

SOCIOLOGY 305: TEACHING PRACTICUM
Fall 2015—WJH 501
Friday 10am – 12pm

Professor Jocelyn Viterna

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Departmental Teaching Fellow Jasmin Sandelson

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Office hours: Thursday 2:00-4:00 (and by appointment)
WJH 426

Course Overview and Goals:

This course is intended to enhance the teaching skills of graduate students in the Sociology Department. Through a combination of classroom discussions and teaching simulations, the seminar challenges students to discover and hone their teaching styles, to develop a personal philosophy about teaching and learning, to develop self-confidence leading and facilitating small and large group discussions, to learn about the teaching resources that are available to them throughout the university, to experiment with designing engaging courses of study, and to discover that teaching can be a rewarding and stimulating element of an academic career.

Topics covered include facilitating discussions; developing engaging questions; lesson planning; classroom management; evaluation of student work; providing feedback to students; the nuts and bolts of scheduling sections, finding classrooms, and holding office hours; and strategies for maintaining an active research agenda while teaching.

The practicum is required of all graduate students in the Sociology Department and should be taken prior to or concurrent with a student's first teaching assignment.

This syllabus is a work in progress; the instructors reserve the right to make changes as the semester unfolds.

Course Structure:

This course will be run as a workshop, and is graded Pass/Fail. To pass the course, students should attend all sessions, arrive to class prepared to participate, and engage thoughtfully in all class activities and discussions. Students are also required to write a short Teaching Statement which will be due on December 4th.

The course is set up to address some of the key challenges you may face across your first semester of teaching at Harvard, but hopefully without overburdening your already busy schedules. Much of the key material is frontloaded. The course will not meet every week, but will allow substantial periods to focus on teaching itself, and schedule video-taped sessions with the Bok Center. Needless to say,

if something comes up that complicates your teaching between classes, you should *not* wait for a class session to address it. Please make an appointment to talk with either instructor as soon as possible.

In the classroom, it is important that we create and maintain a classroom environment that is conducive to experimentation and personal development. We need to be able to be honest and supportive with each other. To this end, all comments, suggestions, and feedback will be presented and received in the spirit of learning and with a genuine intention to help each other improve. Being respectful of each other is of the utmost importance. It is our hope that throughout the semester each student discovers her or his “teaching voice” and most importantly that we have FUN!

During the month of October you will be required to arrange for one of your sections to be videotaped. You will then be asked to meet with a representative from the Bok Center to review your tape with the aim of discussing strengths and areas where you might work to improve your teaching.

The course will continue in the Spring; via three to four professional development sessions you are expected to attend. The topics discussed will include interpreting and utilizing course evaluations, life after Harvard, publishing, and preparing for the job market.

Class Schedule:

* MONDAY AUGUST 31 **Note different day, Room TBD* – Introduction to the Teaching Practicum
Special 4 hour session- 12:00-4:00

Course overview, the joys and challenges of teaching, facilitating discussion, nuts and bolts of teaching at Harvard, and time management while teaching.

SEPTEMBER 4 – Discussion Leading I: Micro-teaching and Class Plans

Prepare a short (5 minutes, with an additional 2 minutes of background if necessary) interactive lesson that covers one idea you want to teach in your current course. We will split into two groups for individual presentations and group discussion and feedback.

SEPTEMBER 11 – Grading

Evaluating and responding to student written work, grading exams, addressing student complaints, preventing and dealing with plagiarism.

SEPTEMBER 18 - Troubleshooting

“Hot” moments in the classroom, monitoring classroom dynamics more generally, addressing tensions (with students, with professors, etc); Mid-term evaluations.

SEPTEMBER 25 – No Class

Between now and November 6th you must have one section videotaped with the Bok Center and review the recording with Jasmin.

OCTOBER 2 – No Class

OCTOBER 9 – No Class

OCTOBER 16 – No Class

OCTOBER 23 – No Class

OCTOBER 30 – No Class

NOVEMBER 6 – Discussion leading II

Discussion of taping experiences, revisiting micro-teaching and discussion leading, introduction to a teaching statement.

NOVEMBER 13 – No Class

NOVEMBER 20 – No Class

NOVEMBER 27 - No Class – Happy Thanksgiving!

DECEMBER 4 - End-of-Semester Madness

Grading final papers & exams, student freak-outs, wrapping up the term, and approaching your teaching philosophy and teaching statement.

Teaching Statement **DUE via email attachment** to Jocelyn and Jasmin by 5pm