

## **Online Teaching: Basics and Best Practices**

This session provides an overview of essential differences in online instruction and face to face instruction and features best practices for teaching online. Topics include:

Syllabus Construction: What to include and how online syllabi differ from face to face syllabi.

- Email/virtual office hours

- Technology requirements/what is available from the college/instructions on how to use required technology/phone number and contact information for troubleshooting

- Learning Objectives

- Schedule with clear due dates/instructions on how to submit work/post online/take quizzes/ exams

- Time Zones

Academic Integrity: Options for assignments and managing academic integrity in online courses.

- Open book work

- Using test banks

- Types of questions/test banks/applied questions/short answer/test timers/backtracking and randomizing questions

- Respondus Lockdown

Creating Community: Strategies for creating a sense of community in a virtual classroom.

- Discussion boards/activities/assignments

Managing Technology: Tactics and strategies for utilizing technology and managing the amount of technology incorporated in the online classroom.

- Types of technology available

- How much to incorporate

Common Mistakes/Pitfalls: Overview/wrap-up of some common mistakes and lessons learned from teaching on online Introduction to Sociology course over the past 7 years.

- Hybrid versus Online

- Schedule

- Communication

**Using Memoirs to Teach the Sociological imagination and Incorporate Critical Thinking Skills**

Why use memoirs/students engagement  
Types of memoirs/student choice/content  
Assignments/learning objectives/social location/connecting biography and  
history/social theories/incorporating critical thinking  
Classes/examples

## **Sample Learning Objectives from Memoirs about Addiction form a Drugs and Society Class**

### **Learning Objectives:**

1) Students will obtain a less abstract understanding of addiction by reading about the experiences of an addict through a memoir.

2) Students will apply a sociological perspective to understanding addiction by utilizing theories studied in class. This is accomplished by requiring students to apply three theories of their choice to the author's addiction. Students are required to review each theory using class notes and their textbook.

3) Students engage in critical thinking in analyzing addiction as opposed to offering an opinion. This requires students to make direct and indirect inferences from the text. Students provide evidence from the memoir to support each theory. Students may use direct evidence or they may make inferences from the text.

### **Assignment:**

Students read a memoir about drug or alcohol addiction. Students write a 4-5 page paper (excluding references) that provides a review of the memoir but also incorporates sociological theories about addiction. The review of the book is limited to no longer than a page and a half with the bulk of the paper covering the student's analysis incorporating theories on addiction and providing evidence, in the form of direct quotes, from the memoir. Students do not use any additional outside of class references for the analysis.

**Memoir Selection:** Memoir selection is based on a list provided by the instructor. During the first class period I provide a brief overview of each of the books and I also provide a personal "rating" of the book similar to motion picture ratings based on language and sexual content. Books are rated "PG-PG13" or "R". I do not allow students to deviate from the provided list. The memoirs selected were chosen in order to represent a range of socio-demographic experiences including age, race, gender, sexual orientation, and social class. The memoirs as listed as such by the publisher (not fiction or partial fiction).