

## **SOC 409: Proseminar in Sociology**

Lehigh University, Fall 2019  
Tuesdays, 1:35-4:15 PM (Credits: 3)  
Linderman Library Room 404  
CRN: 44702

Professor: Danielle Lindemann  
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Office: 223 Williams Hall  
Office Hours: By Appointment



### **Course Description<sup>1</sup>**

The “pro” in “proseminar” is short for “professional.” This course is designed for MA students in Sociology, to introduce them to the habits of mind of being a sociologist. In sociological terms, it is an exercise in *anticipatory socialization*. The course covers a variety of practical topics, ranging from what it’s like to go through the peer review process and how to prepare a conference abstract, to how to maximize one’s time in graduate school and what it means to work as a professional sociologist (both within and outside of academia). Students’ active participation is key to their success in this course.

### **Learning Objectives:**

In this course, first-year MA students in Sociology will...

- ...become more familiar with graduate study and the careers associated with the discipline of sociology;
- ...learn from Lehigh Sociology & Anthropology department faculty, their career trajectories, and their teaching and scholarship;
- ...develop key professional skills, including but not limited to: researching and reading academic literature, moving through the peer review process, presenting one’s scholarship, developing a new research agenda, and navigating Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements;
- ...and think about what’s next for them in their careers.

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<sup>1</sup>Professors Judith Lasker and Jackie Krasas created prior versions of this syllabus.

## Course Materials:

All materials for this course, including the film, are either hyperlinked in this document or available on Coursesite (<https://coursesite.lehigh.edu>).

## Other Useful Resources:

- American Sociological Association, <http://www.asanet.org/> Many resources for sociologists at all levels.
- GradHacker Blog <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker> Topics like “making the most of a summer of writing” and “7 apps for project management” are written by graduate students who want to share their best practices/advice with others.
- Versatile PhD <https://versatilephd.com/> There is a lot of good advice and resources on this website about non-academic careers, making your mark, networking, *etc.*
- A fun resource is the #WHATSHOULDWECALLGRADSCHOOL tumblr page: <http://whatshouldwecallgradschool.tumblr.com/>
- Get a Life PhD Blog on academia and the rest of life: <https://getalifephd.blogspot.com/>

## Course Requirements:

**Unless otherwise specified, all assignments should be submitted via email to the professor as Word files prior to the start of class on the day they are due.**

### Reflections: (10% total)

- *Initial reflection* (5%) (**1 page**, due prior to the beginning of class on **9/3**) – Tell me a little bit about yourself and what you hope to get out of class this semester. What are your goals for your graduate education at Lehigh? What are your long-term career goals? Questions? Worries? What do you hope to learn from the faculty members who come to speak in this class?
- *Midterm reflection* (5%) (**1 page**, due prior to the beginning of class on **10/22**) – Let’s check in! How’s this class going for you, and how is graduate school treating you, in general? Do you have any particular concerns? Do you have any questions (either for myself or other faculty) that you haven’t felt comfortable asking aloud in class? Refer to your prior reflection. Assess yourself, identify areas of improvement, and set new goals

### Abstract for the Eastern Sociology Society (ESS) Conference (10% total)

- *First draft* (5%) (**1 paragraph**, due in class on **9/17**. Please **bring hard copies of your draft** for the instructor and all of your classmates.) Write a 1-paragraph abstract of research you have already done or are in the process of doing, with the aim of presenting this research as a paper at the ESS conference in February.
- *Final version + confirmation* (5%): Final version of paragraph AND evidence that it has been submitted to ESS (e.g. confirmation email, screenshot) (<http://www.essnet.org/annual-meeting/call-for-papers/>) due via email to professor prior to the start of class on **10/8**.

### IRB Training (with Certificate!): (5%)

- Become familiar with Lehigh’s IRB policy, complete the training, and pass the online test to receive the certificate. You must screenshot your completion certificate as evidence that you have

successfully undergone Lehigh IRB training (<https://research.cc.lehigh.edu/training-requirements-personnel-irb-applications>). Email certificate to professor prior to the start of class on **10/22**.

