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**To:** [Downey, Douglas](#)  
**Cc:** [Crocetta, Alison](#); [Vankeerbergen, Bernadette](#); [Horn, David](#); [Haddad, Deborah](#)  
**Subject:** Sociology 2202, 2300, 2309, 3200, 3467, and 4507  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 15, 2020 4:49:00 PM

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Dear Professor Downey,

On Friday, June 26, the ASC Curriculum Committee reviewed proposals to offer distance learning versions of Sociology 2202, 2300, 2309, 3200, 3467, and 4507. Please find below the Committee's feedback for these courses.

- Sociology 2202 – approved with three contingencies and one recommendation:
  - Contingency: The first syllabus uses the title “Social Problems and Social Policy.” The official course title is “Social Problems and Public Policy.”
  - Contingency: According to Ohio State policy, students should expect a certain number of hours per week on direct instruction of some type. For each week please indicate how direct instructional content will be conveyed (e.g., videos, discussion boards, lectures, etc.). The syllabus needs to indicate the nature, frequency, and means of delivery of instructional content. Beyond discussion responses, how will students actually hear from the instructor?
  - Contingency: To help students understand their weekly topics and work load, the syllabus should indicate page numbers for the textbook chapters, provide full citations to other readings, and the date and titles for the podcasts. It is also useful to have the full list of readings on the syllabus, since the syllabus is the official record of the course.
  - Recommendation: Following best practices for distance learning courses, the weekly modules could be elaborated more for students by specifying what the learning objectives are for the week, and what the discussion post topics will be about.
- Sociology 2300 – approved with several recommendations and contingencies:
  - Contingency: The official title of this course is “Sociology of Culture and Popular Culture”, but the syllabus says the title is “Pop Culture”. To avoid confusion the syllabus should use the office title of the course.
  - Contingency: How will the instructor’s direct instructional content be conveyed (e.g. lecture videos, Zoom meetings, etc.)?The first page of the syllabus says that the meeting days/time is online, but later in the syllabus it says that weekly Zoom lectures will be required, and that there will be live sessions (attendance optional). It should be clarified if the lectures are synchronous or asynchronous and if attendance is required.
  - Contingency: Throughout this course there are a series of weekly assignments worth 10% of the final grade, but there are no specific descriptions of these assignments or expectations about them on the syllabus. Given that the syllabus is an official description, more should be provided generally about these assignments, and specific topics for each placed on the weekly schedule.
  - Contingency: The syllabus says that there are required course readings on Carmen, but all of the reading citations are not indicated on the syllabus. Since the syllabus is the official record of the course, and so interested students can learn what the course is about, the reading list should be included on the syllabus.
  - Recommendation: The visual appearance of the syllabus could be improved by using the Carmen Distance Learning “Master Course” template developed by ODEE and available in Canvas Commons. Ian Anderson also suggested using the template.
  - Recommendation: The discussion board and posts could be explained further. For instance, if everyone is responding to two peers, then who starts the discussion on a particular topic? Can you just make your own case, or would one lose points?
  - Recommendation: Best practices for online course design include elaborating a weekly schedule in ways that students can determine precisely what they will read, view, and do each week. While the basic framework is present, each element needs greater specificity. Each week could have the session dates, the topics, aim, and/or learning outcomes of the week could be indicated, titles for the video clips could be provided, discussion topics or questions could be provided, and assignments could be briefly described, with their rubrics and details left on Carmen.
- Sociology 2309 – approved with several recommendations and contingencies:
  - Contingency: According to Ohio State policy, students should expect a certain number of hours per week on direct instruction of some type. For each week it would be helpful to know how the instructor’s direct instructional content will be conveyed (e.g., lecture videos on what topics?). There is no mention of how instructor content is to be supplied; it appears there’s no synchronous component, but that’s not directly stated.
  - Contingency: The course uses exams as the primary means for evaluating student performance (75%). What will be your exam security procedures? For instance, since you are using objective items for some portion of each exam, will you be using Proctorio?
  - Contingency: The schedule is sparse on details, especially on reading assignments. The syllabus says that there are required supplemental course readings on Carmen, but the reading citations are not

