

## Professional Writing for Justice Services

Sociology 501, Fall 202

Gaige 303, Alternating Mondays 6-7:50 (HYBRID)

### *Instructor Information*

Dr. Mikaila Mariel Lemonik Arthur

[marthur@ric.edu](mailto:marthur@ric.edu) (preferred) or 401.456.8681 (be sure to leave a callback number & when to call)

**Student Meetings:** Drop-In hours Tuesdays 3:30-5:30 PM, Gaige 351. You can also book an in-person, Zoom, or phone appointment with me at <https://calendly.com/mmlarthur> or let me know if you need an alternate time. I can also usually meet at 5 pm or immediately after class on class days.

**This course is a hybrid course. You will need to have reliable Internet access on a computer or tablet and you will need to check your email regularly.**

### *Course Description*

This course services as the gateway course for the Master's program in Justice Studies. By the end of this course, students will have gained proficiency in a variety of genres of writing valuable in both professional and academic settings within the broad field of justice studies and will be better prepared for subsequent graduate coursework, including the development of a master's thesis or project.

### *Materials*

ASA. 2019. *American Sociological Association Style Guide*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition. ISBN 9780912764559. Available in paper or Kindle versions and in Adams Library Reference. List price \$35.00

Calarco. 2020. *A Field Guide to Grad School*. ISBN 9780691201092 Available in paper and e-text formats and electronically from Adams Library. List price \$18.00.

Cohen. Forthcoming. *Citizen Scholar: Public Engagement for Social Scientists*. Provided free to students by courtesy of the author.

Olmstead, *Tools for Podcasting*. Online Open Educational Resource, available at <https://pressbooks.pub/toolsforpodcasting/>

*Optional:* Elbow. 1998. *Writing Without Teachers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. ISBN 9780195120165. Ebook available at Adams Library, so you can download the chapters we will read.

Additional reading materials will be made available via Blackboard.

THIS SYLLABUS IS TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

DUE DATES WILL BE FINALIZED UPON CLASS DISCUSSION.

**\*\*TO PROTECT THE HEALTH & SAFETY OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE CLASS, PLEASE DO NOT COME TO CLASS IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING COVID/FLU SYMPTOMS OR HAVE BEEN EXPOSED. \*\***

## *Course Requirements & Grading*

Course requirements for Sociology 501 include:

- A substantial volume of written work, including two large writing assignments and numerous smaller ones, along with a final course portfolio. Many smaller writing assignments will be posted in the course discussion board, where you should frequently interact with and comment on your classmates' work. Some assignments will also include speaking.
- Productive, respectful participation in peer review processes with classmates.
- Attendance at and participation in scheduled in-person or Zoom class sessions.
- Attendance at and participation in a minimum of three individual writing conferences with the professor (these may be in-person or Zoom).
- Completion of supplementary assignments designed to build writing skills (these may be added as we go to address the needs of the class).

**Note:** federal guidelines expect students to complete three hours of work (including both in-class and out-of-class time) for every credit hour earned.

(<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2009/credit.html>)

Grades will be determined based on the totality of work submitted over the semester, with larger assignments weighted more heavily. Improvement over the course of the semester, especially the final portfolio and self-assessment, will be taken into consideration. Individual assignments, especially the smaller weekly writing assignments, will not often receive typical grades, as the goal in this course is to write as part of a developmental learning process rather than in pursuit of specific external rewards.

This is a graduate class and as such it assumes substantial motivation and responsibility on the part of students, as well as dedication to completing the advanced and significant workload graduate education implies. Please note that success in graduate studies requires grades of B or above in graduate courses. Therefore, it will be my assumption that students who complete assignments in keeping with adequate graduate-level performance will earn a B, outstanding work will result in a grade of A, and grades of B+ and A- will be assigned for performance that is better than adequate but not quite outstanding. Work that does not meet graduate-level standards—even for students who have worked hard all semester—will result in a grade of C or D.

## *Course Learning Outcomes*

This course is designed to meet learning outcomes of the Justice Studies MA program<sup>1</sup>:

1. Articulate knowledge of the major issues facing the justice system locally, nationally, and globally, as well as new research findings in the field.
2. Apply research findings to problems with social service agencies within or related to the justice system.
3. Communicate professionally and knowledgably in oral and written formats on a variety of academic and justice-related topics.

