

First-Year Year Connection Seminars
Border Crossings (Soc 14F Sec. 1)

Semester: Fall, 2005

Class: Starr 301

Date and Time: MWF 10:10-11:05pm

Email: Margaret.Abraham@Hofstra.edu

Instructor: Dr. Margaret Abraham

Office: 202F Davison Hall

Off. Hrs: MF 12:45-1:45, W 3:00-4:00 pm

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Border Crossings: This seminar is designed to enable first-year students to explore the different issues that will shape their attitudes and behavior as they navigate through college life and beyond. An important goal of this course is to examine how borders are constructed, maintained, crossed, and challenged around a spectrum of issues. Topics discussed include the transition from high school to college, academic freedom, identity construction, social networks, community building, nationality and global citizenship. By combining readings, lectures, guest speakers, group discussions, and a variety of assignments, this course invites students to grapple with the complexity of the borders and border crossings. It also encourages students to think beyond the borders of our day-to-day experiences and the ways we envision social change.

Goals:

- To explore the different issues that shape our attitudes and behavior
- To examine assumptions.
- To understand and evaluate different perspectives.
- To develop better reading and writing skills
- To be intellectually stimulated and engaged in the learning process.
- To develop critical thinking and to think outside the box.

Required Books:

- 1) Garth Massey (ed) *Readings for Sociology* (3rd edition) W.W. Norton and Co, 2000 (GM)
- 2) Lehrer, Warren and Judith Sloan *CROSSING THE BLVD: strangers, neighbors, aliens in a new america* W.W. Norton and Co, 2003. (W & S)

4) Selected Articles.

- Sylvan, Barnet and Hugo Bedau. "Critical Thinking and Reading" *Current Issues and Enduring Questions: A Guide to Critical Thinking and Argument and Readings*. Bedford/St. Martins: Boston. 1999. pp.1 -22.
- Lawrence III, Charles. "On Racist Speech" in Barnet Sylvan and Hugo Bedau. *Critical Thinking and Reading*. Bedford/St. Martins: Boston. 1999pp. 39-42
- Bok, Derek "Protecting Freedom of Expression on Campus" in Sylvan, Barnet and Hugo Bedau "*Critical Thinking and Reading*. Bedford/St. Martins: Boston. 1999 pp. 43-46.
- McDonald, Steven, "The Laws of Cyberspace: What Colleges Need to Know" in Barnet Sylvan and Hugo Bedau. *Critical Thinking and Reading*. Bedford/St. Martins: Boston. 1999 pp.46-49.

- Whelan, Elizabeth “Perils of Prohibition” in Sylvan, Barnet and Hugo Bedau *Critical Thinking and Reading*. Bedford/St. Martins: Boston. 1999pp.83-85.
- Nagel, Joane. “Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture.” *Social Problem*. Vol. 41. No. 1 February 1994. Pp. 152 -168.
- Anderson, Margaret “Sexuality and Intimate Relationships” in *Thinking About Women: Sociological Perspectives on Sex and Gender*. Macmillan 1993. pp. 77-98
- Fine, Alan Gary and David Shulman “Nation and State: Should the United States Have Open Borders?” in *Talking Sociology*. 2003.Pp. 171 – 188.
- Fine, Alan Gary and David Shulman “Economy and Stratification: Is Global Free Trade Harmful?” in *Talking Sociology*. 2003. Pp.89-109.

Course Requirements

1. Students are expected to do the respective reading assignments prior to attending the class.
2. Students will write in a journal what they understand to be the keys points in the readings.
3. Student participation in class discussion is important and is encouraged.
4. Students will be encouraged to read the newspaper daily.
5. Each student will be complete two written reviews of specified articles that will help demonstrate the student's descriptive and analytical ability. The article review will address the significance of the article in the context of the lectures and readings. It should demonstrate your thoughts and responses to the major issues raised by the article. The paper should also demonstrate your understanding of the text and class lectures. Papers should be typed, double spaced and approximately 3-5 pages in length. Late papers will not be accepted.
6. Each student will prepare an assigned topic to debate during the semester. This assignment should demonstrate the student’s ability to critically think, examine assumptions, and develop an argument of your own on the issue. A detailed handout for the assignment will be provided to students early in the semester and each student will be expected to work on it during the semester and be ready to debate on their assigned day. Papers should be typed, double spaced and approximately 4 to 6 pages. Late papers will not be accepted.
7. Students will take a midterm and final exam. These will comprise of definitions and short answers. There will be no make up exams unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Grading

Assignment 1 Review paper 1 = 15%
 Assignment 2 Review paper 2 = 15%
 Assignment 3 Position paper for debate 20%
 Debate 5%
 Midterm Exam = 15%
 Final Exam = 20%
 Class Participation = 5%
 Speaker series = 5%

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Introduction to the Course: Sociologists and Crossing Borders

Sept. 7 W “What are Sociologists and Why are They Doing This?”

