support your answer.

C. Reflecting on your discussion, how does the campus community compare with the broader societal system of stratification? In your answer discuss issues of life chances, access to resources, power, as well as other sociological concepts. Be certain to support your assertions with at least three (3) readings lecture material, etc.
Exercise #3, Week of October 3rd  
Due Monday, October 10th

Below you will find two possible exercises on which to write. Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper. If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your "style" you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 - 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. American Dream

The American Dream can be defined as the belief that with perseverance and hard work, everyone can be better off than their parents and can achieve the "good life." This exercise asks you to consider the material for this section of the course and answer the following questions:

A. Using the structural functionalist perspective, analyze the American Dream. Include at least 3 functions served by the American Dream. Explain whether each function is a manifest, latent, or social dysfunction.

B. Reflecting on the reading for this week, what institutional barriers do people face in trying to achieve the American Dream? Support with reading and lecture material.

C. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the analyses offered by the structural functionalists perspective? Explain your answer and support your assertions using at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material.

D. In your opinion, is the American Dream more achievable, less achievable, or about equally achievable than a generation ago? What leads you to this conclusion? Identify several influential ways you have been socialized to accept this belief.

2. Power, Privilege and Prestige

Sex, race, and ethnicity relate to class in terms of Weber’s concepts of wealth, prestige, and power (discussed in lecture). Select a hypothetical person of your age whose sex, race/ethnicity and class differs from yours and answer the following:

A. Discuss how one of the sociological perspectives (e.g., structural functionalism, social conflict, or symbolic interactionism) would explain the relationship between sex, race/ethnicity, and class using the hypothetical person you chose.

B. Demonstrate the aspects of social structure (e.g., norms, status, roles, groups, institutions) that inhibit the social mobility of the person you chose. Incorporate examples from at least three (3) of your readings and demonstrate how life chances are shaped by wealth, prestige and power.

C. Reflect on your own position in the system of social stratification. How do your experiences compare to the person you chose? Be certain to support your answer with readings, lecture material, etc.
Exercise #4, Week of October 10th
Due Monday, October 17th

Below you will find two possible exercises on which to write. Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper. If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your "style" you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. Cultural Commodification

The process of commodification—turning the raw materials of someone’s culture (e.g., food, traditions, rituals, etc.) into products to be sold—was discussed by Haunani-Kay Trask in her article “Lovely Hula Hands.” According to Trask, entrepreneurs seeking to make a profit commodify and package various racial-ethnic groups and their culture. We see and hear their products in advertisements, the media, music, and on our bodies. Consider Trask’s discussion of the cultural exploitation and commodification of Hawaiians and answer the following questions:

A. How does Trask describe the values, beliefs, and language of Hawaiian culture that are essential to Hawaiian identity? How has the tourist industry appropriated the values, beliefs, and language of Hawaii?

B. How does cultural commodification contribute to stereotyping? Provide some examples of products of cultural commodification and show how they contribute to stereotypes of some racial-ethnic groups. Support your answer with at least three (3) course readings as well as sociological concepts and material from lecture.

C. Trask offers her solution for ending cultural commodification. What is it? Do you agree or disagree with her solution? What solution(s) would you suggest in addition to or, instead of, Trask’s solution?

2. Perspectives on Culture

The particular norms and values of a culture organize the lives of its members by setting the standards of behavior. Elijah Anderson studies the street culture of one poor inner city black community and how it forms a set of informal rules governing behavior. He calls these rules a code of the streets.

A. According to Anderson, what are the rules in the code of the streets? What is the purpose of the code in the community? What does the code mean for the street youth in relation to the larger U. S. society?

B. Select one of the three sociological perspectives (structural functionalist, conflict, or symbolic interactionist) and discuss how that perspective would explain the existence and purpose of this code. Be certain to explain your answer and support your assertions.

C. What is the set of informal rules in your culture (i.e. your hometown or campus) that govern your behavior? What social factors influenced the formation of these rules? Be certain to support your answer with at least three (3) course readings as well as sociological concepts and material from lecture.
Exercise #5, Week of October 17th
Due Wednesday, October 26th

Below you will find two possible exercises on which to write. **Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper.** If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your “style” you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. **Uses of Social Control**
   This exercise asks you to consider the extent to which our lives are affected by various types of social control.
   
   A. Define social control (both ideological and direct), as explained in lecture, and show how it affects people as individuals, as participants in groups, and as members of institutions.
   
   B. Select three (3) of the course readings (note: these readings can be from any section of the course). Explore both the obvious and subtle uses of social control illustrated in these articles. In your discussion be sure to incorporate relevant sociological concepts to fully support your point(s).
   
   C. Discuss a situation where your life has been affected by a type of social control. Clearly present this situation so I can understand the circumstances and how you think social control was involved. How did you respond, and how has your life changed as a result? Can your situation be related to larger societal forces, such as social stratification? Explain your answer and support with readings, lecture material, and the like.

2. **Constructing Deviance**
   As discussed in lecture, deviance is socially defined. This exercise asks you to consider the social construction of deviance. Consider lecture material as well as course readings on this topic and answer the following questions:
   
   A. In light of this week’s readings, which of the theories of deviance discussed in lecture do you think offers the best explanation? Support your argument with at least three (3) course readings.
   
   B. Explain what is meant by the “social construction of deviance.”
   
   C. In your opinion, which sociological perspective (conflict theorists, structural functionalists or symbolic interactionist) best explains the construction of deviance? Support your choice thoroughly and incorporate course concepts and lecture material.
   
   D. Do you think that some forms of deviance can have positive effects on society? Why or why not? Please provide examples as well as material from lecture and the reading to support your position.
Exercise #6, Week of October 24th
Due Monday, October 31st

Below you will find two possible exercises on which to write. Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper. If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your "style" you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. American Dream
The American Dream can be defined as the belief that with perseverance and hard work, everyone can be better off than their parents and can achieve the "good life." This exercise asks you to consider the material for this section of the course (under the heading "Work, Class & Socioeconomic Status" in your syllabus) and answer the following questions:

A. Using the structural functionalist perspective, analyze the American Dream. Include at least 3 functions served by the American Dream. Explain whether each function is a manifest, latent, or social dysfunction.

B. What institutional barriers do people face in trying to achieve the American Dream? Support with reading and lecture material.

C. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the analyses offered by the structural functionalists perspective? Explain your answer and support your assertions using at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material.

D. In your opinion, is the American Dream more achievable, less achievable, or about equally achievable than a generation ago? What leads you to this conclusion? Identify several influential ways you have been socialized to accept this belief.

2. Poverty and Welfare
In this section of the course we are examining the social inequality that results from a system stratified on the basis of socioeconomic status. This exercise asks you to explore the ramifications of such inequality.

A. How does class situation affect a person's life chances? Include in your discussion how being in poverty and on welfare affect a person's life chances and access to resources. Support your answer with reading and lecture material.

B. Describe some of the stereotypes from the readings that are associated with persons living in poverty or on welfare. How are living in poverty and being on welfare defined as deviant? How do you think these stereotypes affect policy-making?

C. Select a sociological perspective (structural functionalist, conflict, symbolic interactionist) and describe how you think they would explain a class-based social stratification system. Do you think their analysis is accurate? Explain your answer and support your assertions using at least three (3) course readings as well as lecture material.

D. Provide your own examples to explain how social stratification is reproduced. In your opinion, how does race and gender exacerbate class based social stratification? Be certain to support your answer.
Exercise #7, Week of October 31st
Due Monday, November 7th

Below you will find this week’s exercise. In writing your paper it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

Poverty & Life Chances

For this week you were to read the book There are No Children Here. In this book, Alex Kotlowtz tells the story of Lafeyette and Pharoah and their experiences in the Horner housing project in Chicago. This text gives us insight into many of the issues of poverty and access to resources that we are discussing in class. Considering what you have read, as well as the material covered in lecture, answer the following questions:

A. How do the experiences of Lafeyette and Pharoah, as well as other characters in the text, help you to understand how one’s class situation affects a person’s life chances? Include in your discussion how being in poverty affect a person's access to resources such as education, safety, quality of life, etc. Support your answer with reading and lecture material.

B. Read the reading by William Julius Wilson “When Work Disappears: The World of the New Urban Poor.” (listed in the recommended readings for October 24). Is there evidence in Kotlowitz’s book for Wilson’s theories about how the decline of heavy industry and the upward mobility of the Black middle class isolated the ghetto? Explain your answer, citing the readings where appropriate.

C. Define the Sociological Imagination and its the three components: Biography, History and Culture. Explain how this concept helps you to understand the experiences illustrated by Kotlowitz.

D. Finally, reflecting on the book, how do the stories of Lafayette and Pharoah help you to understand how social stratification is reproduced. In your opinion, how does race and geographic location (for example, living in the city vs. living in a suburb) exacerbate class based social stratification? Be certain to support your answer.
Exercise #8, Week of November 7th
Due Monday, November 14th

Below you will find five possible exercises on which to write. Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper. If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your "style" you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. The Declining Significance of Race?

Some observers believe that discussions of U. S. race relations are unfairly dominated by critics of the status quo. For example, Harvard sociologist William Julius Wilson, author of *The Declining Significance of Race*, suggests that class is more powerful than race as a determinant of a person's life chances, and that while racism is an unfortunate part of America's past, it has relatively little significance today.

A. Evaluate this claim by analyzing arguments for and against it. Do the readings on “History and Constructions of Race” support one side or the other? How?

B. How important do you believe your race is in determining your life chances? Is it more or less important than your social class? Are these two concepts intrinsically related? Support your answer with specific examples of how your race and class has affected your life chances thus far.

C. Using your empathy skills, envision a hypothetical person of your age whose race and class differs from yours. For example, if you are a middle-class Asian, picture a working-class Anglo-American, or a wealthy Latino. How do you think this person might answer part B differently than you? Do the readings from this week or last week ("Work, Class, and Access to Resources") support your answer? How? Support your answer with at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material.

2. Colorblind or Appreciating Difference?

Those who argue that the answer to racism is to become "colorblind," claim that they don't see a person's race at all. Others say that it is impossible to be colorblind in our racially charged society, and we should aim towards accepting difference if not encouraging it. Let's explore these ideas sociologically.

A. Using the symbolic interactionist paradigm, provide some examples from at least two of the readings of how people create racial categories from daily interactions. What are the causes and effects of this behavior according to the authors and this paradigm? What do you think?

B. Relate these examples to Omi and Winant's article "Racial Formations". In light of their theory that we construct race, can we (de/re)construct it? What are the implications of your argument? Support your answer with at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material.

C. In your opinion, could we work towards a culture that celebrates difference without discrimination? Should this be our goal? Or is the only solution to ending discrimination to strive towards a colorblind, homogeneous society? If so, who determines the norms? How does your personal experience inform your conclusion? Be sure to articulate and support yourself thoroughly.
3. The Social Construction Of Race And Ethnicity
Race and ethnicity describe categories of people whose physical and cultural characteristics are perceived as different. In this exercise, you are asked to investigate how race and ethnicity are socially constructed.

A. Define the theory of social construction using race and ethnicity as an example. Be sure to use this framework throughout your discussion.

B. Using examples from the readings on “History and Constructions of Race,” discuss how perceptions, and therefore the position of racial and ethnic groups in U. S. society, are subject to change.

C. Some feel that media images of racial and ethnic groups in contemporary U. S. society are becoming more sensitive. Critics would argue, however, that “good images” do not necessarily prevent discrimination and oppression. What is your opinion, considering your discussion above of the social construction of race and ethnicity Support your answer with at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material, etc.

4. Racism: Hidden Differences
When we discuss racism, we often focus on a “black and white” dichotomy while in reality racism extends beyond this dichotomy. This exercise asks you to differentiate the experiences of various races and ethnicities, and examine their position in contemporary U. S. society. Key readings to take into consideration are Rubin and Lee.

A. Explain how race or ethnicity has been socially constructed in the United States. Provide an example to illustrate your answer.

B. Select three racial or ethnic groups and compare and contrast their position in U. S. society. What are the similarities and differences in their historical backgrounds? What factors influenced the ability of these groups to succeed in the United States? Consider the factors that affected:

  ❖ the development of a group’s negative image.
  ❖ the oppression of a minority group culture.
  ❖ the process of the group becoming incorporated into the white mainstream.
  ❖ the process of the group becoming a “model minority.”

C. Drawing from the above comparison, discuss the different forms racism can take, using the theory of social construction and the concept social control. Support your argument with lecture material, readings, etc.

5. Can Only Whites Be Racist?
According to the Conflict perspective, only whites have the power to be racist. Knowing that this idea often generates a range of responses, this exercise provides you with the opportunity to come to terms with the debates surrounding this assertion. Be sure to use your sociological knowledge to support your argument; this is NOT a space to simply air your disagreement.

A. State the definition of racism from a conflict perspective, as covered in lecture, and provide an illustrative example.

B. Explain how racism is institutionalized in society, using examples from at least two of the readings to illustrate your argument. Your discussion should include references to policies, regulations, media images and other factors which play a part in the institutionalization of racism in contemporary US society.

