

**Spring 2016 – Senior Seminar in Sociology
SOCI 4499/W01 CRN 80421**

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE: This class is an *entirely* ONLINE class
using Desire2Learn BrightSpace (D2L).**

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Instructor: Dr. Evelina Sterling

Email: esterlin@kennesaw.edu or within D2L (preferred contact option)

Office: Pilcher Building, PS #143 (Pilcher Building is next to Library)

Office Phone: 470-578-4828

In Person and Virtual Office Hours: By appointment

Course Description:

This is the capstone course designed to help senior-level students integrate their learning from previous sociology courses and other courses in their concentration. Students will (1) carry out an individual research project; (2) present the results of that research in relation to the existing body of knowledge; (3) cultivate the ability to reflect upon their experiences and synthesize the material from all of their sociology courses, (4) hone their skills at documenting their research in a final report; and (5) prepare for entering the job market with a degree in sociology. PREREQUISITES: SOCI 3300 (Foundations of Social Theory); SOCI 3305 (Research Methods in Sociology).

Learning Objectives:

Congratulations! Enrollment in this seminar indicates that you are nearing completion of your undergraduate studies in sociology. You will soon be embarking on a new stage in your life. As with any life course transition, ending one facet of your life and beginning a new one spawns anxiety, ambivalence, uncertainty, and excitement. One major uncertainty looming on the near horizon is what you'll do next. More specifically, you have no doubt wondered, "What will I do with my sociology degree?" That's where this capstone course comes in.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Enhance your sociological imagination by reading in depth current and classical sociological research.
2. Apply your sociological knowledge, skills, and imagination to the "real world" as well as contemporary social problems through your final paper.
3. Stimulate thinking and discussion about ways to put your sociological knowledge, skills, and ideas to good use and towards making the world a better place through participating in discussion boards.
4. Facilitate your transition from being a sociology major to being a practicing sociologist by drafting a resume and practicing common interview questions.

Required Course Materials:

1. Pollak, Lindsey. 2012. *Getting from College to Career*. New York: Harper Business.
2. Module Guides found on D2L provide an overview of the topic; graded assignments; due dates; additional articles, videos and online resources; and checklist for self-directed learning.

The course requirements, which include readings, online discussions, papers, activities, and a final paper, have been devised so as to maximize the likelihood that you will complete this course with a better sense of what you can do with your sociology degree.

08/15/2016 version

PREPARING FOR SUCCESSFUL ONLINE CLASS!

The online format of this course requires that you have a hard-wired (not wireless) high speed Internet, and already possess the basic knowledge on Internet usage (such as browsers and navigation). In addition, students should have access in multiple locations, such as home, work, campus, and/or residences of family members or friends).

This course may be challenging if you are not a self-motivated learner. There are a lot of complex writing assignments to complete within a brief period of time. You must be a strong, self-directed learner with good time management skills to remain up-to-date with readings, writing, and D2L assessments. As with most college level courses, students should expect to schedule three times the course credit hours for readings, assignments, and studying. By giving yourself *approximately nine hours* each week throughout the term for this course, you should be on track for success.

COMMUNICATION:

Contacting the Instructor

You are required to utilize your D2L account and check it regularly for periodic communications. **D2L email is the best way to personally communicate with me.** If you send me an email at esterlin@kennesaw.edu, please always include “*Senior Seminar Online – YOUR NAME*” in the subject line in order to ensure a response! For general questions that are not private, please post it in the “Ask Dr. Sterling” Discussion Board. I will also have time to meet in person while I’m on campus as well as by telephone, chats or video conferencing on D2L. These meetings are by appointment only and must be scheduled at least 24 hours in advance.

Email Responses and Grading Turnaround Times

It is my goal to be a responsive educator and replying to your emails in a timely manner. However, just as I respect that students are usually balancing school schedules with work and family, I ask for your understanding regarding my response time as well. I do try to check my email and the D2L site at least twice a day Monday through Friday (once in the morning and once late afternoon or early evening) so I’m usually able to respond within 24 hours, although occasionally due to my schedule, it might take up to 48 to 72 hours. I do not typically check my email from late Friday afternoon until Monday morning so please do not expect an immediate response from me on the weekends or school holidays. In terms of grading, I usually provide feedback and scores within two weeks, although it is usually quicker.

