

## HOW DO SOCIOLOGY STUDENTS LEARN SOCIOLOGY?

The purpose of this self-administered, questionnaire study is to obtain some information about how sociology students learn sociology. I hope to use this information to develop strategies for our teaching, curriculum, and student support that will improve the learning of our discipline by our students. Your participation in this study is voluntary and you may quit at any time without penalty. Your data will be kept confidential and will be destroyed via secure recycling when the study is completed. The questionnaire will take about 15-20 minutes to complete. If you are willing to be in this study, please complete the questionnaire and turn it in to the researcher. If you have any questions about this research, please contact me ([kmckinne@ilstu.edu](mailto:kmckinne@ilstu.edu)) or the Research and Sponsored Programs Office at 438 - 2528. I greatly appreciate your assistance with this important study.

Kathleen McKinney, Professor, Sociology and Cross Chair in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

### **Background Questions**

1. What is your sex?
  1. Male
  2. Female
2. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your race?
  1. White/Caucasian
  2. Black/African-American
  3. Hispanic/Latino/a
  4. Asian or Asian American
  5. Native American
  6. Other \_\_\_\_\_
  7. Mixed race
4. How would you describe the social class of the family in which you grew up?
  1. poverty level
  2. lower class
  3. working class
  4. lower middle class
  5. middle class
  6. upper middle class
  7. upper class
5. Are you a “first generation” college student (neither parent has a college degree)?
  1. yes
  2. no
6. What is your approximate overall Grade Point Average as of the end of last semester?  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. What is your approximate Grade Point Average in Sociology only as of the end of last semester? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Based on feedback from your instructor thus far, what grade do you expect to receive on your senior thesis paper? \_\_\_\_\_

9. Using the scale below, please rate your average level of motivation in your sociology courses.

Not at all motivated 1 2 3 4 5 Very motivated

10. Using the scale below, please rate your overall level of engagement in the discipline of Sociology?

Not at all engaged 1 2 3 4 5 Very engaged

11. My student status is... 1 Full time 2 Part time

12. What was the **most important factor** in your selection of Sociology as your major?

**Study Experiences and Behaviors**

1. Please briefly explain **one specific strategy you use** that best helps you learn sociology.

2. How often do you use this strategy to learn in fields other than sociology?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very Often

3. How often do you use this strategy to learn in other areas of life (sports, hobbies, domestic skills, etc.)?

Not at all 1 2 3 4 5 Very Often

4. I am confident of my ability to successfully learn sociology.

Disagree Strongly 1 2 3 4 5 Agree Strongly

4. When I do well in Sociology courses, this is due to...

Luck and Fate 1 2 3 4 5 My own effort or ability

6. Please indicate, using the scale below, how often you engaged in each type of activity during the time you have been a Sociology major.

Never 1 2 3 4 5 Very Often

a. Assisted a faculty member on research 1 2 3 4 5

b. Engaged in a Service Learning opportunity 1 2 3 4 5

	Never				Very Often
c. Discussed course material with others out of class	1	2	3	4	5
d. Formed/participated in a study group	1	2	3	4	5
e. Participated in a campus club or organization	1	2	3	4	5
f. Went to a campus, public presentation or lecture	1	2	3	4	5
g. Went on a field trip related to academics	1	2	3	4	5
h. Tutored another student	1	2	3	4	5
i. Met with your advisor	1	2	3	4	5
j. Met, out-of-class, with a faculty member	1	2	3	4	5
k. Completed all required homework on time	1	2	3	4	5
l. Served as an Undergraduate teaching assistant	1	2	3	4	5
m. Presented at Undergraduate research symposium	1	2	3	4	5
n. Participated in Sociology Club	1	2	3	4	5
o. Turned in optional drafts of work for feedback	1	2	3	4	5
p. Came to class well prepared.	1	2	3	4	5
q. Spent more than 30 hours per week on homework	1	2	3	4	5
r. Participated, actively, in class	1	2	3	4	5
s. Shared my written work with peers for feedback	1	2	3	4	5
t. Used email to interact with faculty	1	2	3	4	5

### **Sociological Imagination or Perspective**

1. Please **select one of the situations/behaviors below**. As a Sociologist, please write a paragraph below speculating and explaining, to some non-sociology friends or co-workers, the reasons **why, sociologically**, it occurred. **Use your sociological imagination**. Please use the back of this page to write your answer, and then continue with the questionnaire.

- A male student in your business class was caught cheating on a final exam.
- A teenage girl spends 10 hours per week doing volunteer work for her church.
- Some behavior or situation in your life (please specify).

2. In trying to learn the sociological imagination and/or sociological perspectives during your career as a sociology student, what most helped you to learn these ideas?
  
3. Think about a time when you had a very difficult time learning an idea or skill in Sociology. What did you do to learn? How did you get past that difficult learning situation?

**Learning Style**

Think about how you best learn and please respond to the statements below, using the following scale.

	Seldom	Sometimes	Often
a. I like to write things down or take notes for visual review.	1	2	3
b. I require explanations of diagrams, graphs, or visual directions.	1	2	3
c. I enjoy working with my hands or making things.	1	2	3
d. I can easily understand and follow directions on a map.	1	2	3
e. I do best in academic subjects by listening to lectures and tapes.	1	2	3
f. I play with coins or keys in my pocket.	1	2	3
g. I think the best way to remember something is to picture it in your head.	1	2	3
h. I would rather listen to a good lecture or speech than read about the same material in a book.	1	2	3
i. I grip objects in my hands while learning.	1	2	3
j. I am good at working jigsaw puzzles and mazes.	1	2	3
k. I learn to spell better by repeating words out loud than by writing the words on paper.	1	2	3
l. I prefer to use posters, models, or actual practice and other activities in class.	1	2	3

Thanks for your help!