

SOCIOLOGY 300: FIELD LABORATORY IN APPLIED SOCIOLOGY (2 CREDITS)

WHITMAN COLLEGE

FALL 2006

W 11 A.M.

MAXEY 332

Professor Michelle Janning

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Office Hours Tuesdays 1-2:30, Wednesdays 9-10, and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course provides students with the opportunity to apply a sociological perspective to any of a number of “real-life” organizational settings in the Walla Walla area. As the basis for the course, students arrange an internship at one of the many governmental and/or non-profit agencies in the local community, and commit themselves to work (unpaid) no fewer than three hours weekly in this field placement setting. At the same time that the student is contributing his or her talent and time to the organization in question, he/she will also be observing, from a sociological perspective, the events, activities, structure, culture, and process of this field environment. These field laboratory experiences will be supplemented by academic readings, a regularly-scheduled seminar that will be largely student-led, and the keeping of detailed field journal entries and activity logs. This course may be taken twice, for a maximum of four credits. Prerequisite or corequisite: Sociology 117.

ASSIGNED TEXTS: There are two required texts for this course:

- William Du Bois & R. Dean Wright, editors. 2001. *Applying Sociology: Making a Better World*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Robert M. Emerson, editor. 2001. *Contemporary Field Research: Perspectives and Formulations*, 2nd edition. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.
- Plus some online sources

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADES: Student Evaluation will stem from the following components:

1. **Field Journal (20% of final grade):** Although field notes will be taken during the entire placement period, each student will **submit one** formal field journal entry during the semester, **due by 4 p.m. on any of the three dates specified** in the course schedule (no e-mail entries please). I will deduct 2% (out of 100%) for each day an entry is late. Each entry should be between 5-7 typed pages, with the following components addressed, either in separate sections or intertwined:
 - a. The objective specifics [typed in regular font; about 1-2 pages]: What happened in your field experience since you started? What did you see? What did you do? You may choose to write about many experiences, each one briefly, or about one or two experiences in-depth.
 - b. What you learned about yourself [typed in boldface; about 2 pages]: How did you feel about yourself during the experience? Did you learn anything about your own biases? What are the implications of your reactions, both for yourself and for the people in the field placement setting? Would a person who was different from you along certain demographic or experiential variables feel differently?
 - c. Connections to the sociological imagination [typed in italics; about 2-3 pages]: How can you better understand parts a and b using course readings and concepts? Please be specific in your references to readings here, citing authors parenthetically when referring to them (e.g., Becker 1996, with page numbers for direct quotes). Please use individual article authors, not the editors of the books. You must refer to at least one separate reading for each of the three journal submissions. This is a minimum requirement, and I strongly encourage you to add lots of connections to readings, and to do so in an in-depth and sophisticated manner.
2. **Activity Logs (30% of final grade):** The Activity Logs are **due three times** during the semester **by 4 p.m.** (9/27; 10/25; 11/29); they document your hours and activities at your field placement site. They can be typed or handwritten or emailed. Once your placement begins, which must be by Tuesday, 9/12, you are expected to put in at least 3 hours per week. So the first activity log should have at least 7 ½ hours, the second one at least 12 hours, and the third one at least 12 hours. If you're having trouble getting enough hours, you need to speak to Professor Janning as soon as possible, so that your grade for this assignment isn't affected negatively. An Example of an Activity Log is included in this syllabus. No late assignments accepted.

3. Site Profile (10% of final grade): The Site Profile asks you to provide a general description of your site placement (e.g., organizational mission, supervisor, practicum duties) and gives you an opportunity to research career opportunities in a specific field of sociology relevant to your placement (e.g., employment opportunities, training requirements, salary ranges). The Site Profile should be approximately 1-2 pages, single-spaced, **due by 4 p.m.** on 11/8. A specific outline for the profile is included in this syllabus. No late assignments accepted.

