



**Teaching at the College Level in Sociology (SYA6660)**  
**Summer "B" Session, 2014**  
**MW 1:30-5:00; BEL 519**  
Course website: <http://campus.fsu.edu>

---

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Dr. Ike Eberstein, Charles Meade Grigg Professor  
Department of Sociology, BEL 526B  
Office Hours: MW 12:30-1:15, after class, and by appointment.  
850-644-7108 (voice); 644-6208 (FAX)  
Email: [Eberstein@fsu.edu](mailto:Eberstein@fsu.edu)

**REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS:**

Marilla Svincki & Wilbert J. McKeachie (2010) *McKeachie's Teaching Tips, 13<sup>th</sup> edition*.  
Wadsworth. (14<sup>th</sup> edition is ok.)

Center for Teaching & Learning, *Instruction at FSU: A Guide to Teaching & Learning Practices*. <http://distance.fsu.edu/instructors/instruction-fsu-guide-teaching-learning-practices>

**RECOMMENDED:**

Linda B. Nilson (2010) *Teaching at its Best, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition*. Jossey-Bass.

**GENERAL RESOURCES:**

Program for Instructional Excellence, <http://pie.fsu.edu>. The place to start for information on teaching at FSU. It includes materials from the annual PIE Conference, online resources, and PFF. You should bookmark this very important link.

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course deals with pedagogical issues and practical problems in teaching sociology at the college level. It is intended for graduate students who may already be teaching or anticipate teaching in the future. The course will be run as a workshop where we examine a range of teaching-related principles and challenges, and then practice various methods and techniques for handling them. The course will deal with many questions you may have about teaching, and it will allow you to address issues that may concern you as a new teacher. Finally, it will give you an opportunity to get positive and constructive peer feedback on your teaching practices and to gain expertise, confidence, and pleasure in your own teaching.

I offer this course with a great deal of humility. I have been teaching at the university level for more than thirty-five years (!), and I have approached teaching more as a vocation than a subject of scholarly study. I did have a course like this when I was in graduate school (and, indeed, I used a *much* earlier edition of the McKeachie book), but my approach has mainly been that of a practitioner. Along with my administrative experience, my years in the classroom have reinforced an earlier conviction that good teachers are made, not born. I believe that almost anyone who has the positive qualities it takes to get an advanced degree in our field can be helped to become a more effective teacher, given sufficient motivation, time, and effort. Perhaps the scholarly literature on teaching will be helpful in this (after all, we are [*mostly?*] empirically minded social scientists), but I believe primary emphasis should be given to developing personal qualities such as commitment, enthusiasm, empathy, compassion, and fairness, as well as learning

specific techniques that can help us, whatever our “classroom” situation (e.g., face-to-face or virtual, one-on-one, small seminars, or mass lectures). Good teaching is not an accident, but neither is “it” something that can be produced by following a recipe. Substantial and continuing effort is required to craft a course that meets its objectives – not to ignore that developing course objectives is no small matter! I hope this course will provide you the opportunity to explore your personal qualities and learn some techniques that will help you translate these into highly effective teaching. I will work hard to model effective teaching, but your most memorable lessons may come from observing my shortcomings.

I want to acknowledge my late colleague, Dr. Michael Armer. Mike originally developed this course and worked to have it added to our graduate program. Because of his generosity and the demonstrated effectiveness of his commitment to teacher training, I have borrowed very liberally from his course outline and materials.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

I have three goals for the class. First, I want you to become aware of the range of issues that must be considered in teaching sociology at the college level. Second, I want you to learn some of the ways effective teachers deal with these concerns, both generally and in the specific context of sociology courses. Third, I want you to demonstrate your teaching skills based on these lessons and give positive and constructive feedback to others in the class as they do the same.

### **GRADING/EVALUATION:**

The course is organized as a workshop. It emphasizes a mastery orientation to the material, where students who demonstrate satisfactory performance will receive a grade of “A.” There will be a range of assignments that all students will be expected to complete to professional standards. I will give feedback that reflects my best professional judgment, and I will require unsatisfactory work to be redone.

### **UNIVERSITY POLICIES (<http://facsenate.fsu.edu/curriculum/syllabus-language>)**

*FSU Attendance Policy:* Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the immediate family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. Accommodations for these excused absences will be made and will do so in a way that does not penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

*Academic Honor Code:* The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy>.)

*Americans with Disabilities Act:* Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should: (1) Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the Student Disability Resource Center; 874 Traditions Way; 108 Student Services Building; Florida State University; Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167; (850) 644-9566 (voice); (850) 644-8504 (TDD); <http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/>

*Syllabus Change Policy:* Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation (grading) statement, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.

