

**PRACTICUM IN TEACHING IN THE LIBERAL ARTS: TEACHING SOCIOLOGY**  
**Sociology 593**  
**Fall 2017**  
**Wednesdays 5:00—7:50, HSH 303**

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**Office Hours:** 8/22 - 10/10: Tuesdays 11:00-1:30 pm **Office:** HSH, Room 313  
10/18 - 12/2: Wednesdays 5:00-7:30 pm  
**and by appointment**

**Course Website:**

Announcements, links to readings, assignments, class notes, and all other information will be posted on our course website. The site is <https://blackboard.usc.edu> and can be accessed with your USC username and password.

**Introduction:**

This course is a practicum designed for first-semester teaching assistants in sociology. Registration in this course is a requirement for holding a first Teaching Assistantship at USC.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the semester, enrolled students will 1) be comfortable with basic techniques for relating successfully to undergraduate students, 2) have learned basic principles of lesson plan design and execution, 3) be familiar with basic principles of assignment design and grading techniques, 4) develop a repertoire of techniques for leading and advancing classroom discussion, 5) formulate and adopt a strategy for further development as a teacher 6) begin to assemble a portfolio of teaching materials, 7) understand the requirements for successfully fulfilling a TAship and, 8) learn how to professionally interact with and assist the professor in charge of the class.

**Grade:**

This course will be taught Credit/No Credit. To pass the course, you must successfully complete every component assignment and participate fully in class.

**Required Course Materials:**

Most of the material for this course can be found on USC's Center for Excellence in Teaching website <http://cet.usc.edu/>

Material geared toward TAs can be found at <http://cet.usc.edu/taf/index.html>

Additional readings for the week may be added and can be accessed on blackboard. I will post an announcement if additional reading is required.

## **Recommended Course Materials:**

James L. Lang, *On Course: A Week-By-Week Guide to Your First Semester of College Teaching* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010). Approximately \$16 in amazon.com.

## **Q & A Discussion:**

Each week we will begin class with a 20-30-minute Q & A session that will allow students to discuss issues that have emerged in the previous week's lectures and discussion sections. These sessions will allow us to brainstorm responses and strategies to address to these issues together.

## **General Guidelines and Policies:**

*No late assignments will be accepted unless you can provide clear evidence that circumstances beyond your control prevented your timely performance.* Written assignments must be double-spaced in 12-point font and stapled, and you must keep a copy of all work that you turn in. As the course progresses, it may be necessary to make some adjustments to the schedule of readings, topics, assignments, and due dates printed in this syllabus. You should check the course website on a regular basis for updates and changes. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed.

Each student must hand in his or her own writing assignments and respect USC's standards for academic integrity. Authors and researchers work hard on their papers and books; plagiarism will not be tolerated!

The use of electronic devices in this class is strictly prohibited unless you are using them for note taking or presentation purposes. The use of computers, cell phones, blackberries, etc. for other purposes will result in dismissal from that lecture. After three lecture dismissals you will be asked to drop the class.

## **Statement for Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me (or to TA) as early in the semester as possible. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

## **Statement on Academic Integrity**

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11.00; the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/> Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

## Emergency Preparedness/Course Continuity in a Crisis

In case of a declared emergency if travel to campus is not feasible, USC executive leadership will announce an electronic way for instructors to teach students in their residence halls or homes using a combination of Blackboard, teleconferencing, and other technologies. See USC's website on campus safety and preparedness <http://safety.usc.edu/>

## Overview: Topics and Schedule

\*\*\* This syllabus may change as appropriate\*\*\*\*\*

### Orientation (8/23)

### Making the Most of the First Day of Class

- TA Responsibilities
- First Day of Discussion Section

**Readings:** [http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/being\\_a\\_ta/ta\\_responsibilities.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/being_a_ta/ta_responsibilities.html)  
<http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/teach/firstday.html#1>  
<https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/first-day-of-class/>

### Assignment: For next week.

1. Post a copy of a syllabus of your choice for any class on the USC class registration page. (Please black out the professor's name and contact information.)
2. Prepare a draft discussion section syllabus for your section. You may consult a TA who has taught discussion sections for this course and professor in the past, but please try to add some of your own ideas. Post a copy to our discussion board.

### Week 2 (8/30)

### Planning Your Course & Anatomy of a Syllabus

- Q&A
- Course Planning Syllabi Critique
  - Syllabi critique
  - Discussion section syllabi presentations and critique

**Readings:** [http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/2.1\\_Planning\\_and\\_Organizing\\_Your\\_Courses.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/2.1_Planning_and_Organizing_Your_Courses.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/syllabuscreatesep04.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/syllabuscreatesep04.pdf)  
[http://arr.usc.edu/forms/Syllabus\\_Template\\_CCO.doc](http://arr.usc.edu/forms/Syllabus_Template_CCO.doc)

**Assignment: For next week.** Analyze the syllabus of the course you are TAing using the guidelines for planning and organizing a course that we discussed in class today. Write a memo describing: 1) the goals of the class, 2) the organization of the class, 3) course assignments (readings and written materials), and 4) quizzes and exams. Discuss the rationale for each component of the syllabus. Is the organization of the course likely to be successful in helping students achieve the goals stated in the syllabus? Why or why not? If you were teaching this class, would you make any changes in its organization? If so, what would you change? If not, why not? Post your syllabus and critique for discussion next week.