4. Student-Led Discussion (20% of final grade): Eight classes this semester will be led by student pairs. Each student will present twice during the semester, with each presentation counting for 10% of the final course grade. Sign-ups for these sessions will occur during the first two weeks of class. For discussion-leading, at least one student from each student pair must meet with Professor Janning, at the latest, the day before class (office hours Tuesdays from 1-2:30 would be the latest meeting time) to discuss effective pedagogical strategies, and to ensure that an appropriate amount of content from the readings will be addressed. Members of each pair *must meet with each other and discuss a class plan before they meet with Professor Janning*. Failure to do this will result in a lower presentation grade. Student leaders will be responsible for the entire class (50 minutes), and creative strategies for sparking productive discussion are encouraged. Possibilities can include in-class writing, role playing, small group questions, guest speakers (for a portion of the class), and inclusion of student experiences with field placements that are related to the class readings. Tips for effective discussion leading are included in this syllabus. Evaluation of these student-led discussions will include the following criteria:

1. Was the division of labor between the presenters fair and equitable?
2. Was an appropriate amount of content covered (there's a lot of content in every set of readings – be choosy with what you present; it is always better to focus on fewer topics with more depth, rather than to jump around to lots of disconnected topics) and were all readings discussed adequately?
3. Were effective and sophisticated discussion questions and/or topics raised?
4. Did presenters do a good job being discussion *facilitators*, without dominating or lecturing – i.e., ensuring many students' participation, making connections between comments, preventing tangents or lengthy personal stories, and paying close attention to the flow of discussion?

If all of these criteria are met exceptionally well, student pairs will receive an A for their discussion leading. Less-than-stellar performance in any single category will result in a lower grade. For example, receiving a B range grade means that presenters were either very strong in three criteria and only sufficient in the fourth, or mostly good in all four (with slight problems in 3-4 categories). A C range grade means that presenters were good in two criteria and weak in the other two, or only sufficient in all four (no major catastrophes, but a more productive class discussion needed to happen). A D or F means that class discussion was unproductive and student leaders were not successful in facilitating according to most criteria listed above.

5. Attendance and Participation (20% of final grade): Since this is a discussion-based seminar class which meets only once weekly, attendance at the regular seminar meetings is required, and unexcused absences will be penalized with a grade of "0" for that day's class discussion. In the event that serious illness, personal emergency, or participation in excused college activities causes you to miss a meeting of our class, please be sure to discuss this matter (to find out about alternative assignments) with Professor Janning before the scheduled seminar meeting in question. Unexcused absences cannot be made up. Any absence that is not discussed before the class in question will most likely be considered unexcused. If you are uncomfortable speaking up in class, there are options for your class participation. While the ultimate goal of a seminar is to have good discussions (and not just written ones), you are expected to say something substantive during as many classes as possible, without dominating discussion. But, in the event that this proves difficult, feel free to discuss options with Professor Janning, to ensure that your participation grade will include more than just your physical attendance. And, of course, active listening is a component of any participation grade – especially when your fellow students are leading discussion.

TOPICS, READINGS, AND ASSIGNMENTS: The class will meet once a week, according to the schedule presented on the following pages. Students will be expected to have read the assigned class readings by the dates indicated on the class schedule, and to be prepared to discuss them in the appropriate seminar meeting. If students demonstrate that they are not completing the readings and are unprepared for class discussions, pop quizzes will be implemented. Students taking this course for a second time will meet with the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss alternate and complementary reading assignments.

Sociology 300: Field Laboratory in Applied Sociology

Fall 2006

COURSE SCHEDULE

[D&W = Du Bois & Wright; E = Emerson]