Connecting with Your Classmates

Just because this is online class, I still encourage you to interact with your classmates. Often, they are a great source of information and assistance, especially when you cannot reach me immediately. The best place to reach out to fellow students is on the “Student Cyber Café.” This non-graded area of the course is the proper place for students to help each other about something covered in the syllabus, the schedule, or where to find something in the course D2L site. Postings and replies should be information beneficial for all students. Do not spam the class with non-course related information under any circumstance! Also, remember these messages are not private! Although virtual communication may be less threatening, be cautious not to share inappropriate personal details. Always maintain professionalism, academic integrity, proper netiquette, and all course policies and procedures are in effect. Discussions will be monitored, and the instructor reserves the right to delete problematic postings and/or prevent an individual student from posting again.

COURSE STRUCTURE:

This Senior Seminar course is an upper level capstone course. The overall purpose of this course is to allow you to synthesize all of what you have learned and to prepare you for a career in sociology. It will allow you to reflect on sociology and share your work with your classmates. It will reinforce skills acquired in the sociology major such as communication and critical thinking in order to

prepare you for success in a variety of work settings and pursuing advanced degrees as well as professional attitudes such as respect, responsibility, and common courtesy.

Although the final theoretical paper is the main assignment, this course also includes several activities and assignments that will lead up to your final paper. There are no tests or quizzes—only written assignments and activities due almost every week. Some of these assignments will only consist of a completion grade (if you complete it fully by following the instructions and turn it in on time) and others will be graded for quality using a rubric. Most importantly, this course will largely reflect what you put into it. Please take this class seriously and use what we learn to prepare you for your future, either in finding a job or applying to graduate school.

GRADING CRITERIA:

- A = 90-100% = Excellent; Far exceeds expectations
- B = 80-89% = Good; Exceeds expectations
- C = 70-79% = Satisfactory; Meets minimum requirements
- D = 60-69% = Passing work less than satisfactory
- F = 59% and Below = Failing; Unsatisfactory Work

Grade Earning Assignments and Due Dates

Discussion Boards	Due Dates	General Assignments	Due Dates	Assignments Progressing towards Final Paper	Due Dates
10 Discussion Boards (Introduction + 9 Book Chapters) = 10%	Almost Weekly	Plagiarism Activity (2%)	8/21	Selecting Paper Topic (5%)	8/28
1/20; 2/7; 2/21; 2/29; 3/6; 3/13; 3/20; 3/27; 4/1; 4/17		Reviewing Sociological Theories Activity (2%)	9/4	Summary & Critique of One Article (5%)	9/11
		ASA Citations Activity (2%)	9/18	Annotated Bibliography (5%)	9/25
		Book Review (10%)	9/18	Paper Outline (5%)	10/9
		Personality Test Activity (2%)	9/25	Draft Paper (5%)	10/23
		Resume Draft Activity (5%)	10/2	Peer Review (5%)	10/30
		Interview Activity (5%)	10/16	Final Paper (32%)	11/20
TOTAL: 10%		TOTAL: 28%		TOTAL: 62%	

DISCUSSION BOARDS (10%):

You will need to complete nine weekly discussion boards plus an Introduction discussion board. While your responses won't be graded per se, points are earned for proper participation each week. In the discussion boards, students are REQUIRED to post to every discussion board by responding to the weekly question about that specific week's content. These questions will encourage you to apply what you have learned through the readings. Additionally, you must also reply to at least one other post with more details, examples, or corrections based on the course content. A total of 10 Discussion Boards will be posted throughout the term. Essentially, each completed discussion board participation will count for 1% of your final grade. No partial credit or extensions will be granted for discussion board participation—it is either 100% (you participated by both answering the weekly question and responding to another post within the assigned dates) or 0% (you did not complete both of these things).

Posting to Discussion Boards on D2L

You can locate the discussion boards by clicking on “Communication with Your Teacher and Classmates” from the Home Page as well as through each week of the three modules. In order to get credit for participating in the Discussion Boards, you need to both 1) Post at least once with a thoughtful response to the weekly question posted by the Instructor and 2) Provide a thoughtful response to one of your classmates’ responses offering additional detail.