## Week 3 (9/6)

### Working with Students & Faculty

- **Q&A**
  - Discussion: Analyzing course organization
- **Professional Interaction**
  - Student diversity
- **Working with faculty**

#### Readings:

[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/working\\_with\\_students/index.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/working_with_students/index.html)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/2.9\\_Professionalism\\_as\\_a\\_Teaching\\_Assistant.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/2.9_Professionalism_as_a_Teaching_Assistant.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/2.3\\_Communicating\\_with\\_Students.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/2.3_Communicating_with_Students.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/working\\_with\\_faculty/index.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/working_with_faculty/index.html)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/2.8\\_Teaching\\_in\\_a\\_Diverse\\_Classroom.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/2.8_Teaching_in_a_Diverse_Classroom.pdf)

#### Assignment: For next week.

1. Observe your professor and write a one-page summary of the interaction displayed in the classroom. What types of professionalism behavior and strategies did the professor employ? Assess the success of these strategies. Use the CET materials we discussed in class today to guide your analysis.
2. Review the TA checklist guidelines and be prepared to discuss: 1) why each checklist item is important, 2) how you, personally, have addressed/ will address it, and 3) other issues of importance. Come with specific examples in mind.

## Weeks 4 & 5 (9/13 & 9/20)

### Lesson Planning, Assignments & Facilitating Discussion

- **Q&A**
  - Discussion 9/7: Observe your professor  
TA Checklist
  - Discussion 9/14; Lesson Planning
- **Techniques for a successful study section**
  - **Lesson planning**
  - **Assignments**
  - **Facilitating discussion**

#### Readings:

[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/2.5\\_Lesson\\_Planning.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/2.5_Lesson_Planning.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/4.2\\_Assignments\\_and\\_Homework.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/4.2_Assignments_and_Homework.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/docs/planning\\_questions.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/docs/planning_questions.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/docs/interaction\\_skills.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/docs/interaction_skills.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/3.2\\_Leading\\_Discussions.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/3.2_Leading_Discussions.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/3.3\\_Preparing\\_and\\_Creating\\_Good\\_Environments\\_for\\_Discussions.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/3.3_Preparing_and_Creating_Good_Environments_for_Discussions.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/3.4\\_Guidelines\\_for\\_Group\\_Participation.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/3.4_Guidelines_for_Group_Participation.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/discussions/index.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/discussions/index.html)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/discussions.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/discussions.html)

**Assignment: For 9/13.** Plan a lesson for one of your future discussion sections using the techniques we discussed in class. Annotate your lesson plan indicating how each

component relates to the techniques we learned in class. Post your lesson plan on the discussion board. Come to class prepared to walk us through the lesson.

**For 9/20** Observe an experienced TA and write a two-page summary describing the techniques the TA used to effectively convey the course material. What are the strengths of this approach? Is the approach likely to work for you? Why, or why not?

## Week 6 (9/27)

### Active Learning

- Q&A
  - Discussion: TA techniques
- Active Learning Techniques

**Readings:** <http://blog.cengage.com/mean-active-learning/>  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/Active\\_Learning\\_Florida.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/Active_Learning_Florida.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/active\\_learning.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/active_learning.html)

**Assignment: For next week.** Develop and present an active learning exercise for individual students. Come to class next week prepared to practice leading the exercise with your fellow TAs in class. Design your exercise around content you will use in your own section. You may use the examples in the readings to guide your work, but be sure to modify them in some way.

## Week 7 (10/4)

### Teaching Small Groups

- Q&A
  - Discussion: Active learning exercises
- Techniques for a facilitating small groups

**Readings:** <http://gsi.berkeley.edu/teachingguide/sections/groupwork.html>

**Assignment: For next week.** Design a small group exercise using active learning techniques and plan its implementation. Come to class next week prepared to practice leading the exercise with your fellow TAs in class. Design your exercise around content you will use in your own section. You may use the examples in the readings to guide your work, but be sure to modify them in some way.

## Week 8 (10/11)

### Grading and Assessment & Academic Integrity

- Q&A
  - Discussion10/5: Small group exercises
- Techniques for a grading and assessment
  - Discussion10/12: Grading
- Handling questions of academic dishonesty

**Readings:** [http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/grading/index.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/grading/index.html)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta\\_resources/academic\\_integrity/index.html](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/ta_resources/academic_integrity/index.html)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/5.1\\_Academic\\_Honesty.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/5.1_Academic_Honesty.pdf)

[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/5.2\\_Responding\\_to\\_Academic\\_Misconduct.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/5.2_Responding_to_Academic_Misconduct.pdf)  
[http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching\\_learning/docs/teaching\\_nuggets\\_docs/5.3\\_University\\_Policy\\_on\\_Sexual\\_Harassment.pdf](http://cet.usc.edu/resources/teaching_learning/docs/teaching_nuggets_docs/5.3_University_Policy_on_Sexual_Harassment.pdf)

**Assignment: For 10/11** For this week you will also grade an assignment turned in by three different students in my SOCI 242 class. I will post the assignment, the grading key and the papers turned in by the students. Please grade these assignments and come prepared to justify the grade the student received for each item and why. Be ready to share the comments you wrote each student and the philosophy behind the comments.