C. What is your definition of racism? How does it compare with the definition of racism from a conflict perspective? Use sociological concepts as well as examples from at least two of the readings to justify your argument.

D. Conclude with a discussion of the social and political implications of different types of explanations of racism, including your ideas as well as others. How do different explanations characterize the problem? What would each suggest as solutions to racism? Support your answer thoroughly.
Exercise #9, Week of November 14th
Due Monday, November 21st

Below you will find three possible exercises on which to write. Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper. If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your “style” you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. Gender and Life Chances

Several of this week's readings illustrate how gender (masculinity and femininity) is formed by agents of socialization such as family, work and other social institutions. Furthermore, these readings present divergent definitions and ideas about what it means to be a man or a woman, depending on socio-economic background and other individual life experiences. This exercise asks you to discuss the possible implications of gender construction for an individual's life chances.

A. Using examples from Messner's article as well as your own observations, outline the process by which masculinity is constructed and reinforced throughout an individual's lifetime. Your discussion should include agents of socialization such as family, school, the media and membership in organizations.

B. Illustrate how gender roles assigned to males and/or females can vary according to a person's class, race or ethnic background. Use your own personal knowledge as well as three (3) course readings in order to illustrate your argument. How do these variations in assigned gender roles limit or expand a person's opportunities in life?

C. Discuss how a structural functionalist, conflict theorist or a symbolic interactionist (pick one) would explain the variations in gender roles you discussed in B. Conclude with your own reflections about the importance of the relationship between the construction of gender identities and social stratification.

2. Is Gender Essential?

In many cultures, including the United States, it is believed that while social interaction may play a role in establishing gender identity, gender is essential (natural). Critics might reverse Simone de Beauvoir's famous statement "One isn't born a woman, one becomes a woman." to read "One doesn't become a woman, one is born a woman.”

A. Construct an argument for this essentialist position. Be sure to critique the constructionist views of Lorber and Messner. You may use any source of information except religious texts to support your argument.

B. What are the implications of this essentialist argument? If gender is not a social construct, how would we understand gender difference and the resulting divisions in the family, workplace, classroom and any other aspect of life? Do any of these interpretations cause you to reconsider the essentialist argument? If so, how? Support your answer using three (3) readings from this week.

C. Illustrate how your own experience suggests that gender is essential and NOT socially constructed. Describe these experiences and explain why they are consistent with the essentialist position. Describe how one of the three main theories would explain these experiences (structural functionalist, conflict or symbolic interactionist).

3. If Men Could...

In "If Men Could Menstruate", Steinem uses a tongue in cheek example to critique the tendency to devalue or judge as inferior, aspects of women that make them different than men. As she notes, "The characteristics of the powerful, whatever they may be, are thought to be better than the characteristics of the powerless - and logic has nothing to do with it.”

A. Select another example of how we value biological characteristics of one sex and so devalue those of the other. Explain why these attitudes are illogical using the three components of the social construction theory. In detail, explain how the attitudes are created and perpetuated and by whom. Be sure to use such sociological concepts as labeling, stereotypes, domination and subordination, etc.

B. Imagine a world in which the phenomenon you analyzed in Part A is reversed, such that the characteristics we presently devalue become valued. Describe this new world. How would one of the three theories (structural functionalist, conflict or symbolic interactionist) explain why our real world differs from your imagined one?

C. Describe a personal experience that illustrates how you, a friend, or a relative experienced the devaluation of characteristics associated with powerless people. How do Steinem and this exercise help you see the experience in a new way, if at all? Be certain to support your answer thoroughly using at least three (3) course readings.
Exercise #10, Week of November 21st  
Due Monday, November 28th

Below you will find two possible exercises on which to write. **Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper.** If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your “style” you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. **Are Only Men Sexist?**

Some assert that only men can be sexist and that, in some ways, all men are sexist (similar to discussions of whites being racist). This exercise provides you with the opportunity to come to terms with the debates surrounding this assertion. Be sure to use the knowledge you have gained in this class to support your argument; this is NOT a space to simply air your disagreement.

A. Using the definition of sexism that prejudice + power = sexism, explain how sexism is institutionalized in society. To illustrate your argument, use examples from at least three (3) course readings. Your discussion should include references to policies, regulations, media images and other factors that play a part in the institutionalization of sexism in contemporary US society.

B. What is your definition of sexism? How does it compare with the definition of sexism above? Use course concepts as well as examples from course readings to justify your argument.

C. Conclude with a discussion of the social and political implications of different types of explanations of sexism, including your ideas as well as others. How do different explanations characterize the problem? What would each suggest as solutions to sexism? Support your answer with at least three (3) readings.

2. **Social Construction and Sexual Identity**

Last week, one of the readings (“The Invention of Heterosexuality”) discussed the notion that sexual identity is a social construct. This question asks you to explore this idea more thoroughly.

A. Reflecting on the reading “The Invention of Heterosexuality,” apply the social construction theory to demonstrate how sexual identity is socially constructed.

B. Again, reflecting on the reading “The Invention of Heterosexuality,” other course readings, as well as your own observations, discuss how people's perceptions of others change when their sexual identity is disclosed. Be sure to include sociological concepts such as stereotyping, retrospective labeling, alienation, stigma, etc. Describe an experience when your perceptions about someone changed as a result of your discovery of his/her sexual identity (This can be someone whom you know personally or a public figure).

C. Discuss how social institutions (religion, education, media, family, etc.) impact people's ideas about sexual identity. Choose a recent event that illustrates how social institutions are/are not responding differently to the increased visibility of gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and transgender people. How does this support the idea that sexual identity is socially constructed? Defend your answer using lecture material, three (3) readings, etc.
Exercise #11, Week of November 28th
Due Monday, December 5th

Below you will find this week’s exercise. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and can apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed in the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

Interconnections

Suzanne Pharr presents an argument to expand our sociological understanding of how some of the various forms of oppression interact and are interrelated. Here is a chance for you to apply some of her ideas further.

A. Briefly summarize Pharr's thesis. Does your understanding of sociology that you have gained this semester change your perceptions of sexism and homophobia (fear and/or hatred directed at people based on their perceived sexual orientation)? Does it help you to understand Pharr's argument in ways that you might not have appreciated before this class? Explain your answer, being certain to support your assertions.

B. List some common stereotypes and perceptions of: lesbians, gay men, “real” women, and “real” men. Use examples from the readings for this week as well as your own experience to support your answer. What kinds of relationships do you see between these stereotypes and perceptions? How do your examples illustrate Pharr’s thesis?

C. Select at least two other readings from the semester and show how the “isms” they discuss relate to Pharr's thesis (e.g., Hunter). Be sure to use course material to illustrate your ideas fully and sociologically. How does your understanding of the interconnections between different forms of discrimination impact your understanding of how to eliminate all forms of oppression?
As noted on page 8 of your syllabus, you are required to write a mid-semester paper to demonstrate your understanding of course material and your ability to think critically. This assignment requires you to apply sociological theories to current events in our world. Below are the instructions for this assignment.

**Part One: Hurricanes and the Social Structure**

In August and September of 2005, several areas of the southern United States were hit by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. While these were natural disasters, there were many aspects of the social structure (norms, status, roles, groups, and social institutions) involved in responding to these events. Utilizing sources listed under Part II of this assignment, familiarize your events and indicate the various aspects of the social structure involved. Be specific, incorporating course concepts and material wherever appropriate.

**Part Two: Rebuilding: Who is responsible? What are the goals?**

Now that these hurricanes are over, there are numerous discussions as to how the effected areas should be rebuilt and for whom. Focusing on these issues, visit at least two (2) web sites from each of the following lists of news sources and review their commentary.

**List A**
- ABC News: [http://www.abcnews.com](http://www.abcnews.com)
- CBS News: [http://www.cbsnews.com](http://www.cbsnews.com)
- Fox News: [http://www.foxnews.com](http://www.foxnews.com)
- MSNBC: [http://www.msnbc.com](http://www.msnbc.com)

**List B**
- AlterNet: [http://www.alternet.org](http://www.alternet.org)
- Common Dreams: [http://www.commondreams.org](http://www.commondreams.org)
- Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting: [http://www.fair.org](http://www.fair.org)
- The Nation: [http://www.thenation.com](http://www.thenation.com)
- Thomas Paine Common Sense: [http://www.tompaine.com](http://www.tompaine.com)
- Truthout: [http://www.truthout.org](http://www.truthout.org)

As you review the commentary on these web sites, make note of the key points in the analysis. What does the commentator’s see as the primary issues? What did they see as the strengths and/or weaknesses of the government and other institutional responses? What support did they provide for their assertions? Does the assessment of the commentators match your own assessment of the situation? Would you change your evaluation of the aftermath of the hurricanes after reading any of these commentaries?

**Part Three: The Paper**

Reflecting on your research and your review of the commentaries on the web sites, write a five page (double-spaced) paper that summarizes your analysis. In your discussion, be sure to address the following:

1. What do the various commentators see as the primary issues? What did they see as the strengths and/or weaknesses of the government and other institutional responses? What support did they provide for their assertions?
2. Does the assessment of the commentators match your own assessment of the situation? Would you change your evaluation of the aftermath of the hurricanes after reading any of these commentaries?
3. What is the role of ideology and bias in each of the commentaries. For example, what do you think influences the different interpretations of the rebuilding after the hurricanes? How did this exercise illustrate to you the presence or lack of objectivity in news media?
4. Do you think the commentators would make good sociologists? For example, do they demonstrate an awareness of the various components of the social structure? Additionally, how well do they apply their sociological imagination? How could being more sociological inform their analysis?
5. Each of the sociological theories (structural functionalist, conflict, and/or symbolic Interactionist) that we have discussed this semester could be applied to explain the various perspectives of the authors of the commentaries. Using the examples that you have chosen, apply at least two of these theories to explain their analysis. Under which theoretical perspective do you think the authors are operating? How does this impact their analysis?

In writing your paper be certain to indicate the web sites that you visited and the dates and times of your visits. You will be graded on how well you address the questions above and how well you support your arguments. In addition, a complete answer will incorporate course material, including readings, concepts, and theories.

If you have any questions regarding this paper, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the assignment and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your paper is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points of the assignment.
Teaching Evaluations  
Sociology 160: Principles of Sociology  
Spring Semester, 2005  
Summary Quantitative Data

Mean scores are based on the following scale:
1 = Poor  
2 = Fair  
3 = Average  
4 = Good  
5 = Excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Number Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s attitude toward students has been…</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The clarity and understandability of the instructor’s explanations could best be described as…</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The openness of the instructor to differences in point of view in matters of opinion has been…</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of fairness, the instructor’s methods of evaluation have been…</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s teaching methods have been _______ when it comes to encouraging learning in this subject.</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In his/her interest in the subject, the instructor can best be described as…</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor has been _______ when it comes to stimulating interest in the subject.</td>
<td>4.44</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s knowledge of the subject is…</td>
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<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for questions and discussion in class have been…</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate this instructor overall?</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the coming weeks, you will find that this course relies heavily on communication. This syllabus is provided to you as a means of beginning and facilitating this process. In the following pages, I share some of the bases for my teaching philosophy as well as my expectations of you in this course. Please be sure to read this over very carefully.

This semester we will examine issues of race and ethnicity through a sociological framework, exploring how racial and ethnic categories are created and transformed into systems of inequality. In addition, we will investigate how our own attitudes and perspectives may contribute to these processes. We will also examine the role of institutions in constructing and maintaining systems of racial and ethnic inequality. Doing so will expand our understanding of these issues beyond that of personal differences, thus furthering our sociological literacy. We will use an integrative approach to discussing the experience of racial and ethnic inequalities, focusing on the interconnections of the experiences of racial and ethnic groups, while giving voice to the unique experiences of individuals within them. Finally, we will examine race and ethnicity as a component of a multifaceted set of systems and structures that create and maintain inequality, due to the reality that race and ethnicity go hand in hand with sex, gender, class, and other forms of stratification.

It is important to note that the issues we investigate this semester will often require that we understand one another not through our own eyes of experience, but through the experience of others. Furthermore, we will spend a great deal of time developing tools to analyze and critique the various ways that we see ourselves as well as the way we see those around us. Thus, keep in mind that the concepts and issues to be examined this semester are not simply concrete or factual. It will be our task to learn not only specific information or concepts but also to learn to think critically about the issues we explore.

Each of us brings to this class a collection of socialization experiences gathered over our lifetimes. We have been taught our roles according to our place in society. This has had an effect on our lives that we often don't examine closely enough. Furthermore, we have been taught to respond, often unconsciously, to one another with a pattern of attitudes and behaviors. In turn, we have acquired the power to be ethnocentric, racist, sexist, homophobic, heterosexist, classist, ageist, ableist, etc., even though we are often unaware that we hold these beliefs. It is important that we understand how these processes create inequality, their effects on different people, and how this inequality can be addressed. This semester we
will focus on many of these processes, bringing them into the open, examining them closely, and studying how they impact our lives. To make this process personal, as well as contribute to our sociological knowledge, we will continually seek to connect our personal experiences to the issues we address.