### **MAJOR PRESENTATIONS:**

**1. *Guest teaching.*** Begin making arrangements to teach one class meeting (about 1 hour) in a regular undergraduate course, sometime during weeks 3-6, May 27-June 18. Identify/ approach an instructor, agree on a topic and your broad objectives, and begin planning what you want the students to learn and how you will teach them. If possible, you should try to attend the class sometime before your presentation just to get a feel for the culture. Confirm/ document all arrangements with me ASAP, but no later than **Wednesday May 21**. (Electronic submission).

Within two days after your class is over, send me a copy of your “lesson plan” (objectives, teaching methods/ materials, and assessments [no more than 2 pages]), with a short “reflection” on your experience (no more than 1 page). (Submit via Bb.)

Two classmates will attend your class to give you feedback on its strengths and offering constructive suggestions (1 page). This will be agreed to and scheduled in class. These comments should be sent to you via email *and* turned in to me via Bb within one day of the class.

**2. *Mini-lecture.*** Prepare to give a 15 minute mini-lecture in class during weeks 2-5, May 19-June 11, to teach us something about a teaching-related topic or issue that you believe is both interesting and important. Dates/ times will be assigned and possible topics will be discussed and approved in class. Review the semester’s outline and think about possible topics for your lecture before class on **Monday May 19**. I will meet privately with you afterward to review your video and the comments and suggestions received from your classmates.

After you have completed your mini-lecture and we have reviewed your video, write a short “reflection” describing how you put the lecture together, including your goals and background assumptions, and how you would assess its effectiveness. Limit 2 pages. Due: two days after meeting with me, no later than Friday, June 20.

**3. *Teaching Sociology.*** Browse the journal *Teaching Sociology* and find an article that you believe to be both interesting and useful as a source of “real world” guidance you can apply in teaching your sociology class. If possible do this before class on **Wednesday May 14** so we can coordinate and work up a schedule, and then use Blackboard to send me a PDF by **Friday May 16**. The article can cover how to teach a particularly thorny concept – e.g., privilege, social construction, structure, or inequality, or it can describe one or more approaches for dealing with problematic situations – e.g., student misbehavior, classroom controversies, making your class relevant, or stimulating discussion. Your assignment is to give a 15 minute presentation/ demonstration that will clearly illustrate the what, why, and how of the technique or approach, as well as give some insight into its effectiveness. Note you will not do a conventional article presentation (e.g., theory, methods, data, findings, and discussion questions). My goal is to have you bring in specific, practical information that will be helpful to sociology teachers. As a side benefit, I want to introduce you to the scholarship on teaching and learning in our field with the ulterior motive of enticing you to develop an interest in the area. We will coordinate articles and come up with a presentation schedule from weeks 2-5, May 19-June 11.

**4. *Group Project.*** *Either A or B.*

- A. **Teaching Sociological Concepts.** Divide into teams and pick an important sociological concept that may be challenging to teach to US college students. Examples include social structure, inequality, privilege, etc., but there are *many* others. We will coordinate these to avoid duplication, and concepts should be different from individual *Teaching Sociology* article presentations. Each team should review the relevant resources in our field, including *Teaching Sociology*, teaching related blogs, TRAILS (if you have a subscription), syllabus sets, and so forth to identify potential issues that surround teaching these concepts and different ways these challenges can be met. Present/ demonstrate what you find to the class (20-30 minutes). We will develop a schedule for June 4-11.
- B. **Teaching with Technology.** Divide into teams and pick a new technology that has a potential application to teaching. We will come up with a list collectively and coordinate to avoid duplication, but I want one of these to be Tegrity. Your goal is to investigate the new technology, learn how to do it, evaluate its potential usefulness for teaching, and demonstrate/ report to the class (30 minutes). Presentations will be scheduled June 16.

### **COURSE TOPICS:**

#### *Week 1 (May 12-14)*

- M Introduction & Overview
- W Personal Goals and Learning Objectives

#### *Week 2 (May 19-21)*

- M Organizing a Course & the First Class Meeting
- W The Craft of Lecturing

#### *Week 3 (May 26-28)*

- M **No class** – Memorial Day Holiday
- W Student Centered Teaching (SCT) I: Discussion & Active Learning

#### *Week 4 (June 2-4)*

- M SCT II: Experiential & Problem Based Learning
- W The Bottom Line: Exams, Grading & Cheating

#### *Week 5 (June 9-11)*

- M Maintaining Effective Interaction: Sensitive Topics and Problem Students
- W Technology - I: Impact on Teaching & Learning

#### *Week 6 (June 16-18)*

- M Technology - II: WEB 2.0
- W Wrap up: Teaching Evaluations & Continual Improvement

### **COURSE OUTLINE:**

#### **Week 1**

##### **Monday, May 12**

##### **Introduction & Overview**

What is the course about, why, and for whom?

