

## Teaching Reflections Fall 2019

Unless the students blow-up on the final exam (which I seriously doubt) – this has been a very good semester.

Things that went well:

- Tutorial attendance was solid across the semester. Apparently students really will show up if you give them course credit. ☺ I attended tutorials for each new TA and was gratified to see that students appeared to enjoy being able to talk/discuss the content in smaller groups than the large lecture hall.
- I have heard (some) feedback that students appreciated the videos I made last summer that described some of the key ideas in the course as well as my advice on “How to get an A”.
- Students continue to appreciate that I record my lectures. I am glad that something so easy appears to help students when they miss a class or need to “brush up” when studying.
- This semester I decided to increase the number of questions on the final exam from 3 to 4. My reasoning was that the final is worth quite a bit (35%) and having more questions diminishes the impact of a single answer – not a huge difference, but a change nevertheless.
- While there are still some things I think I can do better to help TAs grade more consistently between them (and I should note that this is less of a concern this year than in previous years) I sense that my more detailed review of the exam questions/mandatory tutorial topics with the TAs helped get us all a little closer to being on the same page.
- This semester, perhaps even more than in previous years, I was impressed by my Soci 100 students’ dedication and commitment. The vast majority of them worked very hard this semester and I appreciated their patience and trust they showed me even after a relative low midterm #1 class average. I am convinced that their efforts will pay off on the final (which is usually the case).
- My TAs were a great group this semester and I had very little “drama” to deal with.
- I have also really enjoyed working with my 2 MA students and 2 Honours students this semester. Their passion and dedication to sociology is inspiring.

Things that I need to work harder on:

- I am not convinced that the written “paragraphs” in tutorials are worth the effort (for the students who have to write them or the TAs who have to grade them). I am going to take another semester to assess how they are going and will reflect on keeping them the next year I teach Intro. In my heart I feel that having students write even a short paragraph on the tutorials’ topic helps them make more meaningful connections with sociology.
- I think I want to try and host a “Sociology Movie Night” with the undergrad society to give interested students an opportunity to meet each other and chat about the power that movies can have for inspiring social change. Now that I have written this, I of course, will have to do it...☺

A great semester. My thanks to all my students and TAs who helped make the semester such a pleasure.

/Bruce