

Sociology 480: *Field Internship*
Dr. Jana Pershing

Course Syllabus

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Introduction and Goals of the Program

As students admitted into the San Diego State University's Field Internship Program, you have met the following criteria: satisfactory academic performance in departmental courses, an enthusiasm for learning, high standards of personal and ethical conduct, and a willingness to maintain appropriate standards of personal appearance while volunteering or working in the organization to which you have been assigned. As representatives of San Diego State, it is expected that you maintain these standards throughout your internship to receive a passing grade in Sociology 480. Furthermore, the Field Internship Program has been instituted in pursuit of two interrelated objectives:

- 1) To provide the opportunity to apply sociological knowledge, analytical abilities, and research skills to the practical concerns of organizations in the "real world."*
- 2) To acquaint members at these "real world" organizations with the broad range of relevant skills acquired by SDSU students in pursuit of the Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology.*

Program Requirements and Grades

You are responsible for serving a minimum of 8 hours per week throughout the 15-week semester in the organization to which you have been assigned.

Field Notes*: 15%
Project Paper Part 1*: 15%
Project Paper Part 2*: 15%
Final Project Paper: 55%

** Although Field Notes and Parts 1 and 2 of the Project Paper will not be formally graded, it is vital that you complete them. A portion of your final course grade will be based on completing these assignments (credit / no credit).*

Field Notes: (to be submitted with all three papers—refer to due dates below)

You will be responsible for **keeping a typed journal** to be submitted with each paper. In this journal, you will discuss and analyze the sociological relevance and import of your field activities. In order to receive "credit" for field notes, they must be submitted on time as well as be informative, sociologically relevant, comprehensive, and insightful.

More importantly, field notes will provide the empirical basis for your papers in which you 1) relate knowledge acquired during your internship experiences to a sociological concept or issue, and 2) place the organization in which you are serving in a broader sociological context. While there are no page limitations, you should have a journal entry for each day spent in the field (refer to examples).

Example 1:

“Using participant observation, today I observed an early morning meeting where I noticed that the women were more talkative than the men. The men were more focused on reading the material whereas the women were more interested in talking about it. These gender differences can be sociologically explained as follows....”

Example 2:

“Organizational analysis: I mapped out the way the desks and cubicles were set up. I noticed that the people with the nicer cubicles were located in the front near the manager. The other employees were set up in smaller cubicles south of the manager. The organizational hierarchy can be sociologically interpreted as follows....”

Project Paper

The project paper is divided into three parts. For each part you are required to write 3 to 5 pages; therefore, the final paper should be 9 to 15 pages.

Project Paper Part 1:

Part 1 should provide an *historical overview* of the organization’s activities or services as well as discuss its *formal goals and objectives*, including responses to the following:

- a) When did the organization come into existence?
- b) Who brought the organization into existence? Include any pertinent events surrounding its founding.
- c) Elaborate on the formal goals and objectives of the organization, and explain how is it organized to attain these goals and objectives?

Project Paper Part 2:

Part 2 should focus on *your role in the organization*. Discuss the following:

- a) What activities do you perform for the organization? Elaborate and provide examples.
- b) How is your presence and input supposed to contribute to the attainment of the organization’s overall goals and objectives?

Final Project Paper (including all 3 Parts):

Revise, rewrite, and refine Parts 1 and 2 into your final draft in addition to writing Part 3. Be sure to include transitional paragraphs as well as include an introduction with a thesis. End the paper with a strong analytical/interpretive concluding paragraph.

Part 3 should focus on *the sociological relevance* of the organization’s activities or services. Connect your evaluation to a concept or issue of broad sociological concern and include discussions about the following:

- a) How effective were your efforts? How might they have been more effective? Explain using examples.
- b) How successful was the organization in attaining its expressed goals? Explain how it could have been more effective or successful in accomplishing its goals?

c) Did the organization serve any other purpose than those stated in its formal or written statements of purpose? Explain and provide examples.

d) Precisely what did you, as a sociology student, learn? Explain how you learned it? What did you learn about yourself?

e) Comment on your overall field intern experience.

PAPER FORMATS: All papers, including field notes, must be typed and double-spaced with average size font (10-12 characters per inch). Margins should be 1 inch; please paginate (provide page numbers). *Late papers will NOT be accepted.*

* Papers and field notes should be edited and spell-checked—**full-letter-grade deduction** from course grade for unedited papers.