

SOC 3240 Logic of Sociological Inquiry (WI)

Spring 2016

| | | | |
|----------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------|
| Instructor: | Rick Matthews | Class: | LH 202 |
| Office: | Lentz 310 | Office Phone: | (262) 551-5825 |
| Office Hours: | M: 8:00 to 10:00 T: 8:00 to 9:30 R 8:00 to 9:30 Others by appointment | E-mail: | rmatthews@carthage.edu |

Required Texts:

Donileen R. Loseke (2013). *Thinking Methodologically: Basic Principles of Social Research Design*. Sage.

Handouts on eLearning

Course Description:

Since you have taken Introduction to Sociology (and perhaps other sociology courses) you should know that sociology is much more than “common sense.” Sociology is the systematic study of society and people. Sociologists strive to understand the social forces that influence human behavior, and how human behavior influences social institutions.

While your introduction to sociology course should have provided you with a basic introduction to the theoretical perspectives, methods and basic vocabulary of the discipline, this course is designed to help you develop broader, deeper and more complex sociological point of view that relies on the intersection of theory, method and data.

Unlike other courses you may have taken, this course is focused entirely on developing the required skills to conduct sociological research. To that end, each of you will spend the semester working on a topic of your choice. By the end of the semester, you will have developed enough of an understanding of your topic that you are prepared to write a brief proposal that identifies a research question you are interested in pursuing to fulfill your senior thesis requirement.

Course Goals:

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- ✓ Articulate the differences between positivist, critical, and interpretive paradigms.
- ✓ Describe the most commonly used research methods in sociology and their relationship to the three dominant paradigms.

- ✓ Conduct effective library research. This includes not only identifying and evaluating appropriate resources (e.g., books, journal articles, etc.), but also reading them critically.
- ✓ Write a clear, coherent, and effective literature review using APA Style.

Statement on Learning Disabilities:

If you have a disability that affects your learning, please see me during the first week of class to discuss support and accommodations. You will also need to meet with Diane Schowalter in the Advising Center (x5802) and provide her with documentation, if you have not already done so.

Attendance:

I do not take attendance. However, you are responsible for everything that transpires in class, including assignments, changes in the course schedule, etc.

Extra Credit:

There are no opportunities for extra credit in this course.

Classroom Conduct:

I expect students to conduct themselves in a professional manner. This means not talking to classmates during class, making sure your cell phone is turned off before coming to class, not text messaging during class, etc. You will spend a considerable amount of class time working independently on your project. If your behavior is disruptive or distracting to either me or someone else in the class, I will ask you to leave. Such an absence will affect your course grade.

Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Penalties for violating the community code range from a grade of zero for an assignment to recommendation for dismissal. You should be familiar with the community code:

<https://www.carthage.edu/campus-life/code/academic-concerns/>

Course Assignments

Literature Review Matrix (25% of course grade)

Prior to writing your annotated bibliography, you will be required to complete a pre-writing exercise (a “KWL” worksheet), and a total of fifteen entries in your literature review matrix (each worth 1% of your total course grade). The template for the matrix is on our eLearning course site. Any matrix entry that is turned in late will be assessed a 2 letter grade penalty.

Annotated Bibliography (35% of course grade—including multiple drafts):

You will be required to write an annotated bibliography that includes a minimum of 15 peer reviewed journal articles addressing your chosen topic. I will provide a handout for this assignment.

Literature Review (40% of course grade—including multiple drafts)

The literature review assignment will be approximately 10 pages in length, and worth 40% of your overall course grade. Like the annotated bibliography, you will be required to submit drafts at various points in the class. Failure to submit drafts (or to submit them on the due date) will result in a grade reduction for the final literature review grade. I will provide a handout for the literature review assignment.

Grading:

Letter grades will be assigned using the following percentage scale:

| | | |
|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| A = 94% - 100% | B- = 80% - 82% | D+ = 67% - 69% |
| A- = 90% - 93% | C+ = 77% - 79% | D = 63% - 66% |
| B+ = 87% - 89% | C = 73% - 76% | D- = 60% - 62% |
| B = 83% - 86% | C- = 70% - 72% | F = 59% or less |

Finally, I encourage you to keep the original copies of all your work in this course. This is important if you have any concerns about your grade at the end of the semester. I will not make grade changes without proof of the assignment.

Tentative Course Schedule: *Please note, we may make changes to the schedule depending on how the work in the course progresses.

| | |
|---|---|
| Key: [MT] Loseke, <i>Methodological Thinking</i> Note: BRING THIS BOOK TO CLASS EACH DAY Also, bring your laptop to class each day. | Feb 4 Introduction to course KWL exercise |
|---|---|

| | |
|---|--|
| Feb 9 Topic selection Finding resources in the library: Chris Grugel Reading journal articles (structure of an article, what's most important) | Feb 11 Bring to class list of 5 articles related to your topic [MT] pp. 1-31 |
| Feb 16 Matrix Entries 1 and 2 due [MT] pp. 32-64 | Feb 18 Matrix Entries 3 & 4 due |
| Feb 23 Matrix Entries 4, 6, & 7 due | Feb 25 Matrix Entries 8, 9, & 10 due |
| March 1 Matrix Entries 11, 12, & 13 due | Mar 3 Matrix Entries 14 & 15 due |
| Mar 8 Incorporating source material, paraphrasing, avoiding plagiarism | Mar 10 Writing workshop day. |
| Mar 15 Writing workshop day. | Mar 17 First draft annotated bibliography due (in class peer review) |
| Spring Break—March 21-28 | |
| March 29 Begin thinking about your own research | March 31 Final draft annotated bibliography due: must |

| | |
|--|---|
| question [MT] pp. 65-98 | turn in final draft, first draft, and peer review. 5% deduction for each part that is missing. 5% deduction if late. [MT] pp. 98-125 |
| Apr 5 Writing workshop day. | Apr 7 Understanding research ethics IRB approval process |
| Apr 12 Incorporating source material, paraphrasing, avoiding plagiarism | April 14 Writing workshop day. |
| Apr 19 Writing workshop day. | Apr 21 First draft of literature review is due (in-class peer review) TURNITIN |
| Apr 26 Writing workshop day. | April 28 Writing workshop day. |
| May 3 Writing workshop day. | May 5 Second draft of literature review is due (in-class peer review) |
| May 10 Writing workshop day. | May 12 Final draft of literature review is due. Must turn in first draft, peer review, and second draft. 5% deduction for each part that is missing. No late assignments accepted. |