Literature Review: (40% total)

- *First draft* (20%) (**4-5 pages including Works Cited**, due prior to the beginning of class on **10/29**). You will write a literature review identifying a research gap, a particular problem or puzzle, and a potential theoretical framework for solving that puzzle. Your review can be connected to your paper for Professor Zhang's statistics course, and it can be connected to your ESS proposal, or it can be on another topic of your choosing. You must use proper citation methods and works cited.
- *Final version* (20%) (**4-5 pages including Works Cited**, due prior to the beginning of class on **12/3**)

Faculty Interview: (10%)

- **2 pages**, due prior to the beginning of class on **11/19**. Construct an interview guide and complete an interview with a Sociology or Anthropology faculty member. Your interview guide should consist of about five questions, and at least one of those questions should be specifically about something the faculty member has written (*i.e.* read some of their work prior to the interview!). What was the most difficult part of the interview process, and why? Did anything happen that you didn't anticipate? Did you learn anything particularly surprising? If you had it to do over again, is there anything you'd do differently?

Job Talk Analyses: (10%)

- Attend all departmental job talks and, for **two**, write a 1-page analysis of the presentation (**2 pages total**). You may submit these at any point in the semester, prior to the final class session. Submit both *together*. Your analysis should address questions such as: What were the key findings of the project? What were the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation, in your opinion? What did you learn (about the topic and/or about presenting academic work)? Is there anything you would have done differently? (Note: attendance at all talks is required, but only 2 papers are required).

Participation and Attendance (15%):

- Participation and attendance are crucial for success in any class, but for this class in particular. You are expected not only to attend every class but to carefully read the assigned material before class, taking notes, and identifying questions. At the graduate level, a seminar should look like a lively conversation among students with the instructor as a facilitator/consultant. This class will not work unless everybody rolls of their sleeves and participates.

**Grading Scale:**

93%-100% = A  
90%-92% = A-  
87%-89% = B+  
83%-86% = B  
80%-82% = B-  
77%-79% = C+  
73%-76% = C

70%-72% = C-  
67%-69% = D+  
63%-66% = D  
60%-62% = D-  
0%-59% = F

### **Late Papers:**

Except in dire circumstances (*e.g.* death in the family, severe illness) late papers will **not** be accepted. This applies to both drafts and revisions.

### **Policy on Laptops/Cell Phones:**

As this is a graduate course, students are permitted to use laptops. Do not abuse this policy. Cell phone use is never permitted.

### **Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations, please contact both your instructor and the Office of Academic Support Services, Williams Hall, Suite 301 ([610-758-4152](tel:610-758-4152)) as early as possible in the semester. You must have documentation from the Academic Support Services office before accommodations can be granted.

### **The Principles of Our Equitable Community:**

Lehigh University endorses The Principles of Our Equitable Community [[http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/initiatives/PrinciplesEquity\\_Sheet\\_v2\\_032212.pdf](http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/initiatives/PrinciplesEquity_Sheet_v2_032212.pdf)]. We expect each member of this class to acknowledge and practice these Principles. Respect for each other and for differing viewpoints is a vital component of the learning environment inside and outside the classroom.

### **Student Senate Statement on Academic Integrity:**

“We, the Lehigh University Student Senate, as the standing representative body of all undergraduates, reaffirm the duty and obligation of students to meet and uphold the highest principles and values of personal, moral and ethical conduct. As partners in our educational community, both students and faculty share the responsibility for promoting and helping to ensure an environment of academic integrity. As such, each student is expected to complete all academic course work in accordance to the standards set forth by the faculty and in compliance with the University's Code of Conduct.”

## Schedule of Assignments

(Readings should be completed prior to the class for which they are listed.)

### **AUGUST 27<sup>TH</sup> – Introduction**

Who am I? Who are you? What's this class all about? What do you hope to get out of a Sociology MA at Lehigh? Identify goals and key concerns.

