Sample Course Syllabus

Sociology of Education
Oregon State University
Distance Learning Course
4 credit hours
Course number SOC 550 400

Instructor: Dr. Olga Rowe
Email: roweo@onid.orst.edu

Please contact me by email any time you want a personal question answered. If you have questions about course deadlines, homework, assignment requirements, etc. please use General Discussion Board located in your class. If some instructions or requirements seem unclear to you, please post a questions on the General Discussion Board. If you think you have a good idea about the issue, please, post the answer.

Prerequisite: SOC204 Introduction to Sociology or Instructor Approval. Please, keep in mind that if you ask for instructor approval, you will be asked to familiarize yourself with the main introductory sociology material. Doing it will be crucial for your success in class.

Catalog Description
Contemporary perspectives and research on schools, students, teachers, and social forces affecting the educational system. Review of comparative and evaluation research on alternative educational strategies and programs. Overview of the literature of educational critiques.

Course Summary:
Education is one of the major social institutions. Education is one of the major agents of socialization in the US society and globally. Education is developing and changing, as any social institution. Education is something you are “getting,” or “receiving,” or “working on” right now. In this course, you will get the relatively unique opportunity to think critically about your own educational experiences and to consider how larger social forces have shaped your individual choices. You and your education experiences will be your own case studies this quarter. You will have a chance to reflect on your experience of this institution and bringing these reflections into the class discussions. I would like you to go back and forth, finding in your own life examples (or
counterexamples) of the concepts, theories and ideas learned in class, and describe your experiences in education in a sociological way.

**Course Objectives**
The course will focus on education in the United States, including formal and informal education. Special attention will be given to sociological theories of education, broad purposes of education, and inequalities in the American education system, including how inequalities based on social class, gender, immigration status, and/or race affect individuals and communities. Different organizational issues in education will be discussed.

**Learning Outcomes**
As a result of fully participating in this class, students will be able to:
1. describe a scope of education institutions in the United States and analyze their potential for reproducing and challenging the inequalities in the US society;
2. summarize several key theories and concepts within the sociology of education;
3. apply the key theories and concepts in sociology of education to their own educational experience, including their current experience with higher education at Oregon State University;
4. gain experience in conducting, writing up and analyzing an interview.

As a **graduate student** successfully completing this course, you will be able to
1. Apply the main concepts and theories in the field of Sociology of Education to your educational path, your future career, and their connection.
2. Formulate a statement of a problem in the area of Sociology of Education and explain how your graduate work can contribute to solving this problem.
3. Write a critical assessment of a range of existing research, evaluating strengths and weaknesses, and applying sociological theories and concepts to specific empirical evidence on education.

**Statement regarding disabilities:**
Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and [Disability and Access Services (DAS)](https://www.oregonstate.edu/disability). Students with accommodations approved through DAS are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through DAS should contact DAS immediately at 541-737-4098.
Policy on student conduct:
Students are expected to conduct themselves in the classroom (e.g., on discussion boards) in compliance with the university's regulations regarding civility. Students are expected to comply with all regulations pertaining to academic honesty as well. For further information, visit the university’s comprehensive website (http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/regs.htm), or contact the office of Student Conduct and Mediation at 541-737-3656.

Statement on disrespectful behavior:
My main goal is to create a fruitful learning environment for all of my students. Your thoughts and ideas are welcome and will be respected. It is essential that you, in turn, respect the thoughts and ideas of others. As members of this class, your responsibility is to treat each other with dignity and respect at all times. Remember, the Bb is a public forum and in a public forum you cannot assume that everyone is going to be like you. On the contrary, you need to assume that when you are talking to your classmates, you are potentially talking to people of diverse backgrounds. Behaviors that are disruptive to teaching and learning will not be tolerated, and may be referred to the Student Conduct Program for disciplinary action. Behaviors that create a hostile, offensive or intimidating environment for anyone in regards to gender, race, ethnicity, color, immigration status, religion, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation will be referred to the Affirmative Action Office.

Academic Honesty: Students are expected to be honest and ethical in their academic work. Academic dishonesty is defined as an intentional act of deception in one of the following areas:
* cheating- use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids
* fabrication- falsification or invention of any information
* assisting- helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty
* tampering- altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents
* plagiarism- representing the words or ideas of another person as one's own
Course Readings: NOTE THAT THE READINGS MIGHT CHANGE FROM QUARTER TO QUARTER

For textbook accuracy, please check the textbook list at the OSU Bookstore website (http://www.osubeaverstore.com/). Syllabi may not have the most up to date textbook information!

The following TWO books are **required** and are available at the university bookstore:


Out of the following FOUR books **you need to select ONE**. All titles are available at the university bookstore as well:

- **Scarecrow Education**.

Additional readings will be posted on the Blackboard website. Instructor’s lectures will be posted on the Blackboard website as powerpoints with narrations.