- o indicated on the distance learning syllabus. The syllabus should include a list of the readings.
  - o Recommendation: The distance learning course description differs from the official course description. The official catalog description could also be on the syllabus.
  - o Recommendation: More detail on assignments could improve clarity for students. For example, a short example of weekly course activities could help students understand the weekly work load. Further elaboration on the research paper, extra credit opportunities, and participation activities would also be helpful for students.
  - o Recommendation: Under assignment information, the word “papers” is used twice to describe the research papers. The assignment breakdown only includes one paper. This should be clarified.
  - o Recommendation: Under the academic integrity policy, you say “The course includes many opportunities for formal collaboration with your classmates.” When will these opportunities occur on the class schedule, and what will they consist of? The sentence could be confusing for students.
  - o Recommendation: The course schedule could be more elaborate by specifying what the weekly assignment activity will generally be about.
- Sociology 3200 – approved with three recommendations and two contingencies:
  - o Contingency: According to Ohio State policy, students should expect a certain number of hours per week on direct instruction of some type. For each week the syllabus could specify the instructor’s direct instructional content (e.g., lecture videos on what topics?). The delivery mode of the lectures (live/recorded) is not explained.
  - o Contingency: A description should be provided for each type of assignment (e.g. reading summary, discussion post, essay, quiz, etc.) What are general expectations for these assignments?
  - o Recommendation: Revise the dates on the schedule to fit the Autumn semester calendar.
  - o Recommendation: The syllabus should indicate that the course is 100% online.
  - o Recommendation: The assessment plan provides a direct method of assessment for each expected learning outcome (ELO), but does not indicate the type of answer for each question that would reach an acceptable level to satisfy each ELO. The Committee recommends using a rubric to evaluate the ELOs.
- Sociology 3467 – approved with four contingencies and two recommendations:
  - o Contingency: The syllabus says that there are other course readings on Carmen, but the reading citations are not included on the proposed DL syllabus. Since the syllabus is the official course document, a list of readings should be included on the syllabus.
  - o Contingency: An ASC syllabus is also expected to communicate “about the length and format of all papers, homework....and examinations.” There are assignments described on the syllabus, but the descriptions extending from pages 3-6 are confusing: (1) the grade breakdown lists 100 points per week for many weeks, but in the prior paragraph it says that 200 points per week are “up for grabs”; (2)the syllabus indicates there are open book quizzes, but no indication of the number of quizzes, when they will occur, and how many points each quiz will be; (3) the syllabus mentions discussion posts, but does not describe the frequency of and aims and expectations for students’ posts; and (4) the syllabus mentions writing assignments, but no details about these assignments, such as frequency, aim, and length. Each type of assignment needs more description on the syllabus.
  - o Contingency: ASC requests that syllabi contain a weekly schedule, “including topics to be covered, readings....and homework.” The current syllabus describes four modules, but does not provide a detailed weekly schedule. Best practices for online weekly schedules include indicating the topics, aim, and/or learning outcomes for the week, what students should read, what videos students should view, and what students should do, in terms of writing assignments or discussion posts.
  - o Contingency: The syllabus should specify the instructor’s direct instructional content (e.g, lecture videos on particular topics).
  - o Recommendation: The exact term, Autumn 2020, should be specified on the first page of the syllabus.
  - o Recommendation: The Committee agrees with Ian Anderson’s recommendations from the Tech Review: “Remove personal email address. Student information is S3 data and should not be stored in personal email accounts. Office hours must be virtual, please note that at the top with method (Zoom). It should be noted that the method of delivery is 100% online in the course description. Add dates to the weekly schedule breakdown.”
- Sociology 4507 – approved with the following recommendations:
  - o Clarify how office hours will be conducted.
  - o The Committee recommends some form of live or synchronous engagement.
  - o Clarify in the syllabus how students are presenting their final presentation topics (e.g. via Zoom, recording presentations).
  - o Update the Academic Misconduct statement with the most recent language, which can be found on page 14 of the ASC Curriculum and Assessment Operations Manual ([https://ascas.osu.edu/sites/default/files/ASC\\_Curriculum\\_and\\_Assessment\\_Operations\\_Manual.pdf](https://ascas.osu.edu/sites/default/files/ASC_Curriculum_and_Assessment_Operations_Manual.pdf))

I will return Sociology 2202, 2300, 2309, 3200, and 3467 to the department queue via curriculum.osu.edu in order to address the Committee’s requests.

Sociology 4507 has already been advanced to the next step in the approval process.

Should you have any questions about the feedback of the Committee, please feel free to contact Alison Crocetta (faculty Chair of the ASC Curriculum Committee; cc'd on this e-mail), or me.

Best wishes,  
Shelby

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