### **SEPTEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> – Approaching Academic Articles/ What Goes into a Literature Review?**

**Due: Initial reflection**

Read:

- “Chapter 3: Writing and the Search for Literature: Proposals, Library Research, and the Preparation of Literature,” in *Writing for Emerging Sociologists* by Angelique Harris & Alia R. Tyner-Mullings (29 pages). (*Coursesite*)
- Morris, E.W. and Perry, B.L. 2016. “The Punishment Gap: School Suspension and Racial Disparities in Achievement.” *Social Problems*, 63(1):68-86. (*Coursesite*)

Meet:

- 1:45-2:15 – Hugo Ceron Anaya, Assistant Professor of Sociology
- 2:15-3:15 - Carrie Baldwin-SoRelle, Social Science/Scholarly Communication Librarian, College of Arts and Sciences

### **SEPTEMBER 10<sup>TH</sup> – Writing Abstracts and Grant Proposals**

**Due: Nothing today!**

Read:

- <http://libguides.usc.edu/writingguide/abstract>
- <https://www.thoughtco.com/how-to-write-an-abstract-in-sociology-4126746>
- Lindemann ESS abstract (*Coursesite*)
- Przeworski, Adam, & Frank Salomon. 1995. “On the Art of Writing Proposals.” *Social Science Research Council* (9 pages) (*Coursesite*)

Meet:

- 1:45-2:15 – Sirry Alang, Assistant Professor of Sociology
- 2:45-3:45 - Katherine Bullard, Research Program Development Officer

### **SEPTEMBER 17<sup>TH</sup> – Giving and Receiving Feedback, Part I**

**Due: First draft of ESS abstract (bring hard copies for instructor and classmates)**

Read:

- Martin, Eloisa. 2016. “How Double-Blind Peer Review Works and What It Takes to Be a Good Referee.” *Current Sociology*. 64(5):691-698 (*Coursesite*)
- <http://libguides.sunysccc.edu/sociology>
- <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2011/10/18/the-peer-review-process/>
- <http://www.asanet.org/news-events/speak-sociology/developmental-peer-review-clearing-some-misunderstandings>
- <https://amlbrown.com/2015/11/10/how-not-to-be-reviewer-2/>
- In class today, we will read and do a peer review of students' abstract drafts.

Meet:

1:45-2:15 David Casagrande, Department Chair and Professor of Anthropology

**SEPTEMBER 24<sup>TH</sup> - Giving and Receiving Feedback, Part II: A Deep Dive into Peer Review**

**Due: Nothing today!**

**Read:**

- Materials from the peer review of “Desperate Fortunes” (5 documents on Coursesite – Read these in the order indicated by the numbers in their file names.)

**Meet:**

- 1:45-2:15 – Bruce Whitehouse, Associate Professor of Anthropology
- 3:30-4:00 – Allison Mickel, Assistant Professor of Anthropology

**OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup> – Surviving and Thriving in Graduate School**

**Due: Nothing today!**

**Read:**

- Adler, Patricia A., & Peter Adler. 2005. “The Identity Career of the Graduate Student: Professional Socialization to Academic Sociology.” *The American Sociologist* 36(2):11-27 (Coursesite)

**Meet:**

- 1:45-2:45 - Kathleen Hutnik, Associate Dean for Graduate Life
- 3:00-4:00 - Shamell Brandon, Staff Psychologist, Counseling and Psychological Services

**OCTOBER 8<sup>TH</sup> – Professional Behavior, Ethics, and the IRB**

**Due: Final version of ESS proposal + submission confirmation**

**Read:**

- <https://research.cc.lehigh.edu/irb-frequently-asked-questions>
- <http://www.asanet.org/membership/code-ethics>
- Babbie, Earl. 2002. “Chapter 3: The Ethics and Politics of Social Research,” in *The Basics of Social Research, Sixth Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Group: 61-90 (Coursesite)