Introductions

Why is teacher training important?

What are the characteristics of good teaching (undergraduate and graduate)?

Are general principles of teaching the “same” or “different” in Sociology?

What resources are available to help become an effective teacher?

**Assignment-1:** Complete the *Teaching Goals Inventory* at the University of Iowa's Center for Teaching. Bring the results to class **Wednesday 5/14**.  
[http://fm.iowa.uiowa.edu/fmi/xsl/tgi/data\\_entry.xsl?-db=tgi\\_data&-lay=Layout01&-view](http://fm.iowa.uiowa.edu/fmi/xsl/tgi/data_entry.xsl?-db=tgi_data&-lay=Layout01&-view)

*Reading:* (Except for today, readings should be done in advance of class. *There will be daily quizzes beginning with Class #2.*)

S&M, Ch 1-2

I@FSU, Ch 1, 15

*Optional:*

Sullivan, Teresa (1991) "Making the Graduate Curriculum Explicit." *TS* 19(3):408-13.

**Wednesday, May 14** (*TS topic due for scheduling Friday May 16*)

**Personal Goals & Learning Objectives**

What are our purposes and goals, and what's our approach?

What is my role relationship to my students?

What does it mean to "teach by objective," and why should I do this?

How can I translate "sociological ways of looking at the world" into specifics?

**\*\*\*Guest Panel: Teresa Roach, Andrew Mannheimer, Katie Graves, & Preeti Vaghela.**  
**"Teaching as a Graduate Student" (1:30) – Think about questions and issues to discuss.**

**Assignment-2:** Indicate your general goals and desired learning outcomes for an introductory-level course you might teach in the future. How would you present these in your syllabus and verbally? Make them as interesting and valuable to students as possible. **Due Friday May 23**. Limit length to one page. (I will add some helpful resources to the Bb library.)

*Reading:*

S&M, Ch 20-21

I@FSU, Ch 2, 4, 6

\*N, Ch 2 (Outcomes)

*Optional:*

Wagenaar, Theodore (2004) "Is there a core in sociology?" *TS* 32(1):1-18.

Persell, Caroline (2010) "How sociological leaders rank learning goals for introductory sociology" *TS* 38(4):330-39.

Moss, A & D Blouin (2014) "Special issue on graduate student teaching" *TS* 42(1):2-4.

**Week 2**

**Monday, May 19** (*Mini lecture topic due in class for scheduling*)

**Organizing a Course and the First Class Meeting**

Getting prepared and started.

Who are our students?

What activities and readings will I require, and how do they connect with my goals?

What should my syllabus include?

What should I do during the first class meeting?

**Assignment-3:** Syllabus review. Use the web to find three syllabi for a course you want to teach and compare these on points I will distribute in class. **Due Friday, May 30.**

*Reading:*

S&M, Ch 3, 11

I@FSU, Ch 3, 5

\*N, Ch 6 (Copyright), 11 (Matching teaching methods & outcomes)

*Optional:*

Sulik, G & J Keys (2014) "Many students really do not yet know how to behave: The syllabus as a tool for socialization." *TS* 42(2):151-60.

**Wednesday, May 21** (*Guest teaching arrangements due in class*)

**The Craft of Lecturing**

What is the purpose in lecturing?

What are different patterns of lecture organization?

What are the ingredients of effective lecturing?

How do we hold student interest and communicate effectively?

**\*\*\*Guest (1:30) Annette Schwabe, 2013-2014 FSU Distinguished University Teacher**

*Reading:*

S&M, Ch 6, 18

I@FSU, Chs 7, 9, 11

*Optional:*

Hill, Andrea, et al. (2012) "The dilemmas of PowerPoint." *TS* 40(3):242-56.

**Week 3**

**Monday, May 26**      **No Class – Memorial Day Holiday**

**Wednesday, May 28**

**Student Centered Teaching I: Discussion & Active Learning**

What are the barriers to effective discussion?

How can we facilitate productive and inclusive discussions?

How do we teach students to learn through discussion?

How do we promote active learning and critical thinking?

What types of activities and writing assignments will I use in my course?

**Assignment-4:** Upload one of your term papers (*real or simulated*) for submission to Turnitin. **Due Monday, June 2** (11:59 pm).

