

Ingraham Teaching Statement

Teaching sociology is an act of public sociology. Students are a unique public with which I share a meaningful connection, and my goal is to use my expertise to help them become aware of existing social structures and inequalities and encourage them to be agents of positive social change. I am committed to helping students think sociologically as they develop their perspectives on the world inside and outside of the classroom. Students learn best when they ask real questions about society and answer those questions using in-depth research and critical thinking skills. By balancing these goals, I create a supportive environment that allows students to explore the social world around them, promoting reflexivity during their college careers and beyond.

I have guided students in sociology and health sciences courses using examples from my own research as learning exemplars. As a teaching assistant and co-facilitator of sociology courses, I contributed to syllabus construction and assigned readings using examples from my own research on fatness to explore learning objectives related to medical sociology and sociological research project preparation. In health sciences research methods courses and public health competencies courses, I helped students build their critical reading skills for medical and social science literature through close reading exercises. I have also guest lectured on my research at several colleges and universities including courses on sociological methods, research methods, and sexuality and gender.

My lessons are divided between illustrative lectures and student-centered activities including guided discussions, written reflections, and paired activities. For example, in a Medical Sociology course, I use obesity epidemic readings and short, in-class reflection writing to help students understand the role of medicalization in social control, with the goal of increasing their awareness of how medical institutions gain social control over bodies within public health contexts. In a research methods course, I have used situational analysis idea mapping methods to help students understand the potential width and breadth of their research topics, while also helping them focus in on the most interesting aspects for a manageable set of research questions.

In my own classroom, I will set clear expectations and assess learning before and after each class using student-based discussion connecting the topics between weeks for each class. Connecting students' diverse experiences and backgrounds to course material and their community will allow students to apply the mechanics of sociological research to the topic at hand. Using a variety of teaching methods, including lectures, videos and in class exercises allows learners of all types to engage with the material in order to apply the sociological tools to study society. While students would be assessed using traditional methods such as research papers, in-class quick quizzes to review course material and relevant theories and creative multimedia assignments will also be used to assess student learning.

In conclusion, whether in small classes or large I am dedicated to bringing the insights of sociology to students' lived experience, both at the local and global level. These insights will enable students to recognize their positionality and empower them to facilitate social change.