**Meet:**

- 2:45-3:45 - Matthew Dohn, Senior Research Integrity Specialist

**OCTOBER 15<sup>TH</sup> – NO CLASS – PACING BREAK**

**OCTOBER 22<sup>ND</sup> -- Planning for a Career in Sociology**

**Due:**

**-IRB completion certificate (hyperlink or screenshot)**

**-Midterm reflection (1 page)**

**Read:**

- <http://www.asanet.org/research-and-publications/research-sociology/research-briefs/sociology-pipeline-todays-graduate-students> (25 pages)
- <http://www.asanet.org/research-publications/research-sociology/research-projects/study-masters-candidates>.
- Van Vooren, Nicole, & Roberta Spalter-Roth. 2011. "Sociology Master's Graduates Join the Workforce." ASA Department of Research & Development. (Coursesite)

**Meet:**

- 3:00-4:00 - Ali Erk, Center for Career and Professional Development

## **OCTOBER 29<sup>TH</sup> -- Advice from Former Graduate Students**

**Due:** First draft of literature review

**Read:**

Nothing for today! Take the extra time to complete your literature review.

**Meet:**

*Lehigh Sociology MA alumni speakers:*

1:45-2:15--*Skype with:* Ginger Berndt, Ph.D. Student in Sociology, University of Delaware

2:30-3:00--*Skype with:* Cynthia Pando, PhD. student in Health Services Research, Policy, and Administration at the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health

3:00-4:00 - *In Person:*

--Zane Kratzer, Data Research Scientist, Institutional Research, Lehigh University

--Chris Minnich, Faculty at Lehigh Carbon Community College

--Corissa Rolón, Director of Development and Communications, Meals on Wheels

## **NOVEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup> – Peer Review of Literature Review Drafts**

**Due:** Nothing today!

**Read:**

- o Classmates' literature reviews (instructor will send via email)

**Meet:**

3:00-3:30 Yuping Zhang, Associate Professor of Sociology

## **NOVEMBER 12<sup>TH</sup> – Playing Catchup**

**Due:** Nothing today!

**Read:**

- o I have set aside this class to continue our peer reviews (if needed) and to return to issues/topics from the semester that require further attention.

## **NOVEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> – What Do Sociologists Do All Day?**

**Due:** Faculty interview questions & reflections

**Read:**

- o Fox, Renee. 2017. "Introduction" and "Chapter 1" in *In the Field: A Sociologist's Journey*. New York: Routledge: 1-14 (*Coursesite*).
- o Buroway, Michael. 2014. "Sociology as a Vocation." *Current Sociology*, 45(4):279-284 (*Coursesite*)
- o <http://www.everydaysociologyblog.com/2009/01/how-great-is-being-a-sociologist.html>

**Meet:**

- o 1:45-2:15 - Jackie Krasas, Associate Professor of Sociology and Associate Dean of Interdisciplinary Programs and International Initiatives

**NOVEMBER 26<sup>TH</sup> – THANKSGIVING WEEK** / We will not meet this week. However, you are responsible for watching "*Sociology as a Combat Sport*," a 2.5-hour documentary about sociologist Pierre Bourdieu. A link to the film is available on Coursesite. (Please note that you need to access the link from an on-campus computer or through the VPN in order for it to work.)

**DECEMBER 3<sup>RD</sup> – Class Wrap-Up and Moving Forward...**

**Due:**

--Final version of literature review.

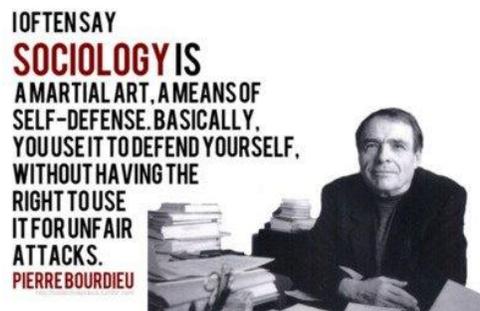
--If you have not yet turned in your two job-talk assessments, they must be submitted by the start of class today.

**Read:**

There is no reading assigned for today. We will have a discussion about *Sociology as a Combat Sport*. We will also discuss the best way for you to prepare for your comprehensive exams.

**Meet:**

No guests today. We have a lot to get through!



HAVE A WONDERFUL WINTER BREAK! ☺