To successfully complete the goals of this course, we must establish and develop a foundation of respect. To help institute this, I will conduct many exercises and we will engage in many discussions. Your experiences in this class will help to broaden and enrich your educational and social experiences this semester. Please keep in mind that when discussing issues in this class, all opinions will be respected and accepted as long as they are argued critically, and I ask that you respect the opinions expressed by myself as well as your classmates.

The following are our goals for this term:

1. To explore the meanings of race, ethnicity, and oppression in the United States.
2. To develop an understanding of the theory of social construction and other concepts and theories of sociology that facilitate our examination of race and ethnicity.
3. To further our understanding of the role of social institutions in constructing categories of race and ethnicity and transforming them into systems of inequality.
4. To examine the impact of constructing a system of stratification based on race and ethnicity on the life chances of members of various racial and ethnic groups.
5. To understand the impact of past policies of racism and discrimination on the present lives of members of various racial and ethnic groups.
6. To explore the heritage, culture, and contributions of people of color in the United States.
7. To explore the experiences of people of color in the United States and how they maintain a sense of identity despite persistent and systematic racial oppression and hate crimes.
8. To explore the ways in which individuals, groups, and institutions are working to transform systems of racial and ethnic inequality.
9. To engage in dialogue and debate around issues of race and ethnicity. Much of our time in this class will be spent discussing and debating these issues. Different perspectives will be addressed and the expression of all beliefs is encouraged and welcomed.

Perhaps the most important element of this course is critical thinking. To think critically means:

First, we must identify and challenge assumptions. We should try to identify the assumptions that are at the foundation of the concepts, values, beliefs, and behaviors that we deem important in our society. Having identified these assumptions we need to then explore their accuracy and legitimacy, considering whether or not what we take for granted does indeed reflect the realities that we experience.

Second, to think critically we need to be aware of our place and time in our culture. When asking questions about aspects of our culture we need to be aware of our own standpoint—the position from which we are asking these questions. In other words, we need to be aware of our own location at a particular intersection of culture and history, and how that is impacted by our own race/ethnicity, social class, sex/gender, sexuality, ability, age, etc. and how that in turn influences the questions we ask as well as the answers we accept. Our standpoint also influences what we see as “normal” or “ordinary” behavior. This relates to the concept of enculturation—immersion in our own culture to the point where we assume our way of life is “natural” or “normal”. Because we
are so enculturated into our own societal standards and practices we often assume that they are the only options and, as a result, we are unaware of alternatives. Furthermore, as a result of this lack of awareness we often view those who have other cultural standards or practices as behaving in a strange or unnatural manner.

Third, when thinking critically we need to imagine alternative ways of thinking. In doing so, we must examine the assumptions that are at the foundations of our ideas and ways of behaving. Considering alternatives to current ways of thinking can often provide us with new insights about widely accepted ideas.

Fourth, to think critically one must develop a reflective analysis. Such an analysis requires that we be skeptical, not in the sense that we don’t believe anything we see but rather that we question what are seen as fixed belief systems now that we know there are possible alternatives to these beliefs. A reflective analysis requires that we challenge dominant ideas as well as popularly held notions regarding solutions to social problems.

Thinking critically frees us from personal, environmental, and institutional forces that prevent us from seeing new directions. Furthermore, as critical thinkers we are no longer passive recipients of knowledge and products of socialization. Rather, after thoughtful scrutiny and continuously asking questions we become active participants in arriving at our own ideas and commitments. As a result, our ideas are based on a solid and informed foundation, all the while keeping in mind that we may still be wrong. When we face challenges to our ideas we will be better prepared to provide justification for and evidence in their support.

As you may have learned in previous classes, a fundamental aspect of sociology is to be critical of the status quo. This will require you to think critically about how the social structure has affected your values, attitudes, and behaviors. When teaching this course, my object is not to negate your belief system and provide you with a new one, but rather to provide you with an environment which allows you to think critically about the attitudes and opinions you have been given. By doing so, it is my expectation that you will develop a belief system that you can claim as your own. I will continually push you to challenge yourself. Thus, memorization is not the intent of this course. Rather, I ask you to understand the material presented to you and to think about how it either challenges or reinforces your ideas of how the world works.

### Course Requirements

Your final grade will consist of the following components:

- Race Memos .................................................................................................................. 20%
- Written Exercises (2) .................................................................................................. 20%
- Reading Responses ..................................................................................................... 10%
- Class Participation ..................................................................................................... 10%
- Mid-Semester Exam .................................................................................................. 20%
- Final Exam ............................................................................................................... 20%
Race Memos

To facilitate your understanding of key themes in this course you will be required to write three (3) “race memos.” The first two memos will be 1 - 2 pages in length. The third memo will be 3 - 5 pages. Each memo will reflect your conceptualization of various issues related to race:

1. Racial Identity Due Thursday, September 11th
2. Racial Issues Due Tuesday, November 4th
3. Racial Identity Revisited Due Tuesday, December 9th

Details of each component of this assignment will be distributed in class. You will need to follow the guidelines for written exercises listed below. The first two memos are each worth 5 points, and the third memo is worth 10 points, for a total of 20% of your final grade.

Written Exercises

You will note that 20% of your final grade is based on written exercises. The purpose of these exercises is to encourage critical thinking with regard to the issues raised in the course. At six points throughout the semester you will receive an exercise that is due in class the following week. You must do two (2) of these written exercises as part of your course requirements. A sign-up sheet will be made available in class where you will sign-up for two weeks out of the semester in which you will be responsible for writing an exercise. Each exercise is worth 10% of your final grade and should be 3-5 pages in length.

Your exercises may be written using the first-person pronoun “I,” but these are not simply “opinion papers.” You should express your opinion, but think of opinion as less a matter of individual taste or preference. Rather, see your view as a perspective shaped by your standpoint, the politics of your own location at a particular intersection of culture/history/sex/gender/race/class/ethnicity/(trans)nation/identity/etc. Work these considerations into your exercise in light of our examination of sociological issues. Keep in mind the following:

In the exercises you will be asked to develop an argument, which consists of the following components:

- a claim or thesis.
  - reasoning to support that claim.
  - evidence to support it.
  - conclusion about the claim.
- Be clear about your point. Avoid leaving your reader in confusion.
- Push your analysis to explore the implications of your argument.
- There are many effective styles and strategies for writing papers. Write in a style that you find most effective.

Some additional guidelines:

- Your papers must be typed or word processed and free of spelling and grammatical errors. If for any reason you feel that you need help with your writing, please feel free to see me in my office hours or after class. You may also consult with The Write Place for assistance (Riverview 118, Phone: 255-2031, Web: http://leo.stcloudstate.edu, e-mail: leolink@stcloudstate.edu).
Please write inclusively. For example, with regard to inclusivity based on sex, this means both she/he, her/him, etc. rather than just he and him. I will not grade papers that I determine as exclusive. This will be elaborated on in class.

You may hand in no more than one written exercise per week.

Be sure to keep an extra copy of all work handed in to me.

Finally, as outlined in the Saint Cloud State University Code of Conduct, it is your responsibility to refrain from academic dishonesty, including but not limited to:

- **Cheating**: Intentionally and knowingly using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, study aids or electronic data in any academic exercise.

- **Plagiarism**: Includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement; unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in selling or otherwise providing term papers or other academic materials; and commercialization, sale, or distribution of class notes without the instructors’ permission.

- **Fabrication**: Intentional or unauthorized falsification of any information or citation in an academic endeavor.

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**Grading Criteria**

Your written exercises (as well as your exams) will be graded according to the following criteria:

**Content**
- Presenting a main point and using information to support your argument.
- Demonstration of your understanding of relevant concepts.
- Incorporation of course and outside reading.
- Incorporation of original insights.
- Responding fully to all questions.
- Developing a discussion that incorporates interesting details from multiple sources (personal experience, readings, and/or outside primary or secondary sources).
- Demonstrating critical thinking by moving in thought beyond merely summarizing, defining, or reporting to analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, drawing conclusions, or gaining insight.
- Engaging the reader through topic choice, original approach, thorough development, etc.

**Organizational Factors**
- Creating a coherent structure with an effective introduction/body/conclusion.
- Providing a clear introduction that identifies the topic/main point that establishes your intent in the paper.
- Using transitions where necessary within paragraphs and to introduce new ideas.
- Concluding in a way to draw main points together.

**Language Use and Expression**
- Using accurate and mature vocabulary to make the writing clear and appropriate for conveying your main points.
- Using clear, direct, complete, varied sentence structure (e.g., free of fragments or run-ons).
• Maintaining consistent verb tense and pronoun reference.
• Avoiding slang, colloquialisms, clichés, and jargon.
• Applying grammar and usage according to acceptable standards for writing.
• Applying correct mechanical skills (spelling, capitalization, punctuation, etc.)

Elements of Style
• Paper is typed or neatly word-processed.
• Paper is proofread and corrected for typos and other errors.
• Paper is printed on clean paper and stapled.

An ‘A’ Essay…
- Addresses the topic of the assignment fully and explores each aspect thoughtfully.
- Has a clear and substantial thesis.
- Shows substantial depth, fullness and complexity of thought.
- Expresses ideas clearly and commands the reader’s attention.
- Demonstrates clear, unified and coherent organization.
- Is fully developed and detailed with ideas supported by persuasive reasons and well chosen examples or references to class material.
- Has a superior style (interesting sentence patterns, smooth transitions between ideas, excellent use of vocabulary).
- Has few, if any, minor errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

An ‘A-/B+’ essay:
- Strongly addresses and explores each aspect of the assignment.
- Has a clear thesis explored fully in the essay.
- Shows some depth and complexity of thought.
- Expresses ideas clearly and in an interesting manner.
- Demonstrates effective organization.
- Is well developed with supporting details and appropriate examples or references to class material.
- Has an effective style (good sentence patterns, transitions between ideas, accurate use of vocabulary).
- Has few errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

A ‘B/B-’ essay:
- Addresses and explores each aspect of the assignment in a satisfactory way.
- Has a clear thesis explored adequately in the essay.
- Shows clarity of thought, but may treat the topic simplistically or repetitively.
- Clearly communicates ideas.
- Is adequately organized.
- Is developed with sufficient examples, reasoning, or references for most of the ideas.
- Has an adequate style (some variety in sentence patterns, transitions between most ideas, vocabulary accurate for the most part).
- Has some errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

A ‘C+/C’ essay:
- Inaccurately responds to or neglects part of the assignment.
- Has a simplistic thesis that may show limited knowledge of the issues involved in the assignment.
- Lacks focus or demonstrates confused, stereotyped or simplistic thinking.
- May not always communicate ideas clearly.
- Is ineffectively organized.
- May not provide adequate or appropriate details or references to support generalizations, or may provide details without generalizations.
Has stylistic weaknesses (little variety in sentence patterns, few transitions, imprecise vocabulary).
Has occasional major errors in grammar, usage or mechanics or frequent minor errors.

A ‘C-’ essay:
Indicates confusion about the assignment or neglects important aspects of the assignment.
Has an unclear or confusing thesis which shows little understanding of the assignment or which demonstrates a misinterpretation of the assignment.
Demonstrates confused thinking.
Often fails to communicate ideas clearly.
Has very weak organization.
Has very little development of ideas; uses very few examples or references to support points.
Has an ineffective style (monotonous or fragmented sentence structure, no transitions, simplistic or inaccurate vocabulary).
Has many repeated errors in grammar, usage or mechanics.

An essay containing one or more of the following would be considered unsatisfactory:
An indication of an inability to comprehend or to respond meaningfully to the assignment.
No thesis or has an incomprehensible thesis.
Deliberately off-topic.
An inability to communicate ideas clearly.
Incoherent organization.
Incomplete or inappropriate development of ideas.
Incoherent style (difficulties with sentence structure, pattern of vocabulary errors).
Pervasive pattern of errors in grammar, usage and mechanics.

If you have any questions regarding my grading process, please feel free to see me.

Reading Responses

10% of your final grade will be based upon written responses in class to brief questions on the readings. These questions will be asked at five (5) random times throughout the semester and will relate to the readings assigned for that particular week. This is a mandatory assignment and cannot be made-up if you miss class.

Class Attendance & Participation

10% of your final grade will be based upon your attendance at and your participation in each class. Attendance is mandatory in this class. Each time you are absent I will deduct 2 points from your final grade. Four (4) or more absences will result in an ‘F’ for the course. Consistently arriving late will also detract from your grade. If for any reason you need to miss class, please let me know.

The Midterm Exam

To evaluate your understanding of the material and your ability to think critically, I will give a midterm exam in class on Thursday, October 23rd. This exam will consist of short answer questions to be answered in class and a take-home essay portion. The essay questions will be distributed at least one week prior to the exam and will be due in class on the date of the exam. More details on this component of your final grade will be given in class. This exam is worth 20% of your final grade.
The Final Exam

The final portion of your grade (20%) will be based on an in-class exam given on Tuesday, December 16th from 1:00 – 3:30 p.m. Again, this exam will consist short answer questions and an essay portion. The essay questions will be distributed at least one week prior to the exam. I will give more details regarding this exam as the semester progresses.