POSTING—The Instructor will post an open-ended thought-provoking question based on the week’s topic and readings to stimulate discussion. Your response should include a descriptive topic written in the subject line to clearly give others a sense of the discussion. In the body of your post, focus on original thought and opinion about the material. To further show your understanding, provide an original real-world example or personal experience which supports or refutes the material. **EACH POSTING SHOULD BE NO LESS THAN 10 SUBSTANTIVE LINES.**

REPLIES—There can be multiple replies to each post, as long as each reply remains focused on the original topic and continues to extend the conversation. Your replies should clearly state if you agree or disagree with the substance of the original post, extend the conversation with additional original thought or opinion about the material, and clearly provide another unique original real-world example or personal experience which supports or refutes the position. **AGAIN, EACH REPLY SHOULD BE NO LESS THAN 10 SUBSTANTIVE LINES.**

GENERAL ASSIGNMENTS (28%):

Activities (18%): These more interactive activities are designed to help you better understand the content, including plagiarism, ASA citations, personality, resume writing, and interviewing. Activities will include watching videos and using certain websites. **GRADING REQUIREMENTS:** You will need to complete each activity on time in order to receive full credit.

- Plagiarism Activity
- Reviewing Sociological Theory Activity
- ASA Citations Activity
- Personality Test Activity
- Resume Writing Activity
- Interviewing for a Job Activity

Book Review (10%): Each student will select a contemporary sociology book to read and critique. This critique should be at least 750 words. This is good practice in assessing the methodological strengths and weaknesses of published research. There is a list of books which to choose a book to review and critique, but students can select books outside this list with approval from the instructor. **GRADING REQUIREMENTS:** At least 750 words; graded for quality (see rubric).

ASSIGNMENTS PROGRESSION TOWARDS FINAL PAPER (62%):

As an upper-division course, the capstone course of your major, you will be expected to write a 12 page paper. The majority of this paper will be a literature review of peer-reviewed journal articles relevant to your research question. It will be the culmination of the term and your major giving you the opportunity to engage sociology as a tool to explain topics in Sociology, a topic relevant and interesting to you, and at least XXX peer-reviewed articles. This paper will be completed in a scaffolded process—meaning each week or two, there will be an assignment due that is related to your final paper.

1. **Identify a Topic and Research Questions (5%)** -- Each student will select a topic of interest to them and develop a sociological research question to investigate from a sociological perspective (what specifically do you plan to further investigate about this topic?). This will be submitted for grading and approval.

2. **Summary and Critique of ONE Article (5%)** – The purpose of this assignment is for you to begin to organize your thoughts on your paper including locating (and reading) of at least one peer-reviewed journal article. Also, it will help you discern between a summary and a critique. In one paragraph, summarize the journal article, telling me what it is about in your own words. Next, in another paragraph, you will need to provide a critical analysis of this article. You should write it with the intent of incorporating it into your final paper and to help you start organizing your annotated bibliography and literature review. The phrase “peer reviewed” means that the publication contains articles reviewed and deemed academically sound and scientifically rigorous by the author’s peers in the field.
3. **Annotated Bibliography (5%)** – The purpose of this assignment is for you to complete the reading of your peer-reviewed articles and organize them into an annotated bibliography table.
4. **Paper Outline (5%)** – The purpose of this assignment is for you to clearly organize the presentation and flow of your final paper.
5. **Draft Paper (5%)** -- Although I do not expect your entire paper to be completed by this point, this is a great opportunity to stay on track and received helpful feedback both from me and a classmate in order to ensure a successful final paper. I will require you have at least 5-6 pages drafted; however, the most you have drafted (it does not have to be finalized), the more feedback you will be given and the easier it will be to finish your final paper by the deadline.
6. **Peer Edits (5%)** -- The purpose of this assignment is two-fold: 1) to provide you with helpful feedback in draft from before you finalize your paper in order to make any corrections; and 2) to practice giving peers appropriate and helpful feedback about their work. You will be paired with one other student and each of you will provide feedback on your draft papers so far.
7. **Final Paper (32%)** -- This is it! All of the previous assignments lead up to writing a successful final paper. This paper will be at least 12 pages long (not including references or title page). It also needs to be double-spaced (please see syllabus for additional paper submission details) and use ASA style. You must also utilize at least 12 scholarly resources for this paper. An example paper and grading rubric is posted in D2L.