*Reading:*

S&M, Ch 4, 5, 14, 16

I@FSU, Ch 8

**Week 4**

**Monday, June 2**

**Student Centered Teaching II. Experiential & Problem Based Learning**

What approaches are covered by these techniques?  
How are these approaches useful?  
When can these approaches be applied, and what constraints are there?  
*Current issue:* “Flipped classrooms.”

**\*\*\*Field Trip (1:30): Paul Cottle, “Physics Tutorial,” CARRUTHERS 303A**  
**REQUIRED reading for tutorial:** Beichner, R (nd) “The SCALE-UP Project: A student centered active learning environment for undergraduate programs.” ALSO – “Improving Science Learning & Teaching at FSU” brochure.

*Optional:* IHE (2014) “The Flipped Classroom: A collection of articles”

*General Reading:*  
S&M, Ch 15

Other background materials for today:  
*Sample decision case:* Choose either one. (Class Bb library)  
1. “Can Nations Increase Fertility?”  
2. “Should the US Allow Gay Adoptions?”

Service learning at FSU: <http://thecenter.fsu.edu/>

### Wednesday, June 4

#### **The Bottom Line: Exams, Grading, and Cheating.**

What will be the requirements and the nature of my assessments?  
What grading scheme will I use and what is my rationale?  
What do I do when I think students are cheating?

*Reading:*  
S&M, Ch 7-10  
I@FSU, Ch 12-13  
\*N, Ch 3 (Syllabus)

**Assignment-5:** Add to the goals and learning objectives you developed earlier in the term and finish a complete syllabus for the introductory level course. It should include all the required components per FSU policy, including requirements, number and nature of exams, written assignments, etc, and the grading system. As a cover memo to me, lay out the rationale for your decisions. Limit the cover memo to 1 page. **Due: Friday, June 13** via electronic submission.

You should also forward your syllabus to two classmates (arranged in class), who will be expected to react to it in no more than one page (offer feedback, including constructive suggestions) and return their comments directly to you via email as well as submit them to me via Bb by **Thursday, June 19.**

Link to FSU policies: <http://facsenate.fsu.edu/Curriculum/Syllabus-Language>

### Week 5 **Monday, June 9**

## **Maintaining Effective Interaction: Cultural Diversity, Sensitive Topics and “Problem Students.”**

How should I handle confrontations and difficult students?

How can I handle students with problems?

How can we handle sensitive topics and multiple diversities?

### *Reading:*

S&M, Ch 12, 13, 22

\*N, Ch 7 (Incivility)

### *Optional:*

Braswell, M (2014) “Once more into the breaching experiment: reconsidering a popular pedagogical tool.” *TS* 42(2):161-67.

### *Websites:*

ASA Code of Ethics (especially #18) <http://www.asanet.org/about/ethics.cfm>

FSU “Academic Freedom” <http://fda.fsu.edu/Academic-Freedom>

## **Wednesday, June 11**

### **Technology - I: Impact on Teaching and Learning.**

How has teaching been affected by web and other new technology?

What are the strengths and weaknesses of online and distance technology?

How can face-to-face teaching be improved through technology?

What are the benefits of a “hybrid” format?

MOOCs – current controversy

\*\*\***Guest:** *Lisa Weinberg (1:30) – “Poll Everywhere, Hybrid Classes, More...”*

### *Reading:*

S&M, Ch 16

I@FSU, Ch 10

\*N, Ch 27 (Using technology wisely)

### *Optional:*

IHE (2013) “Online Education: More than MOOCs.” Selected articles.

Twigg, C. (2003) “New Models for Online Learning.” *Educause Review* (Sept/ Oct): 28-38.

## **Week 6**

### **Monday, June 16**

#### **Technology - II: Web 2.0**

How is “social learning” different from the traditional model of learning?

How can we apply new technologies and to what ends?

\*\*\***Guest:** *John Braswell, ODL (2:00) – “Blackboard 10”*

### *Optional:*

Brown, John S & R Adler (2008) “Minds on Fire: Open Education, Long Tail, and Learning 2.0.” *Educause Review* (January/ February) 16-31.

## **Wednesday, June 18**

### **Wrap up: Teaching Evaluations and Continual Improvement.**

Is the “student as consumer” model appropriate and useful?  
Student Ratings of Teaching: “Are the inmates in charge of the asylum?”  
How can we use Blackboard surveys to improve our classes?  
What did we learn, how do we feel, and where do we go from here?

*Readings:*

S&M, Ch 23

I@FSU, Ch 14

---