Course Readings

There are three required texts for this course:


The books may be purchased at the SCSU Campus Bookstore or at Campus Book and Supply. In addition to these texts, additional readings are available in a course packet at Copies Plus (in Atwood). Books and any additional readings will be available on reserve at Learning Resources and Technology Services (LRS) in the Miller Center. Please note that readings may be assigned in addition to those listed in the course schedule and reading list.

Late Policy

I expect that each of you will submit all assignments by the due date indicated in this syllabus. However, I am aware that this expectation is not always met. As a result, I will be using the following late policy for all assignments submitted past the indicated due date:

1. Students must receive permission from the professor in order to submit a late assignment.

2. Each student is granted one grace period for late assignments. The grace period for submission of written assignments is the following day (Monday – Sunday) by 5:00 p.m. Papers not submitted in class must be turned in to the professor’s office (251 Stewart) or mailbox (inside 262 Stewart). **If a student is using the grace period for an assignment, s/he must notify the professor.**

3. After the grace period has passed, the professor will deduct one letter grade per day (Monday – Sunday) that the assignment is late.

4. Students who do not use their grace period will receive 3 bonus points at the end of the semester.

5. Accepted extenuating circumstances include inclement weather, illness, family death or other emergency, and other situations discussed with the professor. You will not lose points or use up your grace period in these situations. You must contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss these circumstances.
Some Final Notes

I encourage you to make use of my office hours. They are devoted to you so don’t feel as if you are disturbing me when you come by. If they are inconvenient for you, please feel free to set up an appointment with me.

I know that the above rules and regulations may seem like a bit much, and it may appear that this class is more structured than you thought. This syllabus is provided as merely a guideline for how this course will be run. I ask all of you to feel free to give me feedback about this course. It is important that this learning experience be multidirectional; that we learn from each other. This can not happen unless we all participate. Remember to communicate with me; let me know what’s going on. If for any reason you have a problem coming to class or meeting a deadline, please let me know.

Course Schedule and Reading List

Assigned readings are listed directly below the weekly topic. On some weeks there are many readings listed as required reading. Don’t panic. When there are numerous readings listed, they are relatively short. Please be aware that this schedule is tentative and subject to change. Additional readings may be assigned in class. All readings for each week must be completed prior to coming to class on Tuesday.

Reading Key:  
Racism: An American Cauldron = Doob  
Rethinking the Color Line = RCL  
Roots of Justice = RJ  
Course Packet = CP

Part I: The Processes of Constructing Race and Ethnicity

This section of the course will provide an overview of the course, an explanation of various approaches to the study of race and ethnicity, a discussion of relevant concepts, a debunking of biological theories of race, and an explanation of social construction theory and the social construction of race and ethnicity.

Week of September 4th: Course Introduction & Definitions

Required Reading:
1. Read the syllabus carefully so that you understand my perspectives, expectations, goals, and your responsibilities.

Week of September 9th: Social Construction Theory—Debunking Biological Theories of Race & Ethnicity

Required Reading:
3. “Sorting By Color: Why We Attach Meaning to Race.” p. 5-6 RCL  
4. “How Our Skins Got Their Color.” p. 7-9 RCL  
5. “Racial Formations.” p. 9-17 RCL  
6. “Theoretical Perspectives in Race and Ethnic Relations.” p. 18-34 RCL  
7. “We’re More Alike Than Different.” Handout  
8. “For 7 Million People in Census, One Race Category Isn’t Enough.” Handout  
9. “Redefining Minority.” Handout  
10. “Minorities Contribute Majority of Gains.” Handout  
11. “Diversity Expands in St. Cloud Schools.” Handout
Week of September 9th: Social Construction Theory—Debunking Biological Theories of Race & Ethnicity (Continued)

Recommended Reading:
1. “Chapter 9: South Africa and Brazil: Comparative Contexts of Racism.” p. 228-252 Doob

Memo #1 Due Thursday, September 11th

Week of September 16th: Why Categories are Constructed—The Functions of Racial & Ethnic Classification

Required Reading:
5. “Analysis of Census Finds Segregation Along with Diversity.” CP
6. “A Diverse City Exists Equal but Separate.” CP
7. “Segregation Growing Among U. S. Children.” CP

Recommended Reading:
1. “Korematsu v. United States, 1944.” CP

Part II: Social Institutions Creating & Maintaining Inequality

This section of the course will explain how societal institutions construct white as the “center” and all other races and ethnicities as the “other.” We will examine the process of racial classifications in the United States and how these classifications are maintained as systems of inequality through various institutions in the United States.

Week of September 23rd: The Role of Culture & Ideology in Racial & Ethnic Stratification

Required Reading:

Exercise #1 Due Tuesday, September 23rd

Week of September 30th: Law & Policy: The Role of the State in Racial & Ethnic Stratification

Required Reading:
1. “Chapter 3: Passage to Racism.” p. 45-74 Doob
4. “Race and the Uses of Law.” CP
5. “The Effects of Affirmative Action on Other Stakeholders.” CP

Recommended Reading:
1. “An Act for the Better Ordering and Governing of Negroes and Slaves, South Carolina, 1712.” CP
2. “The ‘Three-Fifths Compromise’: The U.S. Constitution, Article 1, Section 2.” CP
3. “An Act Prohibiting the Teaching of Slaves to Read.” CP
4. “People v. Hall, 1854.” CP
5. “The Black Codes.” CP
6. “Elk v. Wilkins.” CP
7. “Indian Tribes: A Continuing Quest for Survival.” CP
8. “Law and Order: Civil Rights Laws and White Privilege.” CP
Week of October 7th: The Economics of White Supremacy & Racial & Ethnic Stratification

Required Reading:

1. “Chapter 5: Knowing Your Place: Work and Housing,” p. 107-141 Doob
4. “Positive Functions of the Undeserving Poor,” p. 182-194 RCL
5. “Race, Gender, Work,” p. 274-289 RCL
6. “‘There’s No Shame in My Game,’” p. 290-306 RCL
7. “‘We’d Love to Hire Them But...’” p. 306-318 RCL

Exercise #2 Due Tuesday, October 7th

Note: No class Thursday, October 9th

Week of October 14th: Housing, Education & Access to Resources

Required Reading:

1. “Chapter 6: Blocking the Gateway: Education,” p. 142-172 Doob
2. “Savage Inequalities,” p. 172-182 RCL

Week of October 21st: Violence, Politics, and the Criminal Justice System

Required Reading:

1. “Chapter 4: Under the Thumb: Politics and the Criminal Justice System,” p. 75-106 Doob
4. “Race and Criminalization,” p. 244-253 RCL
5. “And the Poor Get Prison,” p. 254-274 RCL

Recommended Reading:

1. “Racial Antagonisms and Race-Based Social Policy.” CP
2. “‘United Communities Are Impregnable’: Violence and the Color Line.” CP

Mid-Semester Exam, Thursday, October 23rd

Week of October 28th: The Role of Language & the Media in Racial & Ethnic Stratification

Required Reading:

5. “Learning to Love Language in a Bilingual School,” CP
6. “Racism in the English Language,” CP
7. “How to Tame a Wild Tongue,” CP
8. “TV Arabs,” CP

Recommended Reading:


Exercise #3 Due Thursday, October 30th
Part III: Experiences of Exclusion & Inclusion

In this section of the course we will explore how racialized and ethnic minorities are excluded from full participation in the institutions of the social system and how whites experience privilege, furthering a system of racial and ethnic inequality in the United States.

Week of November 4th: Issues of Identity—Experiences of Exclusion & Inclusion

Required Reading:
2. “A Tour of Indian Peoples and Indian Lands.” p. 66-86 RCL

Memo #2 Due Tuesday, November 4th

Week of November 11th: Whiteness & Issues of Privilege

Required Reading:
1. “Is This a White Country, or What?” p. 464-474 RCL
2. “Optional Ethnicities.” p. 96-108 RCL
5. “White Privilege and Male Privilege.” CP
6. “How White People Became White.” CP

Exercise #4 Due Tuesday, November 11th

Week of November 18th: Alliances, Interconnections, & Intragroup Conflict

Required Reading:

Part IV: Action, Resistance, & Social Change

As we complete this course we will examine how systems of racial and ethnic stratification can be transformed from systems of inequality.

Week of November 25th: Tools for Transformation & Building Alliances

Required Reading:
2. “Ang Laka Ay Nasa Pagkakaiska/Strength is the Union.” p. 9-20 RJ
4. “It’s Our Army Too.” p. 31-40 RJ
5. “Affirmative Action from the Grass Roots.” p. 41-60 RJ
6. “Stand on the Street and Bounce a Ball.” p. 61-72 RJ

Exercise #5 Due Tuesday, November 25th
Week of December 2nd: Strategies for Action, Resistance, & Change

 Required Reading:
1. "Unafraid and Dignified." p. 73-91 RJ
2. "No Evictions. We Won’t Move!” p. 93-104 RJ
3. "You are Now on Indian Land.” p. 105-116 RJ
5. "Back to the Blanket.” p. 129-138 RJ
6. "Justice, Not Sympathy.” p. 139-151 RJ

Exercise #6 Due Tuesday, December 2nd

Week of December 9th: Current Trends in Transforming Systems of Racial & Ethnic Inequality—Where Do We Go From Here?

 Required Reading:
2. “Color-Blind Privilege” p. 575-588 RCL
4. “Getting Along.” p. 604-622 RCL
7. “The Problem of the Twenty-First century is the Problem of the Color Blind.” CP
8. “Confronting One’s Own Racism.” CP
9. “How White People Can Serve as Allies to People of Color in the Struggle to End Racism.” CP

Memo #3 Due Tuesday, December 9th

Note: Final Exam Tuesday, December 16th, 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Exercise #1, Week of September 16th
Due Tuesday, September 23rd

Below you will find three possible exercises on which to write. Select only one and please indicate the exercise you have chosen at the top of your paper. If one does not seem particularly interesting to you or is not your “style” you may select one of the others. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 4 – 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. The Declining Significance of Race?
Some observers believe that discussions of U. S. race relations are unfairly dominated by critics of the status quo. For example, Harvard sociologist William Julius Wilson, author of The Declining Significance of Race, suggests that class is more powerful than race as a determinant of a person's life chances, and that while racism is an unfortunate part of America's past, it has relatively little significance today (discussed on page 9 of Doob).
A. Evaluate this claim by analyzing arguments for and against. Do the course readings support a particular side?
B. How important do you believe your race is in determining your life chances? Is it more or less important than your social class? Are these two concepts intrinsically related? Support your answer with specific examples of how your race and class has affected your life chances thus far.
C. Using your empathy skills, envision a hypothetical person of your age whose race and class differs from yours. For example, if you are a middle-class Asian, picture a working-class Anglo-American, or a wealthy Latino. How do you think this person might answer part B differently than you? Do the readings support your answer? How? Support your answer with at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material.

2. Colorblind or Appreciating Difference?
Those who argue that the answer to racism is to become “colorblind,” claim that they don’t see a person’s race at all. Others say that it is impossible to be colorblind in our racially charged society, and we should aim towards accepting difference if not encouraging it. Let’s explore these ideas sociologically.
A. Reflecting on our class discussion of the social construction theory, provide some examples from at least two of the readings of how people create racial categories from daily interactions. What are the causes and effects of this behavior according to the authors and this paradigm? What do you think?
B. Several of the readings articulate many of the reasons why racial and ethnic classifications are constructed (see, for example, “Racial Formations” or “Drawing the Color Line”). Reflecting on the discussions in these readings, do you think that we can we (de/re)construct these categories? What are the implications of your argument? Support your answer with at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material.
C. In your opinion, could we work towards a culture that celebrates difference without discrimination? Should this be our goal? Or is the only solution to ending discrimination to strive towards a colorblind, homogeneous society? If so, who determines the norms? How does your personal experience inform your conclusion? Be sure to articulate and support yourself thoroughly.

3. The Social Construction Of Race And Ethnicity
Race and ethnicity describe categories of people whose physical and cultural characteristics are perceived as different. In this exercise, you are asked to investigate how race and ethnicity are socially constructed.
A. Define the theory of social construction using race and ethnicity as an example. Be sure to use this framework throughout your discussion.
B. Using examples from the readings discuss how perceptions, and therefore the position of racial and ethnic groups in the United States, are subject to change.
C. Some feel that media images of racial and ethnic groups in contemporary U. S. society are becoming more sensitive. Critics would argue, however, that “good images” do not necessarily prevent discrimination and oppression. What is your opinion, considering your discussion above of the social construction of race and ethnicity. Support your answer with at least three (3) readings as well as lecture material.

Sociology 268
Race & Ethnicity
Fall 2003
Exercise #2, Week of September 30th
Due Tuesday, October 7th

Below you will this week’s exercise. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 4 – 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

Affirmative Action

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson laid the foundation of what we now consider affirmative action policy in Executive Order #11246 which required federal contractors to take affirmative action to ensure equality of employment opportunity without regard to race, religion, and national origin. In 1968, gender was added to the list of protected categories. This question asks you to consider several issues related to affirmative action.