NOTE: D2L includes a plagiarism detection application, similar to turnitin.com which will be utilized for grading all assignments. If any part of the paper is plagiarized you will receive a zero for the paper, an F for the course, and appropriate administrative action will be taken. If you have any questions at all about this, please let me know immediately.

Paper Submission Details

All submitted papers are expected to be typed using 12 pt Times New Roman font, 1 inch margins, double-spaced (unless otherwise noted), and paginated. There should not be any extra space between paragraphs (if using Word, under “home” the “paragraph,” in the dropdown, there is a box you can check “Don’t add space between paragraphs of the same style”). Additionally, titles/headings should not be excessive—and any cover page is not included in the total number of pages. Failure to adhere to these guidelines may result in a grade deduction as per the grading rubric.

Additionally, your paper must be saved and uploaded with your name in the title. Document uploaded should be saved as “LastName, FirstName—Name of Assignment.” For example: Sterling, Evelina—Writing Assignment #1. Failure to save and submit your file with correct label may result in a grade deduction as per the rubric.

I encourage you to use the KSU Writing Center. It is a free service offered to all KSU students, including online students. They offer experienced writing assistants who will work with you throughout the writing process on topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment (in person or virtual appointments are strongly encouraged), visit www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

A note on plagiarism: I check all papers for plagiarism so please cite all your references when you paraphrase. If you use direct quotes, you must place the quote in parenthesis and provide the citation with the page number. If you are caught plagiarizing (which includes turning in work that is not your own as well as turning in a paper written previously for another class), you will

receive a zero for the assignment and appropriate judicial processes will be initiated. *All work produced should be produced by you and you alone and original to this specific class.* See academic integrity statement below.

Extra Credit:

I do not provide an extra credit or “extra points” for this course. No promises, but if your final grade is borderline (within 1 point of the next letter grade up), I may consider providing extra credit for the following accomplishments: 1) Completing ALL assignments on time and 2) Quality and frequency of your discussion board posts and responses.

Late Assignments & Excuses

Due dates for assignments are non-negotiable, and all assignments must be completed on time. You will be given plenty of notification regarding assignment due dates and all assignments will remain posted for a set period of time. Do not miss the expiration dates as no changes or extensions will be granted. You will receive a zero for a missed or late assignment, and no partial credit will be given. All assignments must be turned in online through D2L. Do NOT fax me, leave your assignment under any door, in any wall pocket outside a door, or mailbox. Only an extreme emergency with documentation (such as an accident report or emergency room receipt copies sent to me as a .pdf or .jpg file in D2L email) will be considered. In these cases only, you MUST contact me **before** the due date. Warning: doctor notes must cover the entire time an assignment was available online and must also be accompanied by a visit receipt date during (not after) the assignment availability time.

What if I have a technology problem?

It is your responsibility to pace and complete the work on schedule. Sometimes circumstances beyond our control (such as upgrades, software and/or hardware failure, and/or computer incompatibility) prevent us from using D2L. Note that computer/technical failure and/or waiting too late to complete the assignment DOES NOT EXCUSE YOU from completing the course assignments and requirements on time. You know the course schedule for graded items now, each is available for an extended period of time, and you have enough notice to make sure your work is completed. It is best to work early in case you have to try again before the deadline.

ENROLLMENT STATUS POLICY:

Students are solely responsible for managing their enrollment status in a class; nonattendance does not constitute a withdrawal. Please refer to the official KSU policy for potential reimbursement if you withdraw from classes.

Academic Integrity Statement:

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs, Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addressed the University’s policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to the University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in grade adjustment, or a “formal” hearing procedure which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement. The full policy is published at the following link:

<https://web.kennesaw.edu/scai/content/ksu-student-code-conduct>

Persons with Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to notify the instructor as early in the semester as possible. Verification from the KSU Student Disability Services is required. All discussions will remain confidential. For more information, please contact Student Disability Services at <http://sss.kennesaw.edu/sds/>

