SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION  
(Version 5: The Individual Project – Joint Progress Model)

INSTRUCTOR: Bernice A. Pescosolido

TIME: Regular Time: Monday, 3:30-5:30pm. The class will meet biweekly, and meetings may be moved to accommodate opportunities for teaching and learning. This syllabus indicates those classes which have been moved, to date.

PLACE: Institute for Social Research (Room 100)

OFFICE HOURS: TBA. Since we will depend heavily on meetings between individuals in the classroom and the instructor as well as among students, both e-mail and tailored appointments will be used frequently and rooms made available when necessary.

Course Description

This is the capstone course in Sociology's Preparing Future Faculty Program. With the focus in the first course on the "nuts and bolts" of teaching in conjunction the initial experience with an independent class and the focus in the second class on the research and theory on pedagogy, the students in this course stand in a unique position to brings together their experience; their substantive, research-based knowledge on teaching and learning and their training in research methods at this point in their graduate careers to engage in creative activity around these issues.

In this course, we will follow an approach which links the progress in individual projects to stages in research, or sections in the reporting of research. We will work as a consultant team every other week as we assist in the development, planning, execution and write up of each project. Each student will hand in their draft of that section of their research report. Each student will read and respond (edit, critique, suggest) as appropriate all other student efforts. In class, we will discuss the aspect of their research that is the topic of the day (e.g., abstract, introduction, basis in the existing literature, data and methods, results, findings and discussion, and conclusion). The final paper or project, of publishable quality, must address some important issue of higher education. Potential research topics include student learning, historical studies of changing profiles of higher education, the implication of gender, race and class in higher education, examining hypotheses about roles and rewards. However, taking seriously Ernest Boyer's call to rethink the meaning of scholarship, projects can also focus on the development of materials for teaching as long as they meet the criterion of being prepared for dissemination to a scholarly audience via publication.

Course Requirements

Class will meet bi-weekly, for the most part, addressing stages in the research process as we proceed. Students should match progress on their projects with the day’s assigned topic, depending on the particulars of their project. Students will demonstrate the ability to apply theoretical and methodological concepts to their own research and creative ventures. At the initial stage, each student will provide an overview of their project; toward the end of the semester, students will do a
final, professional presentation. Writing assignments will be due (posted on Oncourse) no later than the Friday (by 3:00pm) before the next class, and each student will provide written feedback to the other students by the beginning of the next class. Two types of feedback are essential. The first feedback will be directed toward ensuring the quality of the research or creative project; the second feedback will focus on helping to polish and develop dissemination plans for the product. Grading will be based primarily on the quality of the final project (60%) but will also take into account the quality of verbal presentations (20%), the written feedback to other students (10%) and classroom presentation (10%).

Students will be responsible for providing a sample of a reading which best represents what they are trying to do in their project, if they so choose. The final presentation should be accompanied by a polished draft. Copies of these readings will be given to the instructor; copies will be made and placed on Oncourse. Any readings which may be assigned throughout the semester will also be posted on Oncourse. Since the requirements for S606 which preceed the course included an approved SOTL plan, we will begin with the assumption that projects are underway.

As always, you will be expected to be familiar with the major teaching publications such as *College Teaching, Teaching Sociology, Change* and *the Chronicle of Higher Education*, and make use of them.

All standards of ethical behavior, including those in IU's *Code of Student Rights* and ASA's *Code of Ethics*, will be expected of all who participate in this course.

Course Schedule of Meetings, Readings and Assignments

Meeting 1, Jan. 11:  INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN HIGHER EDUCATION I

Starting with first things first: Introduction to the Course; Reminder of SOTL projects; initial assignments for next class.

Meeting 2, Jan. 25:  INTRODUCTION TO SOTL RESEARCH: Erikson’s Taxi Cab Driver and Writing the Abstract

Assignment: Prepare a typical length abstract for your project. Submit to all other students by the Sunday before class.
Meeting 3, Feb. 8: **FRAMING THE TOPIC: PAPER INTRODUCTIONS, STATING PAPER AIMS, THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK, AND STUDY PROTOCOL**

*Assignment:* In a few pages, deliver the Introduction. Class discussion focuses on how to introduce the aims, relevant parts of existing theories, and a protocol and motivate the research. Submit to all other students by Friday before class.

*February 15 – PFF Conference*

Meeting 4, Feb. 22: **THEORETICAL FRAME**

*Assignment:* Students will deliver a draft of their theoretical background section.

Meeting 5, Mar. 8: **DATA AND METHODS SECTION**

Meeting 6, Mar. 22: **RESULTS SECTION**

Meeting 7, Apr. 5: **FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION SECTION**

Meeting 8, Apr. 19: **CONCLUSION SECTION**

Meeting 9, May 3: **FINAL REVISIONS OF PAPERS DUE**