A. In what ways do you think affirmative action has impacted the life chances of people of color and whites in this country? For example, do you think that affirmative action is an effective policy for correcting past discrimination or has it lead to “reverse discrimination”? Support your argument with lecture material and at least two readings.

B. Historically whites, particularly males, have used unofficial affirmative action practices such as nepotism, social networking, and racial preferences. What argument can you make in support of or against this type of “affirmative action”? Can you make the same argument in support of or against official affirmative action policies?

C. Some argue that if affirmative action were eliminated, we would return to the Jim Crow era. Do you agree or disagree with this argument? Use lecture material and at least two course readings to support your answer.
Below you will find this week’s written assignment. You have two choices—please select only one and indicate your choice at the top of your paper. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 4 – 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

1. Racism and the English Language

Language communicates our ideas and concepts. As shown in the article by Robert B. Moore, racism can be found in the English language.

A. According to Moore, racism in the English language expresses and shapes our racial attitudes and thoughts. Do you agree or disagree with their assertion? Explain your answer and support your argument with at least three (3) course readings as well as material from class.

B. In their article, Lichter and Amundson discuss the negative images the media portrays of Latinos. What they illustrate is that those that occupy marginalized groups are not often given the opportunity to decide how they will be represented. How do you think this helps to maintain the oppression of marginalized groups?

C. Do you think it is possible to recreate or reclaim language (see the reading by Gloria Anzaldúa "How to Tame a Wild Tongue")? Why or why not? Provide your own examples and be certain to support your assertions.

2. Language and Assimilation

"Language is learned, induced, and developed, and as such reflects the values of the culture."

Adrienne Rich in "Language and Interracial Communication"

Consider the above quotation and answer the following questions:

A. Today in the U. S. there is a debate about the importance of bilingual education for children of different backgrounds. Develop your own argument, whether in favor of bilingual education or against it. Explain your answer and support your argument with at least three (3) course readings as well as material from class.

B. How do the experiences of Anzaldúa in the reading “How to Tame a Wild Tongue” illustrate the intimacy of the relationship between language, identity, culture and the development of one’s sense of self?

C. Do you believe that there are double standards regarding specific languages and cultures in contemporary U. S. society? Are some cultures and languages considered to be more acceptable? For instance, is the reaction the same when one hears French being spoken in public, as opposed to hearing Mexican-Spanish? Why or why not? Support your argument with readings, lecture material, etc.
**Sociology 268**  
**Race & Ethnicity**  
**Fall Semester, 2003**  

**Exercise #4, Week of November 4th**  
**Due Tuesday, November 11th**

Below you will find this week’s written assignment. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 4 – 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

**Racism: Issues of Identity**

In class we are discussing issues of identity and how they are influenced by experiences of racism. This exercise provides you with an opportunity to explore these issues further. Reflecting on the film *My America*, or *Honk if You Love Buddha* and your understanding of the readings answer the following questions:

A. In your opinion, what constitutes identity (i.e., what makes someone “who they are”)? What are indicators of identity? What influences one’s identity?

B. Incorporating examples from the film as well as at least two readings, what is the role of race/ethnicity in someone’s identity?

C. How does identity differ for persons who are members of the majority from those who are members of marginalized groups? How, if at all, does discrimination and oppression play a role? In your discussion, incorporate at least two readings for this section of the course and include examples to illustrate your answer.

D. Reflecting on your answers to the above, how important should race be in one’s identity? Be certain to support your statements and to incorporate course material where appropriate and to examine how your own standpoint (e.g., personal experiences) influences your answer.
Exercise #5, Week of November 18th
Due Tuesday, November 25th

Below you will find this week’s written assignment. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 4 through 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren't any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

Tools for Transformation and Building Alliances

Several of the readings for this section of the course discuss how to go about transforming inequality. Reflecting on these readings, answer the following questions:

A. We have spent a great deal of time this semester discussing constructions of race and racial inequality. In reading the selections in *Roots of Justice* do you think that the actions of those in the readings can lead to racial equality in society in general? Explain your answer, incorporating specific examples from the reading.

B. What kind of equality are people working for social change fighting for? Do you think that this kind of equality is possible (or necessary) in the United States? Explain your answer.

C. There are many strategies and tools that can be used to bring about positive social change. Considering what you have learned this semester, what types of strategies or tools will be effective in transforming our society? Support your answer thoroughly, particularly using examples from the readings.

In your answer, be certain to incorporate and draw upon course readings and to include course concepts and theories. In addition, be certain to support your assertions and to examine how your own standpoint influences these.
Exercise #6, Week of November 25th
Due December 2nd

Below you will find this week’s written assignment. In writing your exercise it is not necessary to answer the questions in any particular order, just be sure that your paper flows logically. Do be sure to answer all of the questions and be specific. Your goal is to demonstrate that you understand concepts from lecture and apply them. Furthermore, be certain to support your arguments and to consider the implications of your assertions. Finally, a complete answer draws on reading and lecture material.

Please remember that your answer must be 3 – 5 pages in length and to follow the guidelines listed on pages 4 – 6 of the syllabus for these papers. If you have any questions regarding these exercises, please do not hesitate to contact me during office hours or via e-mail. In addition, I encourage you to share this with a friend outside the class and ask her/him to read the exercise and your paper. This will be a good check to ensure that there aren’t any misspelled words, that your essay is coherent, and that you have addressed all the points.

Where Do We Go From Here?

This semester we have spent a great deal of time discussing issues of race, ethnicity, and racism and the various roles societal institutions play in creating or preventing racial inequality in the United States. In this exercise you will have the opportunity to revisit some of these issues and discuss where we should go from here. To do this, you will write a letter to someone (a parent, your roommate, a friend, a legislator, etc.) to whom you would like to explain what you have learned about race, ethnicity, and racism and what you think will be the future of racial equality in this country. Your letter should include a discussion of the following:

A. Explain how you view issues of race, ethnicity, and racism. Specifically, discuss whether or not you believe that there is racism in the United States.

B. Explain what you see as the source of racial inequality in the United States. Be certain to use course readings (at least three) to support your answer.

C. Using the readings that have been assigned from Roots of Justice, explain to the person to whom you are writing where you think we should go from here in the struggle for racial equality. What societal and institutional changes are necessary? What changes do individuals need to make? Remember, you are trying to explain these issues to the addressee and to convince her or him of your ideas. As a result, be certain to support your answer thoroughly.

D. Finally, tell the person to whom you are writing what you plan to do to work toward racial equality in the United States. What would you like her/him to do?

In your answer, be certain to incorporate and draw upon the examples that the authors offer and to include course concepts and theories. In addition, be certain to support your assertions and to examine how your own standpoint influences these.
Mean scores are based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 = Poor</th>
<th>2 = Fair</th>
<th>3 = Average</th>
<th>4 = Good</th>
<th>5 = Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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Summary Quantitative Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Number Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s attitude toward students has been…</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The clarity and understandability of the instructor’s explanations could</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>best be described as…</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The openness of the instructor to differences in point of view in matters</td>
<td>4.18</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of opinion has been…</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of fairness, the instructor’s methods of evaluation have been…</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s teaching methods have been ________ when it comes to</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>encouraging learning in this subject.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>In his/her interest in the subject, the instructor can best be described</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
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<td>as…</td>
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<tr>
<td>The instructor has been ________ when it comes to stimulating interest in</td>
<td>4.39</td>
<td>33</td>
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<tr>
<td>the subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The instructor’s knowledge of the subject is…</td>
<td>4.91</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for questions and discussion in class have been…</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate this instructor overall?</td>
<td>4.76</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the coming weeks, you will find that this course relies heavily on communication. This syllabus is provided to you as a means of beginning and facilitating this process. In the following pages, I share some of the bases for my teaching philosophy as well as my expectations of you in this course. Please be sure to read this over very carefully.

This semester we will examine the sociological dimensions of the various ways women have organized for social justice in response to the powerful forces of the global expansion of capitalism. Examinations of globalization typically focus on broad economic, social, and political dimension of these changes, but few observe the numerous ways in which they reshape the everyday lives of women in different parts of the world. This semester we apply various feminist frameworks to our study of women’s responses to the effects of globalization, exploring the local implications and connections of these global movements. Our primary goal will be to understand their impact on structural relations of power and inequality—particularly focusing on issues of class, labor, and allocation of resources such as land, food, and water. Throughout our discussions of a range of movements and revolutions we will explore what women have done for social justice and the ways in which their actions relate to feminism.

Keep in mind that this is a seminar. More than other courses, a seminar depends on the steady work, commitment, and engagement of all participants. Being passive is not appropriate, nor can you expect to do well by coasting through the semester. You must come prepared to actively participate in collaborative inquiry and to consistently contribute to class discussions. You will find that the greater your participation in this class, the more fully will your educational and social experiences this semester be enriched.

Finally, to successfully complete the goals of this course, we must establish and develop a foundation of respect so that all of us can fully participate. Please keep in mind that when discussing issues in this class, all opinions will be respected and accepted as long as they are argued critically, and I ask that you respect the opinions expressed by myself as well as your classmates.
The following are our objectives for this term:

1. To explore the sociological dimensions of global movements for social justice.
2. To apply feminist theoretical frameworks to studies of responses to globalization.
3. To develop a sociological understanding of class, labor, and allocation of resources in a global context.
4. To explore the local implications of global movements for social justice.
5. To develop a better understanding of how sociological concepts, theories, methods, and findings can be applied to the study of social movements.
6. To develop an appreciation for the multiple ways in which people have mobilized for social justice.

Perhaps the most important element of this course is critical thinking. To think critically means:

First, we must identify and challenge assumptions. We should try to identify the assumptions that are at the foundation of the concepts, values, beliefs, and behaviors that we deem important in our society. Having identified these assumptions we need to then explore their accuracy and legitimacy, considering whether or not what we take for granted does indeed reflect the realities that we experience.

Second, to think critically we need to be aware of our place and time in our culture. When asking questions about aspects of our culture we need to be aware of our own standpoint—the position from which we are asking these questions. In other words, we need to be aware of our own location at a particular intersection of culture and history, and how that is impacted by our own race/ethnicity, social class, sex/gender, sexuality, ability, age, etc. and how that in turn influences the questions we ask as well as the answers we accept. Our standpoint also influences what we see as “normal” or “ordinary” behavior. This relates to the concept of enculturation—immersion in our own culture to the point where we assume our way of life is “natural” or “normal”. Because we are so enculturated into our own societal standards and practices we often assume that they are the only options and, as a result, we are unaware of alternatives. Furthermore, as a result of this lack of awareness we often view those who have other cultural standards or practices as behaving in a strange or unnatural manner.

Third, when thinking critically we need to imagine alternative ways of thinking. In doing so, we must examine the assumptions that are at the foundations of our ideas and ways of behaving. Considering alternatives to current ways of thinking can often provide us with new insights about widely accepted ideas.

Fourth, to think critically one must develop a reflective analysis. Such an analysis requires that we be skeptical, not in the sense that we don’t believe anything we see but rather that we question what are seen as fixed belief systems now that we know there are possible alternatives to these beliefs. A reflective analysis requires that we challenge dominant ideas as well as popularly held notions regarding solutions to social problems.

Thinking critically frees us from personal, environmental, and institutional forces that prevent us from seeing new directions. Furthermore, as critical thinkers we are no longer passive recipients of knowledge
and products of socialization. Rather, after thoughtful scrutiny and continuously asking questions we become active participants in arriving at our own ideas and commitments. As a result, our ideas are based on a solid and informed foundation, all the while keeping in mind that we may still be wrong. When we face challenges to our ideas we will be better prepared to provide justification for and evidence in their support.

As you will come to notice, a fundamental aspect of this course is to think critically about mobilizations for social justice. When teaching this course, my object is not to negate your belief system and provide you with a new one, but rather to provide you with an environment that allows you to think critically about the attitudes and opinions you have been given. By doing so, it is my expectation that you will develop a belief system that you can claim as your own. I will continually push you to challenge yourself. Thus, memorization is not the intent of this course. Rather, I ask you to understand and comprehend the material presented to you and to think about how it either challenges or reinforces your ideas of how the world works.

### Course Books

**There are five required texts for this course:**


The books may be purchased at the SCSU Campus Bookstore or at Campus Book and Supply. Readings will also be assigned in addition to these and will be distributed in class.

### Course Requirements

Your final grade will consist of the following components:

- **Class Facilitation** ................................................................. 10%
- **Critical Questions** .............................................................. 15%
- **Class Participation** ............................................................ 15%
- **Semester Research Project** .................................................. 60%
Class Facilitation

The first component of your final grade requires you to help facilitate class discussion once this semester. This facilitation will be done in pairs. To prepare for this facilitation each pair will need to come to class the week prior to the week they facilitate with at least five questions for critical thinking and discussion (Note: this will be different for the first pair of facilitators). These questions will relate to the readings and/or topic of your assigned week. Your pair will then need to come to class on the week you are assigned prepared to facilitate a discussion on the reading/topic. The professor will aid each pair in this facilitation. This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade (each member of the pair will receive the same grade). Greater detail on this assignment will be distributed on a separate handout. A sign-up sheet for this assignment will be distributed in class.

