

Sociology 1111

Introduction to Sociology

Course Syllabus using Team-Based Learning

Fall Semester 2009 Lake Superior College

Marlise Riffel, Instructor m.riffel@lsc.edu

Office W3606 Phone 733-5962

Office hours: 11:30-12:30 Mondays and Wednesdays, 1-2pm Fridays

This course involves both an explanation of and active practice in using the sociological perspective to examine the world around us. It introduces sociology as a discipline and sociological ways of understanding human social interaction and processes such as socialization, deviance, culture/society, and social change. This class teaches the use of sociology in class via small-group exercises and the use of computers to explore questions about the social world. (Meets MTC GOALS 2,5,7)

Course outcomes:

1. Students will be able to use the conceptual language of sociology to analyze everyday social processes and current events.
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the interplay between social context and individual factors underlying human diversity.
3. Students will be able to identify the values and social structures that organize human societies.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the dynamics of social power in contemporary society.
5. Students will be able to use social science research to explore and test ideas and to support or refute generalizations.
6. Students will be able to employ competing sociological theories to explain social phenomena such as deviance, socialization, culture, the structure of groups and formal organizations, and social change.

Texts for this course include:

The Practical Skeptic: Core Concepts in Sociology, McIntyre, fourth edition 2008, McGraw Hill ISBN 978-0-07-340415-8

Mapping the Social Landscape: Readings in Sociology, Ferguson, fifth edition 2008, McGraw Hill ISBN 978-0-07-352807-6

Online assigned readings found under "Content" in Desire2Learn at LSC Connect

Microcase CD and tutorial, distributed in class

Monday-Wednesday class

The Team-Based Learning Approach:

In a class using the Team-Based Learning process, you spend most of your time working in teams applying what you've learned from the textbook. Teams solve real-world problems and answer questions about how the world works. That's what sociology is all about. TBL uses short tests to make sure you've got the basics from the textbook before tackling problems. They're not ordinary tests, though. You take the tests both individually and as a team, and you get immediate feedback, so the tests function as learning tools. But most of our class time is spent applying what we've learned. Here are the basics.

A. We'll form teams during our next class meeting. It's my job to make the teams as diverse as possible, so I'll collect some information from you today that will help us form successful teams.

B. At the beginning of each unit, you will individually take a 10-question test, called an "Individual Readiness Assessment Test" (**IRAT**) to see how well you've understood the concepts in the assigned reading. These tests will cover the McIntyre textbook (The Practical Skeptic). Each IRAT is worth 30 points and there are 10 of them for a total of 300 points.

C. Right after taking the IRAT, you will take the same test with your team. This is called a "Group Readiness Assessment Test" (**GRAT**). For the group test, you'll use a special "scratch-off" answer sheet that immediately tells you whether you have the correct answer. Each correct answer is worth 3 points. If your team doesn't choose the correct answer on the first try, you make a second choice. If that answer is correct, you earn 2 points for the item. If it takes you three tries to get the correct answer, you earn 1 point for the item. Each GRAT is worth 30 points, and there are ten of them, for a total of 300 points.

D. When you've finished the GRAT, your team may appeal a wrong answer if you feel that you've missed a question because the question was worded ambiguously or you may appeal because the reading material was either ambiguous or the correct test answer disagrees with the textbook. I'll provide written instructions for appeals. Then each Team records its scores in a Team Folder.

E. I'll use the team scores to determine how well you understand the text material and I'll clear up the points that you've had a tough time with. I'll also add illustrations or supplemental material to help you with the text concepts. This is the closest we'll get to a traditional "lecture." And then we'll move to applying the newly-learned concepts to the real world. We'll do this in team exercises called **Applications**. They're labeled on your course calendar. More about these in H, below.

F. You'll notice that the course calendar also includes assigned readings from the Ferguson text (Mapping the Social Landscape). On days when you have assigned readings from the Ferguson book, you will have a ★Comprehension Check due (marked with a star in the course calendar and listed as "CC1..CC2" in the grades list). In order to complete the ★, you will need to read the articles thoroughly, answer the Comprehension Check questions on each article, and be prepared to use the content of the articles in class. Your ★ answers are due when you enter the classroom that day. It

is very important that you have all of the questions answered because if you do, I will give you a sticker that entitles you to extra credit points (see G. Below). ★ assignments must be completed individually (by you) and are each worth 20 points. There are 10 ★ Comprehension Checks this semester for a total of 200 points.

G. You'll have an opportunity to earn extra credit in two ways. 1) If you get a sticker from me on your ★ Comprehension Check assignment, you will individually receive 2 points extra credit. 2) If all of your Team members are present and on time that day, your Team will earn a sticker worth 2 points. There are 10 class days when ★'s are due, so you can earn 20 individual extra credit points and 20 Team extra credit points during the semester.

H. We'll spend most of our class time applying the information contained in the assigned readings through Team Application exercises. While the Applications are team exercises, there is an individual component to each graded Team Application (■ on the course calendar). This individual component is worth 10 points. To earn the 10 points, you need to complete the ■ assignment and bring it to class, then staple it to the back of the Application that your Team turns in. Team Applications will pose a question (listed on the course calendar in italics and underlined) and ask you, as a Team, to make a decision. Your Team will need to poll each member, listen to each member's ideas and their explanation of why their idea would work, and then reach a Team consensus. At the end of your deliberation, all of the Teams will simultaneously show their decisions. Then we'll discuss the question as a class. Over the semester, we'll do many smaller applications, but 8 Team Applications (■) will be graded. The Team portion of each graded Application is worth 20 points and I'll use a grading rubric to assign those points. This rubric is posted in the "Content" section of our online class website. I'll also provide a hard copy for you to use. We'll complete TWO ungraded practice Team Applications (marked with □) at the start of the semester. Eight graded Team Applications @ 20 Team and 10 individual points each yields 160 Team points and 80 individual points.