DATE	TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT	ASSIGNMENT(S) DUE
8/30	Introductions, Organization and Expectations of the Course		
9/6	What is Applied Sociology?	D&W 1 (Du Bois) "A Framework for Doing Applied Sociology" Online Reading: Bonnie Berry: Sociological Practice, Social Change, and Social Problems: http://www.ou.edu/special/freeinq/SP1Berry.htm Online Reading: Jammie Price and Steve Steele: What is Applied Sociology? http://www.aacc.edu/socgeo/qapricesteele.cfm Online Reading: Kathy Stolley: Is Applied Sociology a New Idea? http://www.aacc.edu/socgeo/qakstollapsoc.cfm Online Reading: John Glass: Why Applied Sociology? http://www.aacc.edu/socgeo/qajohnglass.cfm Online Reading: Jeanne Ballantine: To Whom is Applied Sociology Important? http://www.aacc.edu/socgeo/qajballapsoc.cfm Online Reading: Jan Marie Fritz: The Development of the Field of Clinical Sociology: http://digilander.libero.it/cp47/clinica/fritz.htm	<i>Field Placements chosen (to begin no later than Tuesday, 9/12)</i>
9/13	Theoretical and Practical Considerations of Ethnographic Research	E Introduction (Emerson) "The Development of Ethnographic Field Research" E 5 (Goffman) "On Fieldwork" E 11 (Emerson & Pollner) "Constructing Participant/Observation Relations"	<i>Field Placements must have started by yesterday, <u>or students will not be allowed to continue in the course.</u> Bring to class a one paragraph description of your experience so far, followed by a discussion question that stems from one or more of the readings.</i>
9/20	Getting Personal: Analyzing the Self in Field Experiences	E 8 (Kondo) "How the Problem of 'Crafting Selves' Emerged" E 9 (Warren) "Gender and Fieldwork Relations"	Student-Led Discussion #1
9/27	Service Learning or Experiential Learning? The Sociologist as Artist	D&W 22 (Du Bois & Wright) "The Sociologist as Artist"	Student-Led Discussion #2 Activity Log Due
10/4	Evidence and Representation of Applied/Field Research	E 13 (Becker) "The Epistemology of Qualitative Research" E 17 (Katz) "Ethnography's Warrants"	Student-Led Discussion #3
10/11	Placement Updates and Reports to the Class		Field Journal Due

10/18	Physical Space of Field Placements and the Social "Landscape"	D&W 2 (Jones) "Doing Sociology with the Design Professions" D&W 3 (Du Bois) "Design and Human Behavior: The Sociology of Architecture"	Student-Led Discussion #4
10/25	Crime and Delinquency	E 2 (Wieder) "Telling the Convict Code" E 12 (Leo) "Trial and Tribulations: Courts, Ethnography, and the Need for an Evidentiary Privilege for Academic Researchers"	Student-Led Discussion #5 Activity Log Due
11/1	Abuse and Homelessness	D&W 12 (Pepinsky) "Safety from Personal Violence: Empathy and Listening" D&W 19 (Wright) "Tramp Training: Constructing a Service Learning Program in Homeless Intervention"	Field Journal Due Student-Led Discussion #6
11/8	Working with Children	E 10 (Thorne) "Learning from Kids" D&W 14 (Du Bois) "There are no Secrets Here: Secrets and Privacy in Juvenile Group Homes"	Student-Led Discussion #7 Site Profile Due
11/15	Public Attitudes	D&W 4 (Du Bois) "Transforming Community Attitudes and Morale" D&W 5 (Connor) "Preventing and Resolving Public Controversy: Concepts and Techniques of Public Participation"	Student-Led Discussion #8
11/29	Conclusions		Field Journal Due Activity Log Due
12/6	Class Brunch		Eat food

Activity Log
Sociology 300 Field Laboratory in Applied Sociology

Date:
Student Name:
Field Placement Site:
Supervisor(s):

Date	Hours	Activities
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TOTAL HRS: _____

Activity Log #1 (Example)
Sociology 300 Field Laboratory in Applied Sociology

Date: September 27, 2006
Student Name: Olaf Overachiever
Field Placement Site: Legal Aid Clinic of Walla Walla
Supervisor(s): Abby Lawyer & Sam Manager