Critical Questions

At three points in the semester you will be required to prepare and raise in class a “critical question” based on the readings for that week. The intent of this question is to foster discussion on the topic being addressed. In addition to introducing and explaining your question to the class, you will submit a 1 – 2 page paper stating your question as well as a discussion of your own ideas relating to answering that question. Each paper will be worth 5% for a total of 15% of your grade. A sign-up sheet for this assignment will be distributed in class.

Class Participation

An additional portion of your final grade will be based upon your attendance at and your participation in each class. Attendance is mandatory in this class. Each time you are absent I will deduct 3 points from your final grade. Three (3) or more absences will result in an ‘F’ for the course. Consistently arriving late will also detract from your grade. If for any reason you need to miss class, please let me know. This component of your grade is worth 15% of your final grade.

Semester Research Project

A major portion of your grade will be based on a semester research project. This project has several components:

- **Project Proposal**: 10%  
  Due: February 7th
- **Annotated Bibliography**: 10%  
  Due: February 25th
- **Literature Review**: 10%  
  Due: March 18th
- **Final Paper**: 15%  
  Due: April 15th
- **Web Page**: 15%

This research project will require you to examine a specific global social movement in detail, exploring the roles of women and/or feminisms in this movement. Your goal as an individual student is to explore a
movement about which you currently know very little. Our goal as a class is to make the information that
we gather both available and useful to those outside of this class. To that end, we will construct a web
page as a class that will serve as a “clearinghouse” of information (e.g., other web pages, documents,
contact information, sources of additional information) on movements of social justice. We will determine
what this page contains, as well as its organization and design, as a class. Details of this project, as well
as each component, will be explained and distributed in class. Each component will be a graded
assignment worth a total of 60% of your final grade.

Paper Guidelines

The following are guidelines to be used when completing any written assignments for this course:
✓ Your papers must be typed or word processed and free of spelling and grammatical errors. If for any
reason you feel that you need help with your writing, please feel free to see me in my office hours or
after class. You may also consult with The Write Place for assistance (Riverview 118, Phone: 308-
2031, Web: http://leo.stcloudstate.edu, e-mail: leolink@stcloudstate.edu).
✓ Be sure to keep an extra copy of all work handed in to me.

Finally, as outlined in the Saint Cloud State University Code of Conduct, it is your responsibility to refrain
from academic dishonesty, including but not limited to:

Coding Cheating: Intentionally and knowingly using or attempting to use unauthorized materials,
information, study aids or electronic data in any academic exercise.

Coding Plagiarism: Includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation, the
published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement;
unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in selling or
otherwise providing term papers or other academic materials; and commercialization, sale, or
distribution of class notes without the instructors’ permission.

Coding Fabrication: Intentional or unauthorized falsification of any information or citation in an academic
endeavor.

Some Final Notes

I know that the above rules and regulations may seem like a bit much, and it may appear that this class is
more structured than you thought. This syllabus is provided as merely a guideline for how this course will
be run. I ask all of you to feel free to give me feedback about this course. It is important that this learning
experience be multidirectional; that we learn from each other. This cannot happen unless we all
participate. Remember to communicate with me. If for any reason you have a problem coming to class or
meeting a deadline, please let me know.
Assigned readings are listed directly below the weekly topic. Please be aware that this schedule is tentative and subject to change. Additional readings will be assigned in class throughout the semester.

Reading Key:  
- Women’s Activism and Globalization = WAG  
- The Revolution Question = RQ  
- I, Rigoberta Menchú = RM  
- The Green Belt Movement = GB  
- Water Wars = WW  
- Additional readings—distributed in class = AR

January 24th: Course Introduction—Why Study Social Movements?  
**Required Reading:**  
1. Read the syllabus carefully so that you understand my perspectives, expectations, goals, and your responsibilities.

Section I: Women’s Responses to Globalization: Local Struggles and Transnational Politics  
January 31st: Defining the Terms & Setting the Contexts  
**Required Reading:**  
1. Naples, Nancy A. “Changing the Terms.” p. 3-14 WAG  

**Required Reading:**  
2. Hrycak, Alexandra. “From Mother’s Rights to Equal Rights.” p. 64-82 WAG  

Project Proposal due February 7th—in class.

February 14th: The Impact of Transnational Activism on Global Politics  
**Required Reading:**  
2. Wells, Betty L. Context, Strategy, Ground.” p. 142-155 WAG  
4. Wing, Susana D. Women Activists in Mali.” p. 172-185 WAG

February 21st: Activism and the Transnational State  
**Required Reading:**  
2. Cichowski, Rachel A. “No Discrimination Whatsoever.” p. 220-238 WAG  

Annotated Bibliography due Friday, February 25th @ noon.
Section II: Feminisms & Revolutions

February 28th: Femininity & Feminisms: Practical and Strategic Actions for Social Justice

Required Reading:

March 14th: Post-Revolutionary Periods and the Roles of Women and Feminisms

Required Reading:
4. “Conclusion: Unity-Inspired Divisions.” p. 159-168 RQ

Literature Review due March 18th @ noon.

Section III: The Raising of Revolutionary Consciousness

March 21st: I, Rigoberta Menchú—The Raising of My Consciousness

Required Reading:
2. Chapters I – XVI, p. 1-121 RM

March 28th: I, Rigoberta Menchú—Guatemalan Resistance

Required Reading:
1. Chapters XVI – XXXIV, p. 122-247 RM

Section IV: Social Movements in Focus

April 4th: The Green Belt Movement

Required Reading:
8. “Constraints.” p. 75-79 GB

Final papers due
April 11th: Water Wars

Required Reading:

1. “Preface.” p. ix-xv WW
4. “Climate Change and the Water Crisis.” p. 39-52 WW
8. “Converting Scarcity Into Abundance.” p. 119-130 WW

Section V: Sharing Our Knowledge

In this final section of the course students will work together as a class designing and constructing a web site that will serve as a clearinghouse for the role of women and feminisms in global social movements for social justice. While we will begin this process earlier in the semester, these final weeks are intended for us to share the knowledge that we gained in our research and focus our attention toward completing this task.

April 18th: Web Design and Construction

Required Reading:

1. To be assigned.

April 25th: Web Design and Construction

Required Reading:

1. To be assigned.

May 3rd: Web Design, Construction, & Completion

Required Reading:

1. To be assigned.
Class Facilitation Assignment

As indicated in your syllabus, a portion of your participation grade requires that you help facilitate class discussion once this semester. You will be working in pairs in order to prepare for this facilitation. In your facilitation you will be required to focus on the reading assignments for the week that you have chosen. This is a graded assignment and will be worth 10% of your final grade. The following guidelines will help you prepare for your facilitation.

Preparation

1. Read all required readings for your particular topic.
2. Meet at least one week in advance to decide on what particular focus you want to take. Please note that the weekly topics are fairly broad. In order to have an effective discussion you should narrow the focus to something that can be covered in the class session and that will engage the attention of the class.
3. Prepare at least five (5) questions based on the readings and the topic of the week that you will use to guide the discussion.
4. Provide the class with copies of your discussion questions at least one class session prior to class that you will facilitate.

Facilitation

1. You will be required to facilitate discussion for at least one hour.
2. At the beginning of your facilitation provide us with a rationale for your questions.
3. As facilitators your role is to keep discussion moving along, not to dominate discussion. Draw ideas together and comment on ideas raised by other students. Offer insights that help us to move toward a conclusion or the discussion of new ideas.
4. The professor will assist in your facilitation as the need arises.

The purpose of this assignment is to give you a voice in class discussion and the issues addressed. Have fun with this assignment. Use this as an opportunity to show what you know about sociology and why it is important to you.
As indicated in your syllabus, a major portion of your grade will be based on a semester research project. This project will be reported in a 10-15 page paper (if you are connecting this project to your senior project or are a graduate student, your final paper should be 20-25 pages). To begin this project you will need to write a research proposal, outlining the details of the topic and methods of your research.

**Framing a Question**

In this course we will be examining the sociological dimensions of the various ways women have organized for social justice in response to the powerful forces of the global expansion of capitalism. Reflecting on this, develop a research question that will address a specific global social movement, exploring the roles of women and/or feminisms in this movement. Remember, your goal as an individual student is to explore a movement about which you currently know very little.

**Writing your Proposal**

In a 3-5 page, double-spaced paper you should articulate your research question, the motivation of this question, and how you plan on going about answering your question (your expected methods, sources, etc.). There are many options in what type of paper you may write:

- **Textual Analysis:** a paper that uses text as data as well as the source of your question.
- **Library Research:** a paper that uses the library to refine your question and as a source of your data.
- **Ethnographic Research:** a paper that uses data gathered from observing or interacting with people “in the field.”
- **Quantitative Research:** a paper using numerical data (primary or secondary) to answer a sociological question.

Any of the above (or a combination of different components of each) is acceptable for this project. Please be certain to indicate what type of paper you plan to write.
As a portion of your final project for this course you will need to write an annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography is a list of citations to books, articles, and documents. Each citation is followed by a brief (usually no more than 150 words) descriptive and evaluative paragraph. The purpose of the annotation is to inform the reader of the relevance, accuracy, and quality of the sources cited. Please note that annotations differ from abstracts. Abstracts are the purely descriptive summaries often found at the beginning of scholarly journal articles or in periodical indexes. Annotations are descriptive and critical; they expose the author's point of view, clarity and appropriateness of the source to your research.

Your bibliography should include a minimum of 10 sources. When writing each annotation, be certain to provide enough information to allow for a comprehensive understanding of the purpose, content, and special importance of the source. It is also important to be concise in your descriptions. The following guidelines, adapted from the Write Place web site at Saint Cloud State University (http://leo.stcloudstate.edu/research/annotated.html), should be helpful in writing each annotation:

- First, locate and record citations to books, periodicals, and documents that may contain useful information and ideas on your topic. Briefly examine and review the actual items. Then choose those works that provide a variety of perspectives on your topic.
- Provide the complete details of the citation. You can use whatever citation format you choose (e.g., MLA, APA, ASA), just be consistent.
- Describe the main point of the source.
- Briefly outline the content of the source.
- Indicate the relevance of the source to your project (e.g., how it supports your thesis, it's place in your paper).
- Evaluate the relevance of the information to your project.
- Explain how this work illuminates your bibliography topic.
- Evaluate the authority or background of the author.
- Compare or contrast this work with another you have cited.
- Indicate any possible shortcomings of the source.

The following example, using the APA format for the journal citation, may be helpful to you:


The authors, researchers at the Rand Corporation and Brown University, use data from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Young Women and Young Men to test their hypothesis that non-family living by young adults alters their attitudes, values, plans, and expectations, moving them away from their belief in traditional sex roles. They find their hypothesis strongly supported in young females, while the effects were fewer in studies of young males. Increasing the time away from parents before marrying increased individualism, self-sufficiency, and changes in attitudes about families. In contrast, an earlier study by Williams shows no significant gender differences in sex role attitudes as a result of non-family living.
Literature Review: Due March 18 at noon

As indicated in your syllabus, a major portion of your grade will be based on a semester research project. The next step in this project is to write a literature review. The following details the requirements of this assignment.

**Literature Review:**

Your goal in writing a research paper is to provide your reader with an opportunity to increase their understanding of the subject that you are addressing. Regardless of the type of research paper you are writing, you must know what has already been learned in order to give your readers comprehensive and up-to-date information or to add something new to what is already known about a subject. This is the purpose of writing a literature review: a thoughtful collection and analysis of available information on your research question. It tells you what is already known and provides a context for your research. The literature review should tell the reader:

- The most relevant information available on your topic from previously compiled or published studies, articles, or other documents.
- What these studies conclude about your topic.
- The strengths and weaknesses of these studies.
- What remains to be known about your topic.
- What appear to be the most effect ways for developing new information on your topic.

Your literature review should consist of a written narrative that addresses the above points. The success of your research project depends on the care with which you do so.

In the **Introduction**...

- define or identify the general topic of your research question, thus providing an appropriate context for reviewing the literature.
- point out overall trends in what has been published about the topic; or conflicts in theory, methodology, evidence, and conclusions; or gaps in research and scholarship; or a single problem or new perspective of immediate interest.
- establish the writer's reason (point of view) for reviewing the literature; explain the criteria to be used in analyzing and comparing literature and the organization of the review (sequence); and, when necessary, state why certain literature is or is not included (scope).

In the **Body**...

- group research studies and other types of literature (reviews, theoretical articles, case studies, etc.) according to common denominators such as themes in the literature, conclusions of authors, specific purpose or objective, chronology, etc.
- summarize individual studies or articles with as much or as little detail as each merits according to its comparative importance in the literature.
- provide the reader with strong "umbrella" sentences at beginnings of paragraphs, "signposts" throughout, and brief "so what" summary sentences at intermediate points in the review to aid in understanding comparisons and analyses.