**Class participation (BlackBoard Reading Discussions) 20%**

Every week you will participate in guided online discussions of class readings. Based on these discussions, you will submit a worksheet of the most important terms, concepts, and information learned in each class materials (including lectures). Your grade will be assigned bi-weekly based both on your participation in discussions (its timeliness and quality) and the submitted worksheets.

**Interview Project 15%**

You will conduct one interview with someone you know and who is sufficiently different from you in terms of his or her education experiences. You will not need to tape and fully transcribe the interview, but you will need to take notes and create a text of the interview based on these notes. Along with the text, you need to submit the analysis of the interview. The analysis should heavily rely on sociological concepts and theories you learned in class.

**Journaling 10%**

One of your class readings, **Good Day, Bad Day** by Ken Winograd will give you an idea of what journaling is like, how it is done, and how it can be used for research of your own educational experiences (if you are a student) and
practices (if you are an educator). A journal entry is description of your experience and your reflection on it. I would like you to connect your reflection to what you are learning in class. I will grade your journals bi-weekly. Please submit them weekly, 2-3 entries per week.

**Book Presentation**
20%
From a list of optional books you need to choose one (I will post some videos on Blackboard that can help you decide which one is the right for you) and write a report on it. You will find detailed report guidelines on the Blackboard.

**Final Reflection Piece**
15%
Looking back on all the work you’ve done in the class, what have you learned? What is Education seen from sociological perspective? What do the concepts learned in Sociology of Education class mean to you today? How did they influence your thinking about education? What’s your next step?

**Statement of Career and Educational Path, Statement of Interest, and Focused Literature Review**
20%
I will outline a big picture for this assignment below, but keep in mind that you will be able to find very detailed guidelines, including the exact due dates and deadlines for each assignment on the Blackboard.

Statement of Career and Educational Path is due during the first week of classes. You can submit it before doing any other assignment in class. This assignment will require you to think about the graduate degree you’re currently working on, and its connections to your future career and the field of education.

Statement of Interest is a typed essay that answers the question, “Which narrower field of Sociology of Education will contribute best to my graduate experience?” The goal of this essay is to carve out the area within Sociology of Education for you to focus on in the next graduate assignment. It will be due in the end of Week 3.

Focused Literature Review Based on the guiding question or a statement of the problem you formulated in the Statement of Interest, identify 7-10 articles in current peer reviewed journals in the area of Sociology of Education and/or classic readings in Sociology of Education. The result of this assignment is an annotated bibliography of these articles and a detailed discussion on how each of the readings contributed to answering your question or illuminating your problem. You will need to connect the articles you're using with the main sociological theories and concepts discussed in class.

The bibliography (list of readings) for Focused Literature Review is due during Week 3. At this point I might suggest changing a source (a journal), adding a reading, or tailoring the readings closer to the question/problem you have formulated.
The first draft of the Literature Review is due during week 7. The first draft is a completed assignment, not an outline or a rough draft. You have to submit the first draft in order to receive a passing grade on this assignment. The final draft of the Literature Review is absolutely due in the end of the Dead Week.

**Grading:**

**Your final grade will be calculated in the following way:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation (BlackBoard Reading Discussions)</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interview Project</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>Journaling</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Book Presentation</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Final Reflection Piece</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>Statement of Career and Educational Path, Statement of Interest, and Focused Literature Review</td>
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**My grading guidelines:**

**A** – Outstanding work. An example for everyone to follow. Written work is virtually flawless in terms of grammar, spelling, cogency, and content. Performs far above minimum requirements. The student demonstrates excellent understanding of class materials, includes them extensively, and employs sociological imagination consistently throughout.

**B** – Well done work. Above average. Performs above the minimum requirements. Demonstrates good understanding of sociological terms and ideas, uses class materials on regular basis.

**C** – Work is satisfactory, average. Minimum requirements met. The class materials are used.

**D** – Below average work. Minimally acceptable, but insufficient to make a conclusion that the student understands and employs class materials and sociological concepts and theories.

**F** – Unacceptable work. Does not meet minimum requirements

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100%</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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**Late/Make-Up Policy:** If you anticipate scheduling conflicts or other problems meeting the requirements of this course, please consult with me well in advance. Because you will know due dates for papers well ahead of time, late papers will not be accepted.

NOTE THAT THE READINGS MIGHT CHANGE FROM QUARTER TO QUARTER – DOWNLOAD CURRENT SYLLABUS!

Please, contact me with any questions you have about this class – I will be happy to answer them!

Olga

**Course Evaluation**

We encourage you to engage in the course evaluation process each term – online, of course. The evaluation form will be available toward the end of each term, and you will be sent instructions through ONID. You will login to “Student Online Services” to respond to the online questionnaire. The results on the form are anonymous and are not tabulated until after grades are posted.