---

<sup>1</sup> See <https://www.ric.edu/departments-directory/departments-sociology/justice-studies-undergraduate-and-graduate-programs/justice-studies-ma> & click on “learning goals”

## Course Schedule

Note: readings are due **prior to** the class session in which they will be discussed. We will negotiate specific due dates for assignments and discussion boards as a group, and then these will be posted to Blackboard, so always check Blackboard for details about specific deadlines.

*Week of August 26:* Introduction to Soc 501, to graduate study, and to each other

### Class Meets

Reading: Calarco 1-9, 84-107; Elbow, 18-22; Beetham, "Writing as Passing"

Writing: complete Course Introductions discussion

Assignment: Complete the Getting to Know You Survey in Blackboard

*Week of September 2:* Developing a professional focus

Reading: Calarco 108-118; Baker-Smith *et al.*, "#RealCollege2020: Five Years of Evidence on Campus Basic Needs Insecurity;" Broton & Goldrick-Rab, "Going Without: An Exploration of Food and Housing Insecurity Among Undergraduates"

Writing: as an individual assignment, write a 1-2 page reflection paper on the differences in genre between this week's two assigned readings.

Assignment: Academic Integrity Tutorial (<https://plagiarism.iu.edu/index.html>) & Certification

Test: MA & BA-MA Studies must take master's/doctoral test; BA students are encouraged to also take this one but can choose the one for undergraduates.

Assignment: complete online library tutorial (*prior to meeting with librarian*)

*Week of September 9:* The research process & writing the literature review

### Class Meets

\*\*\*Note: there will tentatively be filming in class this week for a promotional video for the

MA program. If this presents an issue for you please see me ASAP to discuss alternatives.

Reading: Reading: Forsyth, "The Regulation of Witchcraft and Sorcery Practices and Beliefs;";

Calarco 177-211; handout on reverse outlines; start reading articles for your literature review

Writing: in the course discussion board, post a paragraph in which you summarize the topic you intend to focus on this semester and explain why this topic is important for knowledge or policy, as well as a summary of subtopics, keywords, and avenues of exploration you want to pursue in relation to your writing and research topic

Assignment: schedule appointment with Reference Librarian Dragan Gill

(<https://ric.libcal.com/appointments/gill>). After your appointment, send me an email summarizing what happened at your appointment, what you learned, and what you intend to do going forward.

Be sure to do this **this week**, and after you complete the online library tutorial.

*Week of September 16:* Work week

Reading: Elbow, 93-106; Calarco, 228-234; ASA style guide, 51-93 and 125-139; finish reading articles for your literature review

Writing: complete initial annotated bibliography

Writing: complete reverse outline one article of your choice from your bibliography, focusing on the literature review

*Week of September 23:* Writing as part of job-seeking

**Class Meets**

Reading: Purdue OWL: Job Search Writing; RIC Career Development Center Resources

Writing: Select a specific job listing in your career field and complete a resume and cover letter appropriate for that job. Optionally, create and submit a profile on LinkedIn or another relevant career networking site.

Writing: work on draft literature review

*Week of September 30:* Peer Review

Reading: Guillory, “The Memo and Modernity;” Picardi, “Writing Memos and Letters that Achieve Your Goals”

Writing: complete draft of literature review; attach reverse outline of your paper

Writing: peer review of classmates’ work & submit peer review in the form of a professional memo

Assignment: schedule an individual meeting with me

*Week of October 7:* Writing about policy

**Class Meets**

Reading: Reading: Cunningham, “Rules for Writing a Policy Brief”; Sample policy papers in Blackboard; Young & Quinn, “An Essential Guide to Writing Policy Briefs”

Assignment: Submit literature review & revision memo

*Week of October 14:*

Writing: In the course discussion board, outline additional data, literature, etc. needed to complete the policy paper & develop initial policy suggestions for your policy paper (Policy Focus)

Meeting with Reference strongly encouraged

Assignment: Appointment or critique from Career Development Center (required; send me an email report after your meeting)

Reading: read additional sources needed for your policy paper

*Week of October 21:* Writing with visuals and data

**Class Meets**

Reading: Klass, 71-122

Writing: In the course discussion board, post a letter to the editor, with submission ideas

Assignment: Schedule an individual meeting with me

*Week of October 28:* Success in grad school

Reading: @biblioracle on writing a report, Calarco, chapters 2, 5, 6, and conclusion

Assignment: Submit discussion board post on success in grad school, and respond to your classmates