In the **Conclusion**...

- summarize major contributions of significant studies and articles to the body of knowledge under review, maintaining the focus established in the introduction.
- evaluate the current "state of the art" for the body of knowledge reviewed, pointing out major methodological flaws or gaps in research, inconsistencies in theory and findings, and areas or issues pertinent to future study.
- conclude by providing some insight into the relationship between the central topic of the literature review and the larger area of your research question.
As indicated in your syllabus, a major portion of your grade will be based on a semester research project. The next stage in this project is a 10-15 page paper (if you are connecting this project to your senior project or are a graduate student, your final paper should be 20-25 pages). The following details the requirements of this assignment. Keep in mind that this is just a guideline.

**Introduction:**

Your introduction should provide a background of your subject and an overview of your paper. In it you should include:

- Description of form of global social movement studied: what movement did you study. What form of inequality does this movement address? Use appropriate portions of your proposal assignment here.
- Research objectives: You should provide a detailed statement of your research objectives, stating the ideas you explore in the paper.
- Statement of the research problem: What is the overall question or issue that you are addressing.
- Methods: Discuss the research methods that you used. Did you do library research? Did you interview or observe people? If so, how did you choose your participants.

**Literature Review:**

This section of the paper should present a critical analysis of the prior research studies, reviews of literature, and theoretical articles relating to your subject. In this section of the paper be certain to address the following questions:

- How does your research build on these earlier studies?
- Are there gaps in the literature that your research will fill?
- Does your research challenge the findings or propositions put forward by earlier studies?

**Findings:**

In this section of your paper you should present your own research and findings. For those of you who did original research (interviewing people, observations, etc.) you should provide an overview of your findings and how they answer your research question. For those of you relying primarily on library and other text research you should provide your insights on how effective you think the movement you studied has been in addressing the social injustice they were attempting to reconcile. Here you can also discuss your own ideas as to how to address the social injustices that the movement sought to remedy.

Arrange your discussion under appropriate subheadings. Typically, these are drawn in terms of different groups of findings. Without these subdivisions, your discussion will be confusing. They will therefore add clarity and coherence to your paper. You will need to decide which subheadings are most appropriate for your paper.

**Conclusion:**

This section typically consists of a summary and conclusion. The summary repeats, in less detail, the major findings of your project. The conclusion explores the implications of these findings. In concluding, discuss the repercussions of the movement’s effectiveness in addressing social injustice as well as the implications of your own proposed solutions. For example, what policies would need to change in order to bring about social justice in this particular area? What elements of the social structure would be impacted by your proposed solutions?

Again, the above is merely a guideline. If you have questions about how to apply the suggestions made above to your own project, please do not hesitate to contact me.
Teaching Evaluations
Sociology 462: Global Social Movements
Spring Semester, 2005
Summary Quantitative Data

Mean scores are based on the following scale:

1 = Poor
2 = Fair
3 = Average
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Score</th>
<th>Number Responding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s attitude toward students has been…</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The clarity and understandability of the instructor’s explanations could best be described as…</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The openness of the instructor to differences in point of view in matters of opinion has been…</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In terms of fairness, the instructor’s methods of evaluation have been…</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor’s teaching methods have been ________ when it comes to encouraging learning in this subject.</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In his/her interest in the subject, the instructor can best be described as…</td>
<td>4.72</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The instructor has been _______ when it comes to stimulating interest in the subject.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The instructor’s knowledge of the subject is…</td>
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<tr>
<td>Opportunities for questions and discussion in class have been…</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would you rate this instructor overall?</td>
<td>4.78</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sociology 462/562
Sociology and the Politics of Food
Fall Semester, 2005
Mondays, 6:00 p.m. – 8:55 p.m.

Professor: Tracy E. Ore
Office: Stewart Hall 353
Phone: 308-5570
E-Mail Address: teore@stcloudstate.edu
Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 10:00 a.m. – Noon; Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.; and by appointment.
Course Web Site: http://web.stcloudstate.edu/teore/Food/FoodPolitics.htm

In the coming weeks, you will find that this course relies heavily on communication. This syllabus is provided to you as a means of beginning and facilitating this process. In the following pages, I share some of the bases for my teaching philosophy as well as my expectations of you in this course. Please be sure to read this over very carefully.

This semester we will examine the various sociological and political dimensions of food. Atkins and Bowler note, "the study of food is rather like a 'barium meal’ for X-raying social, political, economic and cultural issues, a kind of marker dye for broad structures and processes. In this sense food is the bearer of significance, as well as a material object of consumption." (Food in Society. 2001:vii) In sum, in this course food will serve as a mechanism through which we will examine larger structural issues in society.

As we examine the questions "Where does our food come from, and how does it get to our tables?" we become aware of how little knowledge we have of the processes involved in producing and distributing our food. As Barndt notes, when we examine these questions, "we open a Pandora’s box…whose hands have planted, cultivated, picked, packed, processed, transported, inspected, sold, and cooked it?" (Tangled Routes. 2002:2) How do these processes relate to structures of power and inequality? How is our disconnect from food and processes of production, consumption, and distribution impacted by as well as reflected in our disconnect from the communities within which we live? We will explore these and many other questions this semester.

Keep in mind that this is a seminar. More than other courses, a seminar depends on the steady work, commitment, and engagement of all participants. Seminars can be engaging and thought-provoking spaces. In order for that to occur, we all need to participate equally and respectfully through, first, thoughtfully reading the material for each week (do not to come to class without doing the readings), and second, listening and speaking in class. You will find that the greater your participation in this class, the more your educational and social experiences this semester will be fully enriched.

My expectations in this seminar are that everyone will attend all class sessions and everyone will participate in each class discussion. Additionally, I would expect to see those who are more talkative making space for and encouraging those members who are typically more quiet. Similarly, I would hope to see those who are typically more quiet take opportunities to voice their ideas. I encourage you to view this course as a place to build community through conversations relevant to the study of the politics of food.
The following are our objectives for this term:

1. To explore the social meanings and the structural relations of power regarding the production, distribution, preparation and consumption of food.
2. To develop a sociological understanding of the structure of a globalized, industrialized agriculture and food system and the impacts on farmers, consumers and communities.
3. To examine the organization of a global food system that links the production and consumption of food; particularly how it generates abundance for some and famine for others.
4. To acquire knowledge of current responses to social problems regarding food and agriculture.
5. To develop a better understanding of how sociological concepts, theories, methods, and findings can be applied to the study of food.
6. To further our appreciation for the value of sociology and sociological perspectives in examining our world.
7. To develop an appreciation for the multiple ways in which sociology can be applied.

Perhaps the most important element of this course is critical thinking. To think critically means:

**First**, we must identify and challenge assumptions. We should try to identify the assumptions that are at the foundation of the concepts, values, beliefs, and behaviors that we deem important in our society. Having identified these assumptions we need to then explore their accuracy and legitimacy, considering whether or not what we take for granted does indeed reflect the realities that we experience.

**Second**, to think critically we need to be aware of our place and time in our culture. When asking questions about aspects of our culture we need to be aware of our own standpoint—the position from which we are asking these questions. In other words, we need to be aware of our own location at a particular intersection of culture and history, and how that is impacted by our own race/ethnicity, social class, sex/gender, sexuality, ability, age, etc. and how that in turn influences the questions we ask as well as the answers we accept. Our standpoint also influences what we see as “normal” or “ordinary” behavior. This relates to the concept of enculturation—immersion in our own culture to the point where we assume our way of life is “natural” or “normal”. Because we are so enculturated into our own societal standards and practices we often assume that they are the only options and, as a result, we are unaware of alternatives. Furthermore, as a result of this lack of awareness we often view those who have other cultural standards or practices as behaving in a strange or unnatural manner.

**Third**, when thinking critically we need to imagine alternative ways of thinking. In doing so, we must examine the assumptions that are at the foundations of our ideas and ways of behaving. Considering alternatives to current ways of thinking can often provide us with new insights about widely accepted ideas.

**Fourth**, to think critically one must develop a reflective analysis. Such an analysis requires that we be skeptical, not in the sense that we don’t believe anything we see but rather that we question what are seen as fixed belief systems now that we know there are possible alternatives to these beliefs. A reflective analysis requires that we challenge dominant ideas as well as popularly held notions regarding solutions to social problems.

Thinking critically frees us from personal, environmental, and institutional forces that prevent us from seeing new directions. Furthermore, as critical thinkers we are no longer passive recipients of knowledge.
and products of socialization. Rather, after thoughtful scrutiny and continuously asking questions we become active participants in arriving at our own ideas and commitments. As a result, our ideas are based on a solid and informed foundation, all the while keeping in mind that we may still be wrong. When we face challenges to our ideas we will be better prepared to provide justification for and evidence in their support.

As you will come to notice, a fundamental aspect of this course is to think critically about food in society. When teaching this course, my object is not to negate your belief system and provide you with a new one, but rather to provide you with an environment that allows you to think critically about the attitudes and opinions you have been given. By doing so, it is my expectation that you will develop a belief system that you can claim as your own. I will continually push you to challenge yourself. Thus, I ask you to understand and comprehend the material presented to you and to think about how it either challenges or reinforces your ideas of how the world works.

Course Books

There are five required texts for this course:


Pham, Andrew X. 2000. *Catfish and Mandala.* New York: Picador USA.


The books may be purchased at the SCSU Husky Bookstore or at Campus Book and Supply. In addition to these texts, additional readings will be distributed in class. Books for this course will be available on reserve at Learning Resources and Technology Services (LRS) in the Miller Center. **Please note that readings may be assigned in addition to those listed in the course schedule and reading list.**

Course Requirements

Please Note: A passing grade in this course requires successful completion of each component of the course requirements.

Your final grade will consist of the following components:

- **Class Facilitation** ................................................................. 10%
- **Food Example** ................................................................. 5%
- **Field Trip** ......................................................................... 10%
- **Novel Paper** ................................................................. 15%
- **Class Participation** ................................................................. 15%
- **Semester Research Project** ................................................................. 45%
Class Facilitation

The first component of your final grade requires you to help facilitate class discussion once this semester. This facilitation will be done in pairs. To prepare for this facilitation each pair will need to come to class the week prior to the week they facilitate with at least five questions for critical thinking and discussion. These questions will relate to the readings and/or topic of your assigned week. Your pair will then need to come to class on the week you are assigned prepared to facilitate a discussion on the reading/topic for at least one hour of the class. The professor will aid each pair in this facilitation. This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade (each member of the pair will receive the same grade). Greater detail on this assignment will be distributed on a separate handout. A sign-up sheet for this assignment will be distributed in class.

Food Example

You will note that the syllabus includes a variety of familiar and not so familiar examples of food to illustrate the concepts and issues being addressed. At one point in the semester you are required to bring food to class. This should be food that others can sample, but you do not need to bring enough to feed a meal to the entire class. When bringing your example, be prepared to explain why you brought the food that you did to the class. In addition, you will submit a 2 to 3 page, double-spaced critical reflection of either the production, distribution, or consumption of the food item.

Field Trip

There are four field trips planned for this class:

Field Trip 1: Tour of Lisa Bergin’s farm, Friday, September 16th. Depart SCSU @ 7:00 a.m.
Field Trip 2: Tour of St. Paul’s Farmer’s Market, Saturday, September 17th. Depart SCSU @ 6:30 a.m.
Field Trip 3: Tour of Gold’n Plump Poultry Processing Plant, Friday, October 14th. Depart SCSU @ 7:00 a.m.
Field Trip 4: A “slow food” tour of Minneapolis and St. Paul, Saturday, November 5th. Depart SCSU @ 7:30 a.m.

You are required to participate in at least one of these field trips. This assignment is worth 10% of your final grade. Additional details will be discussed in class.

Novel Paper

There are three novels assigned for this course (The Jungle, My Year of Meats, and Catfish and Mandala). Each offers insightful commentary on the food, “American culture,” and the like. While we will discuss these texts at several points in the semester, you will need to select one of these on which you will write a 5-page paper. The schedule of due dates is as follows:

- The Jungle: October 17th
- My Year of Meats: October 31st
- Catfish and Mandala: December 5th

Details of the paper assignment will be distributed later in the semester. This will be a graded assignment and is worth 15% of your final grade.
Class Participation

An additional portion of your final grade will be based upon your attendance at and your participation in each class. Attendance is mandatory in this class. Each time you are absent I will deduct 3 points from your final grade. Three (3) or more absences will result in an ‘F’ for the course. Consistently arriving late will also detract from your grade. If for any reason you need to miss class, please let me know. Please also see my expectations for participating in a seminar on page one of this syllabus. This component of your grade is worth 15% of your final grade.

Semester Research Project

A major portion of your grade will be based on a semester research project. This project has several components:

- Project Proposal 5%  Due: September 26th
- Literature Review 15%  Due: November 14th
- Final “Facts & Actions” Sheet 15%  Due: December 5th
- Web Page 10%

This research project will require you to select a food item (something that humans consume) and examine how the production, distribution, preparation, consumption, and/or representation (pick one or more) creates, reinforces, or challenges structures of power among specific groups of people. In addition to your individual research projects, our goal as a class will be to make the information that we gather both available and useful to those outside of this class. To that end, we will construct a web page as a class that will serve as a “clearinghouse” of information on the politics of food. We will determine what this page contains, as well as its organization and design, as a class. Details of this project, as well as each component, will be distributed in class. Each of these will be graded assignments worth a total of 45% of your final grade.