Writing Center

This course is a writing intensive class. You are expected to utilize all the knowledge and skills that you have gained throughout your academic career to produce these writing assignments. I encourage you to utilize the KSU writing center. "The KSU Writing Center helps students in all majors improve their writing. Experienced, friendly writing assistants help with topic development, revision, research, documentation, grammar, and more. For more information or to make an appointment, visit www.writingcenter.kennesaw.edu or stop by English Building, Room 242 (Kennesaw campus). These services are also available for online students via virtual appointments. Please contact the writing center for more information or to schedule an appointment http://writingcenter.kennesaw.edu/how_we_help_writers/session-formats.php

Career Services

Because this course intends to help you transition from student to professional, you should reach out to the KSU Career Services Center. The Career Services Center shares in the mission of the University by educating and facilitating the career development of students and alumni, in preparation for the ever-changing work environment. Through strategic engagement with internal and external partners, the Career Services Center provides access to services, programs, and experiences that develop competent and competitive professionals who will contribute to local and global communities.

<http://careers.kennesaw.edu/>

COURSE OUTLINE:

I plan to follow the course schedule listed below as closely as possible. If changes are necessary during the semester, I will announce them in advance in class and on D2L. Please read the specified material in the text prior to the dates on which they will be discussed. I expect that you will come to class prepared to discuss assigned course material. You will be responsible for all assigned readings, whether they are explicitly covered in class or not. Please ask questions about any information presented in texts or lectures.

SENIOR SEMINAR -- SPRING 2016

Module/Dates	Topics and Readings	General Assignments DUE: Sundays by 11:59 pm	Assignments Progressing to Final Paper DUE: Sundays by 11:59 pm
PART 1: Current Topics in Sociology (Modules 1-5)			
Module 1 Aug 15-21	*Read Syllabus and All Course Materials on D2L	Introductions Discussion Board DUE & Plagiarism Activity DUE	
Module 2 Aug 22-28	What is a Literature Review?		Selecting Paper Topic Due DUE
Module 3 Aug 29-Sept 4	Reviewing Sociology Theory	Sociology Theory Review Activity DUE	
Module 4 Sept 5-11	*Read Chapter 1 in Pollak—Get Started *Read Chapter 2 in Pollak—Stop Being a Student and Start Being a Professional	Book Discussion Board #1: DUE	Summary & critique of one article DUE
Module 5 Sept 12-18	Reviewing ASA citations	Book Review DUE ASA Citations Activity DUE	
Part 2: Preparing for a Career in Sociology (Modules 6-10)			
Module 6 Sept 19-25	*Read Chapter 3 in Pollak – Figure out what you want and what you don't	Personality Test Activity DUE & Book Discussion Board #2 DUE	Annotated Bibliography DUE
Module 7 Sept 26- Oct 2	*Read Chapter 7 in Pollak—Market yourself on paper and online	Resume DUE & Book Discussion Board #3 DUE	
Module 8 Oct 3- Oct 9	*Read Chapter 4 in Pollak—Networking	Book Discussion Board #4 DUE: 11:59 pm Sun 3/6	Paper Outline DUE
Module 9 Oct 10-16	*Read Chapter 9 in Pollak—Over prepare for Interviews	Interview Assignment DUE & Book Discussion Board #5 DUE	
Module 10 Oct 17-23	*Read Chapter 5 in Pollak—Gain Real World Experience	Book Discussion Board #6 DUE	Draft #1 Paper Due for Peer Evaluation DUE
Part 3: Applying Sociology (Modules 11-15)			
Module 11 Oct 24-30	*Read Chapter 6 in Pollak—Give Yourself the Edge	Book Discussion Board #7 DUE	Comments/Edits for Peer Reviews of Papers DUE
Week 12 Oct 31- Nov 6	*Read Chapter 8 in Pollak—Find opportunities	Book Discussion Board #8 DUE	
Module 13 Nov 7-13	*Read Chapter 10 in Pollak—Before you head off into the real world	Book Discussion Board #9 DUE 11:59 pm Sun 4/17	
Module 14			Final Paper DUE

Module/Dates	Topics and Readings	General Assignments DUE: Sundays by 11:59 pm	Assignments Progressing to Final Paper DUE: Sundays by 11:59 pm
Nov 14-20			
Nov 21-27	NO SCHOOL – THANKSGIVING BREAK		
Module 15 Nov 28-Dec 4		Exit Survey DUE	
Exam Week Dec 6-12	NO FINAL EXAM		