I. At the end of the semester, each of you will complete a confidential "**Peer Evaluation**" to assess the contribution of the other members of your team. You'll be evaluating each member on their participation in team activities. (Did they come to class regularly? Were they prepared for the day's activity? Did they contribute productively to the team? Respect others' ideas?) You will distribute 100 points among the other members of your team. We will likely have teams of six students. So each team member will be evaluated by the other five members of the team. There is a copy of the Peer Evaluation form in the "Content" section of our online class website. I'll take each person's composite score, convert it to a percent, and apply it to the team Application scores (potential 160 in H, above). The results will be a "Peer" score.

J. **Due dates:** the team nature of this class requires you to be in class and to do your part as a member of your Team. If you will be absent for an IRAT, you must notify me by phone or email before class begins and arrange to complete the test. If I don't hear from you by phone (733-5962) or email (m.riffel@lsc.edu), you cannot make up the IRAT. If you miss a GRAT, you will receive the team score. If you are absent when a ★ is due, you'll need to arrange a time to turn it in. However, if you miss a graded Team Application, you'll receive only the 10 individual points for that Application (provided you complete the individual portion). The nature of Team assignments is such that you just

can't do them individually, so you can't make them up.

K. Grades are based on three categories of evaluations.

A. **Individual Performance** includes

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. 10 IRAT scores, 30 points each | 300 |
| 2. 10 ★CCs worth 20 points each | 200 |
| 3. 8 ■ Applications, 10 points each | 80 |
| 4. Extra credit bonus points | 20 |

B. **Team Performance** includes

- | | |
|--|-----|
| 1. 10 GRAT scores, 30 points each | 300 |
| 2. 8 graded ■ Applications, 20 points each | 160 |
| 3. Extra credit bonus points | 20 |

C. **Team Contribution**

Peer evaluation scores converted to % and applied
to B.2. above 160+ or -

L. You will decide, as a class, how much each category above, A., B., and C., will contribute to your final grade. We'll decide these proportions during the first week of class and I'll give you guidelines and a form on which to record our decision. We'll staple it to the back of this syllabus for reference.

M. Your **Final Grade** will be determined by your standing in the overall distribution of scores within our class. Your grade is calculated as a percent and is displayed in the "Grades" section of our online class website all through the semester. I encourage you to check it frequently—it is updated each time I enter a score for you.

Student responsibilities:

1. General. Students are expected to attend all classes, to complete all assigned readings, and take all scheduled tests by the completion dates included in the course calendar. Students are expected to complete and turn in all course assignments within the time frame specified on the course calendar. Students are expected to take responsibility for acquiring class notes, handouts, assignments, and course-related announcements for class sessions they have missed. Students are expected to participate in all classroom discussions and exercises.

2. Student Code of Conduct. Charges of academic misconduct will be brought to the attention of the student and disciplinary action will be taken. See the LSC Student Code of Conduct, Policy 3.6.1, Part 6 for further details. You are expected to maintain honesty and integrity in your written work (plagiarism will result in no credit for the assignment). Unless assignments are specifically designed to be completed by a group, you must complete them on your own. Duplicate assignments (★ assignments) from two or more students will not be accepted for credit. Please review the online code of conduct at <http://www.lsc.edu/Online/Start/netiquette.cfm>

3. Non-attendance. You are expected to attend (login and participate in) classes regularly and are advised to officially withdraw from courses if they should stop

attending. The College's Non-attendance Policy requires instructors to report students who are not attending class(es), resulting in the automatic issuing of an "FN" (failure for non-attendance) grade and re-evaluation and possible repayment of financial aid. Please refer to the LSC Policy 3.17.4 for additional information, at <http://www.lsc.edu/Policy/policy3174.cfm>

4. Student Success Day. This semester, Student Success Day will be on October 27, 2009. All students are strongly encouraged to participate in Student Success Day activities.

5. Assessment. You may be required to participate in college-wide assessment activities as part of this course. Such activities may include course or instructor evaluation, testing or special assignments.

6. Online login. You will need to open and activate your LSC student email account and login to our online class website in order to participate in this class.

Class-related assistance:

1. Disabilities. Individuals who have a documented disability which might affect their ability to perform in this class are encouraged to contact the College's Disability Coordinator, S1911, 218-733-7650 (voice), or 218-733-7705 (TTY), at the start of the semester to discuss possible accommodations. All discussion will remain confidential. Here is a link to [Disability Services](#).

2. Tutoring. Free tutoring is provided in the Learning Center (E2120) Monday-Saturday in many subjects. Walk in or make an appointment (733-5927). Here is a link to the [Learning Center](#).

3. Technology Support Center. The support center is located in E1001. It's designed to help you with all of your academic computer needs. The phone number is 218-733-1016 or 1-800-432-2884 ext. 1016, or you can email them at connect@lsc.edu