Late Policy

I do not accept late papers. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the date indicated in this syllabus.

Some Final Notes

I encourage you to make use of my office hours. They are devoted to you so don’t feel as if you are disturbing me when you come by. If they are inconvenient for you, please feel free to set up an appointment with me.

I know that the above rules and regulations may seem like a bit much, and it may appear that this class is more structured than you thought. This syllabus is provided as merely a guideline for how this course will be run. I ask all of you to feel free to give me feedback about this course. It is important that this learning experience be multidirectional; that we learn from each other. This cannot happen unless we all participate.
Assigned readings are listed directly below the weekly topic. On some weeks there are many readings listed as required reading. Don’t panic. When there are numerous readings listed, they are relatively short. Please be aware that this schedule is tentative and subject to change. Additional readings may be assigned in class.

**Reading Key:**  
*Fast Food Nation* = FFN  
*Tangled Routes* = TR  
Additional Readings = AR

**Theme I: Approaches to the Study of Food**

There have been many influences in the study of food. This section of the course will provide an overview of some of these approaches and explain why it is important to study food.

**Week of September 12th:** Course Introduction—Why Study Food?

**Required Reading:**
1. None.

Field Trip 1: Tour of Lisa Bergin’s farm, Friday, September 16th. Depart SCSU @ 7:00 a.m.

Field Trip 2: Tour of St. Paul’s Farmer’s Market, Saturday, September 17th. Depart SCSU @ 6:30 a.m.

**Week of September 19th:** Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Food

**Required Reading:**
2. “Frames and Filters: Theoretical and Methodological Approaches” p. 54-81 TR

**Theme II: From Seed to Fruit; Calf to Cow: The Production of Food**

In this section of the course we will examine the political economy and ecology of the production of food. As you will come to find, there is a significantly complex diversity of trends regarding food production. We will examine several of the factors that influence these trends, as well as the impact of food production on the eco-system, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), organic farming, and other ethical issues regarding food production.

**Week of September 26th:** Government Policies and Food Regulation

**Required Reading:**
1. “Introduction” p. 1-10 FFN
3. “Your Trusted Friends” p. 31-57 FFN

Project Proposal Due September 26th.
Week of October 3rd: Capital, Agriculture, & State Intervention

Required Reading:
1. “Across Space and Through Time: Tomatl Meets the Corporate Tomato” p. 7-53 TR
2. “Success” p. 91-107 FFN
3. "Cogs in the Great Machine” p. 149-166 FFN
5. Solkoff, Joel “Farmers Don’t Live Here Anymore” from The Politics of Food (p. 7-17) San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1985. AR
6. Floegel, Mark. “From Elsie to the Corporate Cow” Eating Well, Fall 2002:36-37; 75; 77. AR

Week of October 10th: Food Processing and Manufacturing

Required Reading:
1. “Arch Deluxe with a Smile: Women never Stop at McDonald’s” p. 82-112 TR
2. “Picking and Packing for the North: Agricultural Workers at Empaque Santa Rosa” p. 165-208 TR
3. “Behind the Counter” p. 59-88 FFN
4. "Why the Fries Taste So Good” p. 111-131 FFN
5. “On the Range” p. 133-147 FFN

Note: Complete reading of The Jungle by October 10th.

Field Trip 3: Tour of Gold’n Plump Poultry Processing Plant, October 14th.

Week of October 17th: Food, Nature and Manipulation

Required Reading:
5. Gorelick, Steven. “Solutions to a Farming Future” The Ecologist, May 22, 2000. AR

Theme III: From Farm to Table: The Distribution of Food

This section of the course will examine the distribution of food, including the transnationalization/globalization of food networks. Through our readings and discussions we will consider levels of economic development, issues of war and poverty and their relation to the presence of famine or surplus, as well as the impact of structures of power on the self-determination of nations and regions.

Week of October 24th: Food Marketing and Food Quality

Required Reading:
1. “What’s in the Meat” p. 193-222 FFN

Note: Complete reading of My Year of Meats by October 24th.
Week of October 31st: Gendered Labor: Food Sales and Delivery

Required Reading:
1. “You Can Count on Us: Scanning Cashiers at Loblaws Supermarkets” p. 113-154 TR

My Year of Meats paper due October 31st.

Field Trip 4: “Slow Food” tour of Minneapolis and St. Paul, November 5th.

Week of November 7th: Globalization, World Trade, & Economic Development

Required Reading:

Week of November 14th: Famine, Feast and Food Security

Required Reading:

Literature Review Due November 14th.

Theme IV: Stratification, Geographies, and Identities: The Consumption of Food

The purpose of this section of this course is to examine various aspects of food consumption and how this relates to issues of race, ethnicity, social class, income, age, sex, household consumption, religion, and culture as well as how it varies with regard to place and space.

Week of November 21st: The Stratification of Consumption

Required Reading:

**Week of November 28th: Culture, History, and the Geography of Eating**

**Required Reading:**

Note: Complete reading of *Catfish and Mandala* by November 28th.

**Week of December 5th: Food and the Ethics of eating**

**Required Reading:**

*Catfish and Mandala* paper due December 5th.

Final "Facts and Actions" sheet due December 5th.

**Theme V: What Next? The Futures of Food**

Having spent our semester examining the various political aspects of food, the purpose of this section of this course is to consider the future directions of food. We will do this through an exploration of the ways in which individuals and groups have responded to many of the problems we have discussed, developing both local and global strategies.

**Week of December 12th: Signs of Hope**

**Required Reading:**
1. “Cracks in the Corporate Tomato” p. 229-251 TR
2. “Epilogue: Have it Your Way” p. 255-270 FFN

Note: Class Potluck—Monday, December 19th @ 6:00 p.m.
Date: October 3, 2005
Due: October 17, 2005

As noted in your syllabus, you are required to read the novel *The Jungle* and required to write a 5 page, double-spaced paper that will be worth 15% of your final grade. The purpose of the paper assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the text and to connect them with other material covered in this class. Below are the details of this assignment.

In Chapter 33 of *The Jungle*, Sinclair writes:

> To Jurgis the packers had been equivalent to fate; Ostrinski showed him that they were the Beef Trust. They were a gigantic combination of capital, which had crushed all opposition, and overthrown the laws of the land, and was preying upon the people. (p. 296)

This quote demonstrates the impact that the introduction to socialist ideas has on Jurgis. Prior to hearing these ideas, Jurgis thought that his position as one controlled by all-powerful bosses was unavoidable. As with all characters in the novel, Jurgis is not simply an individual, rather, he symbolically represents the whole of the immigrant working-class, and the conditions he faces illustrate how capitalism fails the working class. Considering this, address the following questions:

Considering this, address the following questions:

1. Sinclair uses the approach of the novel as a means for discussing the horrible conditions that he observed at the meat packing plants. Why do you think he chose such an approach?

2. Many of the characters and places in *The Jungle* are meant to be symbols of other things. What do the stockyards and packing plants symbolize? What about the characters of Jurgis and Ona (and others)? Sinclair discusses at length the disfigurement of many of the people in packing town. What are these injuries supposed to represent?

3. Many of the fundamental values of the American Dream are represented in the character of Jurgis (hard work, family values, self-reliance, self-motivation). How useful are these characteristics to Jurgis and others? What message do you think Sinclair is attempting to convey?

4. As noted in the introduction to the uncensored edition of the text, Sinclair wrote a powerful book that spoke out against capitalism and empathized with the plight of the worker. However, such sentiments were not present in the published version. Rather, the public was only to hear about the gruesome details of meat packing, seeing the conditions that Jurgis and others faced as a result of their own actions. Nearly one hundred years later, much of our discussions about meat packing, as well as other food industries, focus on the plight of the animal rather than that of the worker. How does the disembodiment of the worker from the processes of the production of our food further the conditions that result in exploitation of those workers?

5. What are the messages that Sinclair conveys about socialism and capitalism? As is noted toward the end of the text, there are more workers than owners, yet there is rarely a revolution of the workers over the owners. Why is this? What conditions exist today (as opposed to 1906) that make such a revolution even more difficult?

The above questions are provided merely as starting points. Feel free to go beyond them, discussing issues raised in this novel that relate to the other course material. In your answer, be certain to incorporate examples from *The Jungle* as well as other course readings.
As noted in your syllabus, you are required to read the novel *My Year of Meats* and required to write a 5 page, double-spaced paper that will be worth 15% of your final grade. The purpose of the paper assignment is to provide you with an opportunity to discuss the issues raised in the text and to connect them with other material covered in this class. Below are the details of this assignment.

On page 334 of *My Year of Meats*, Ozeki writes the following to indicate Jane’s thought process:

> Information about food is widely available, but people don’t want to hear it. Once in a while a story is spectacular enough to break through and attract media attention, but the swell quickly subsides into the general glut of bad news over which we, as citizens, have so little control.

> Coming at us like this—in waves, massed and unbreachable—knowledge becomes symbolic of our disempowerment—becomes bad knowledge—so we deny it, riding its crest until it subsides from consciousness…In this root sense, ignorance is an act of will, a choice that one makes over and over again, especially when information overwhelms and knowledge has become synonymous with impotence.

Considering this, address the following questions:

1. Name at least one example of information that we have addressed this semester that is widely available, yet people don’t want to hear it. Why do you think that people would not want to hear the information?

2. What examples can you find in the text of characters denying “bad knowledge”? What is the impact of their denial? Can you relate their actions to your own in anyway?

3. Do you agree that “ignorance is an act of will”? Explain your answer, providing examples from the novel as well as other sources of people choosing (or not) to be ignorant.

4. If ignorance is an act of will, what can be done to make people “willfully knowledgeable”? What individual as well as structural changes would need to take place? What would be the societal impact of willfully knowledgeable citizens?

The above questions are provided merely as starting points. Feel free to go beyond them, discussing issues raised in this novel that relate to the other course material.
As indicated in your syllabus, a major portion of your grade will be based on a semester research project. This project will be reported in a literature review and a final "Facts & Actions" sheet (if you are connecting this project to your senior project or if you are a graduate student, you will also submit a 10–15 page final paper). Details on the "facts and actions sheet" will be distributed later this semester. Below are guidelines for writing your proposal and literature review.

Writing your Proposal

To begin this project you will need to write a research proposal, outlining the details of the topic and methods of your research. In this course we have been examining sociology and the politics of food. For your research project you will need to select a food item (something that humans eat or drink) and examine how the production, distribution, preparation, consumption, and/or representation (pick one or more) creates, reinforces, or challenges structures of power among specific groups of people. In developing your question, it will be important that you use your knowledge of sociology and social structure. In a 3-5 page, double-spaced paper you should describe your research item, your motivation for studying this item, and how you plan on going about conducting your research.

Literature Review: Due November 14th

Generally, the purpose of a literature review is to analyze critically a segment of a published body of knowledge through summary, classification, and comparison of prior research studies, reviews of literature, and theoretical articles.

In the Introduction

- define or identify the general topic, issue, or area of concern for your paper, thus providing an appropriate context for reviewing the literature.
- point out overall trends in what has been published about the topic; or conflicts in theory, methodology, evidence, and conclusions; or gaps in research and scholarship; or a single problem or new perspective of immediate interest.
- establish your reason (point of view) for reviewing the literature; explain the criteria to be used in analyzing and comparing literature and the organization of the review (sequence); and, when necessary, state why certain literature is or is not included.

In the Body

- group research studies and other types of literature (reviews, theoretical articles, case studies, etc.) according to common denominators such as qualitative versus quantitative approaches, conclusions of authors, specific purpose or objective, chronology, etc.
- summarize individual studies or articles with as much or as little detail as each merits according to its comparative importance in the literature.
- provide the reader with strong “umbrella” sentences at beginnings of paragraphs, “signposts” throughout, and brief “so what” summary sentences at intermediate points in the review to aid in understanding comparisons and analyses.

In the Conclusion

- summarize major contributions of significant studies and articles to the body of knowledge under review, maintaining the focus established in the introduction.
- evaluate the current “state of the art” for the body of knowledge reviewed, pointing out major methodological flaws or gaps in research, inconsistencies in theory and findings, and areas or issues pertinent to future study.
- conclude by providing some insight into the relationship between the central topic of the literature review and a larger area of study such as a discipline, a scientific endeavor, or a profession.
Teaching Evaluations
Sociology 462: Sociology and the Politics of Food
Fall Semester, 2004
Summary Quantitative Data

Mean scores are based on the following scale:

1 = Poor
2 = Fair
3 = Average
4 = Good
5 = Excellent

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<th>Number Responding</th>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>The clarity and understandability of the instructor’s explanations could best be described as…</td>
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<td>The openness of the instructor to differences in point of view in matters of opinion has been…</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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