Date	Hours	Activities
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8/28	1-2 pm	Interview with Legal Aid
9/1	12-6pm	Training – Legal Aid policies, ethical issues, facility tour, intro to staff
9/3	3-6pm	Attended staff meeting, shadowed senior attorney during client meeting
9/6	9-10am	Staff meeting
9/12	3-6pm	Observed court session, assisted w/ note taking, shadowed office manager
9/18	3-6pm	Assisted w/ client meeting (in Spanish), helped supervise child of client
9/25	3-5pm	Shadowed office manager, assisted planning of staff retreat
9/26	1-5pm	Attended staff retreat, assisted w/ note taking, picked up snacks
9/27	3-6pm	Shadowed senior attorney

TOTAL HRS 26 hrs

Site Profile

The goal of this assignment is to provide a general description of your site placement (e.g., organizational mission, supervisor, practicum duties) as well as information about a specific field of sociology relevant to your placement (e.g., employment opportunities, training requirements, salary ranges). You will present this information in a 2-3 page "Site Profile." Site Profiles will be kept by the department and made accessible to students seeking future practicum placements or career information. Site Profiles should be organized according to the outline below.

Placement Profile

1. **Practicum Placement Site:** Provide the name and contact information for your placement site. Include the name of the director of the agency.
2. **Supervisor:** Provide the name and title of your primary supervisor at the site.
3. **Description of Site:** Briefly describe your placement site. You are encouraged to use the formal 'mission statement' or description your site uses when describing itself to the community. If no formal statement is available, construct one with the help of your supervisor or look in the book of social service agencies on reserve. What services does your site provide?
4. **Description of Practicum Responsibilities:** Provide a brief but thorough description of the responsibilities you've been engaging in over the course of the semester. Give an indication of what proportion of time you spent doing each activity.

Career Profile

1. **Employee Description:** Describe the staff at your practicum site. What is the demographic profile of staff members in the organization (e.g., race, gender, age, language abilities)? What proportion of the staff are volunteer/paid? Describe the educational background and/or professional titles of the individuals who work at your site placement. What proportion of employees hold bachelors, masters, or doctoral degrees? You are encouraged to report actual numbers or proportions of different types of employees. You may use figures or charts for illustration.
2. **Specific Job Requirements:** List the job title of your supervisor (or someone else at the agency with whom you have worked closely this semester). What degree and training requirements are generally necessary to obtain this particular position? What field do most individuals holding this position come from (e.g., sociology, social work, etc.)? What advancement opportunities exist for someone in this position? What is the average salary for someone in this field?

LEADING DISCUSSION IN A SOCIOLOGY CLASS AT WHITMAN COLLEGE

In this class, you are expected to lead discussion at least once. Criteria for evaluation are listed in the syllabus. But, if you need some tips for how to strategically plan out a great discussion, here are some helpful pieces of information:

CHECKLIST FOR EFFECTIVE DISCUSSION LEADING

From <http://ctl.stanford.edu/teach/handbook/chklsteffdis.html>

✓ Be Prepared

- Carefully consider your objectives for a discussion. What do you hope to accomplish? What topic(s) would you like discussed? What might be considered a tangent? Do all the students know enough about the topics to discuss them? Are there both majors and non-majors in this class?
- Use discussion to help students link concepts to their own lives; to encourage students to evaluate material critically; and to address topics that are open-ended, have no clear resolution, and/or can be effectively addressed through multiple approaches.
- Provide students opportunities to "warm up" through brief (1-4 minute) in-class writing exercises on the topic, 3-5 person mini-discussion, or an exercise at the beginning of class that focuses students on the topic(s) to be covered.

✓ Facilitate, Don't Dominate

- Provide clear guidelines for participation. Discuss them beforehand, stick to them, and enforce them during the discussion (you can be explicit about this – even saying that everyone needs to speak at least once).
- Maintain an atmosphere of safety and respect.
- Use open-ended questions, ask students for clarification, examples, definitions.
- Summarize student responses without taking a clear stand one way or another.
- Invite students to address one another and not always "go through" you.
- Pause, give students time to reflect on your summaries or others' comments. Five seconds seems like a long time, but it helps to count and wait.
- Stimulate and challenge, don't intimidate or threaten. Don't dwell on one student for too long; deal openly with conflicts, don't ignore them; listen to the other students—attempt to learn from them.
- Control the "talkers," and call on the "non-talkers." But, if a "non-talker" isn't ready to contribute, don't persist.
- Consider taking notes of main points on a chalkboard or overhead, but, if you do, write everyone's ideas down.
- Toward the end of the discussion, review the main ideas, the thread of the discussion, and conclusions. Be sure to plan time for this in your initial preparation for class.

