Some Approaches to Course-based Assessment

Learning Goals for English 198 (linked with Sociology 271)

My goals for your learning in this class are that you leave the class knowing how to:

1. Use writing as a way of learning the sociological theories that are the subject of Sociology 271
2. Write effective sociological arguments
3. Read your own writing/thinking critically, developing and implementing strategies for revision
4. Use research in support of your own arguments
5. Offer effective critical comments to other writers
6. Think critically about sociological arguments, including those of your peers

Assessment informs decision-making:

- Which goals did we meet?
- Were these realistic goals for this class?
- Which goals require more emphasis or different teaching methods?
- Was I able to assess my goals with the methods I included?
- What worked well?
- What will I do differently next time?

Student Performance on Written Assignments that Require Research and Include Sociological Theories

Beyer, Winter 2003
English 198 w/Soc 271
Paper 2

Select a type of deviance from the list below and formulate a sociological hypothesis for why it occurs. After critically examining the sociological literature on the deviant act, write a paper that argues your hypothesis, using the evidence from your research to support your argument. You will need to address opposing arguments explicitly as part of your own argument.

Please note that this is a causal argument. You will be arguing that X (the independent variable) causes Y (the dependent variable), using your research to support that argument. Your research will be easier if you focus on a specific type of deviance.

Possible choices:
- Rape, gang-related violence, Child abuse (physical or sexual)
- Juvenile runaways, police violence/brutality
- Drug-related crime, spouse abuse, white collar/elite crime
- Hate crimes (of one type), prostitution, other (check with me)

5-7 pages, typed and double spaced
Draft due Monday 10/30
Draft of introduction/hypothesis due Wed. 10/1
Draft of paper due Monday 11/6, 3 copies
Revisions and peer reviews due Wed., 11/15

Exams

Faculty and TA Observations
(Sometimes literally-what we SEE in our classes)

1-Minute Essays

Students’ Peer Reviews

Personal Response System

Class Discussion & Participation

Student Self-Assessment

Presentation: Applying Theory to Case

Course Evaluations

Assessment informs decision-making:

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- What will I do differently next time?

See also Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Handbook for College Teachers, 2nd Ed. by T. Angelo & K. P. Cross, Jossey-Bass, 1993