Sept. 9 F “The Sociological Imagination”

Readings:

GM: 1 & 2 (Movie)

Crossing Borders: Critical Thinking Helps!

Sept. 12 M Critical Thinking: Imagination, Analysis and Evaluation

Sept. 14 W Examining Assumptions

Sept. 16 F Analyzing and Evaluating

Readings:

- Barnet, Sylvan and Hugo Bedau. “Critical Thinking and Reading” in *Current Issues and Enduring Questions*. Pp. 1 -27.

SEPT. 19 M ASSIGNMENT 1: WRITING AS A WAY OF THINKING?

The University and Campus Culture

Sept. 19 M Academic Freedom

Sept. 21 W Challenges

Sept. 23 F Community

Readings:

- Lawrence III, Charles. “On Racist Speech”
- Bok, Derek “Protecting Freedom of Expression on Campus”
- McDonald, Steven, “The Laws of Cyberspace: What Colleges Need to Know”
- Whelan, Elizabeth “Perils of Prohibition”

Identities: Border Construction, Maintenance, Contestation & Crossings

Sept. 26 M Race

Sept. 28 W Race

Sept. 30 F Speaker: In class

Readings:

GM: 7, 10, 11, 14, 36

W & S: pp. 22 - 71

Oct. 3 M Ethnicity

Oct. 7 F Ethnicity

Oct. 10 M Film

Oct. 14 F Ethnicity

Readings:

GM: 9 & 13

W & S: pp. 75 - 177

- Nagel, Joane. “Constructing Ethnicity: Creating and Recreating Ethnic Identity and Culture.” *Social Problem*. Vol. 41. No. 1 February 1994. Pp. 152-168.

Oct. 17 M Class
 Oct. 19 W Public Lecture: LITHR: Day of Dialogue
 Oct. 21 F Discussion after day of dialogue & Midterm review
OCT. 24 M MIDTERM EXAM
 Oct. 26 W Class
 Oct. 28 F Class

Readings:

GM: 18, 19, 20 & 24
 W & S: pp. 271 – 329

Oct. 31 M Gender and Sexuality
 Nov. 2 W Gender and Sexuality
 Nov. 4 F Gender and Sexuality

Readings:

GM:15,16,33, 34

- Anderson, Margaret “Sexuality and Intimate Relationships” in *Thinking About Women: Sociological perspectives on Sex and Gender*. pp. 77-98

ASSIGNMENT 2: THE INTERSECTION OF BORDERS

Borders and the State

Nov. 7 M Nation and State
 Nov. 9 W Nation and State
 Nov. 11 F Nation and State

Readings:

GM: 12, 26, 27, 28, 40
 W & S: pp. 333 - 396

- Fine, Alan Gary and David Shulman “Nation and State: Should the United States have open Borders?” in *Talking Sociology*. Pp. 171 – 188.

Globalization: Increasing or Decreasing Borders - For What, Who and Why?

Nov. 14. M Servants of Globalization
 Nov. 16 W Business Outsourcing
 Nov 18 F The Global Divide.

Readings:

GM: 29, 31 &32, 39

- Fine, Alan Gary and David Shulman “Economy and Stratification: Is Global Free Trade Harmful?” in *Talking Sociology*. Pp.89-109.

Challenging Borders: Social Movements and Social Change: The Power to Change

Nov. 21 M Organizing for Change

Nov. 23 W Organizing for Change

Readings: GM: #44,46,47, 48 & 49

Current Issues: Debating about Current Issues and Continuing to Question

Nov. 28 M Abortion: Whose Right to Life is it Anyway

Nov. 30 W Stem Cell research?

Dec 2 F Gay Marriages: Should they be Legalized?

Dec 7 M Censoring the internet: Is it Necessary?

The War in Iraq?

(Students select topics)

Readings:

Class handouts and student presentation handouts

Beyond Borders?

Dec 8 W Thinking about the future. (How do we cross borders? What borders should we cross?)

Dec 9 F Thinking about the future. (What are the borders of the future and how do we go beyond borders)

Dec.12 M Exam Review