TIPS FOR GOOD DISCUSSIONS:

From [http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/TLBulletins/2\(3\)Discussion.html](http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/TLBulletins/2(3)Discussion.html)

Good discussions are prepared in advance.

What do you want the other students to learn from the discussion? Before a discussion takes place,

- Clarify your goals for the discussion.
- Plan guiding questions for the discussion.
- Design activities that will prepare students to discuss. For example,
 - Provide focused study questions before class
 - Post guiding questions prior to the discussion via email
 - Ask students to respond to the guiding questions, in writing or in small groups, prior to the discussion

Good discussions are purposefully led.

What strategies will keep the discussion moving?

During

- Ask questions that establish what students understand (comprehension and review) before asking them to do more complex or original thinking (apply or critique)
- Pause 5-10 seconds after a question so that students have time to formulate thoughtful responses.
- Ask follow-up questions that allow students to develop or clarify a response.
- Be aware of the effect of non-verbal cues such as eye contact, gestures, posture, and position in the room.

After

- Provide a record or summary of key points as they have emerged, either orally or on the board.

- Draw connections between the day's discussion and other topics students are learning in the course.

Good discussions are assessed.

How will you determine what students learned from the discussion?

- Leave time at the end of class for debriefing. Ask, "What have we learned from today's discussion? Where does this discussion lead us next?"
- Leave time at the end of class for students to write key points from the discussion or list important questions that remain for them.

Good discussions lead to more discussions.

- Emphasize connections between the new topic and earlier discussions.

TEN WAYS TO START A DISCUSSION [From "The Dreaded Discussion: Ten Ways to Start" by Peter Frederick, *Improving College and University Teaching*, Vol 29, No. 3.]

1. Goals and Values Testing: Students pair off and decide together what they think is the primary value of the particular text for the day, and how their consideration of it meshes with course goals. VARIATION: have pairs list relationships between this text and another. Make instructions explicit: "identify three themes common to both texts" or "suggest the two most obvious differences between the two texts"
2. Concrete Images: go around table and ask each student to state one outstanding concrete image/scene/event/moment from the text. No analysis, just recollections and brief description. List images on board. As a follow-up, study the items and look for emerging themes, the connection between images, patterns, missing elements.
3. Generating Questions: ask everyone for their questions about the text. Various methods can be used for generating and collecting questions, as well as bringing the questions into the discussion.
4. Finding Illustrative Quotations: ask each student to find one or two quotations from the assigned text that he/she found particularly significant (liked/disliked/best illustrates major thesis/difficult to understand/key symbol/etc). Read aloud and discuss.
5. Breaking into Smaller Groups: to discuss various issues. Keep instructions clear and simple and task-oriented; vary ways groups are formed; vary ways in which groups report out when reassembled.
6. Generating Truth Statements: decide upon three statements know to be true about a particular issue.
7. Forced Debate: force students to select one or the other of two opposite sides and defend their choice. Ask them to sit on one side of the table or room or the other to represent their decision. Ask why they have chosen to sit where they are. Invite students to feel free to change their place during a debate if they are so persuaded. Perhaps allow a middle for students who refuse to chose one side or the other.
8. Role Playing:
9. Non-Structured Scene-Setting: Stay out of the discussion, provide a prompt (slide, quote, tape recording) and allow students discuss.
10. Ask "How did you Like It?" (note from Janning on this one – this can be risky since it's so open ended. I recommend a more specific question, such as "Did you see any evidence of this author's concepts present in your everyday life at Whitman?" or "If you had to choose one positive piece of this article, and one that you found problematic, what would they be?")