Writing: Locate an image, a graph, and a table relating to your policy topic and explain each

*Week of November 4:* Writing for the public

**Class Meets**

Reading: Calarco 224-225; Op-ed Writing: Tips and Tricks; Promoting Sociological Research Toolkit 75-76; sample op-eds in Blackboard; Poynter on civic clarity

Writing: submit draft policy paper and revision memo

Assignment: schedule meeting with me

*Week of November 11:*

Reading: Cohen, Chapters 1-3 (3-56)

Writing: Complete peer review of classmates' work & submit peer review as a professional memo

Writing: Submit final policy paper & revision memo

*Week of November 18:* Social Media and Professionalism

Reading: Promoting Sociological Research Toolkit 1-8, 61-66, & 80-83; Cohen, Chapters 4-6 (57-119); Calarco, 255-264; Ollier-Malaterre & Rothbard, "How to Separate the Personal and Professional on Social Media"

Writing: In the discussion board, post an op-ed based on your whitepaper

Assignment: Create an approximately 30-second tiktok-style video introducing yourself and your project

*Week of November 25:* Writing for presentation

**Class Meets on Zoom this week**, with guest Phillip Cohen

Listening: choose at least one episode from The Annex Sociology Podcast and at least one episode from New Books Network—Sociology to listen to in their entirety

Reading: Cohen, Chapters 7 & 8 (120-154)

Reading: Olmstead, *Tools for Podcasting*, Chapter 5: The Art of the Interview (chapters 1-3 optional)

Writing: Discussion board post on the podcast episodes you listened to

Writing: Develop interview questions for podcast

*Week of December 2:* Bringing it all together

Reading: Olmstead, *Tools for Podcasting*, Chapters 4, 6, 7, and 8 (chapters 9-11 optional)

Assignment: Record, edit, and submit podcast

Assignment: Develop final 10-minute presentation

Writing: Discussion board post on Citizen Scholar

*Week of December 9:* Submit writing portfolio

### **Class Meets**

Reading: ASA style guide, 107-120; Calarco, 265-284; Cargan, “The Research Proposal;” Raj, “Writing Effective Grant Proposals;” Cohen, pp. 26-31

Assignment: Present your project in class today

Writing: Plan for final assignment

Schedule an individual meeting with me prior to due date

### *Writing Portfolio Requirements*

- (1) Research or grant proposal;
- (2) revised policy paper;
- (3) finalized resume and cover letter;
- (4) at least one additional revised assignment; and
- (5) performance review/self-assessment

## **Course Policies**

*Academic Integrity:* All students enrolling in this course are expected to abide by the Rhode Island College guidelines on academic honesty. More information about academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism, as well as RIC policies, can be found at <http://ric.libguides.com/proethics>. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to:

- Using AI writing systems and turning in the results as if they are your own work.
- Plagiarizing written work, including copying some or all of your work from a book, a website, or another student’s paper. Think about how you would feel if someone passed off your hard work as their own.
- Using sources without proper attribution. Remember that all claims in a paper that did not spring fully formed from your own head need attribution, regardless of whether or not they are paraphrased, and all direct quotes should appear in quotation marks. If you are unsure how to document sources, please see me or check the links in Blackboard.
- Turning in research reports that are fabricated or which do not accurately represent the research activities in which you engaged.
- Turning in work completed for other classes without prior permission.
- Working together with other students or seeking help from professionals or peers on assignments which prohibit such activities.
- Destroying course materials or preventing other students from achieving fully in this course.

Cheating successfully is often harder than you think, and you might as well just put your effort into doing the assignment legitimately. The penalties for academic dishonesty are severe, and include receiving a 0 on the assignment for the first minor offense, receiving an F for the class for a repeated offense, and report to the Academic Integrity Committee at RIC for all offenses. If you feel the urge to engage in academic dishonesty, stop and think about what you are doing, and then come see me so we can work out a plan together to ensure your success in the course.

*Extensions, Absences, and Attendance:* Please make every effort to attend all scheduled class sessions. Class sessions will not be recorded and group activities cannot be made up. However, we can work out a plan for alternative assignments if you become ill, face quarantine, or otherwise will miss more than a class or two. If you need an extension, instructions for requesting one are available in Blackboard.

Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due in Blackboard at specific times as indicated in Blackboard; you can request an extension for eligible assignments using the link in Blackboard. Assignments **must** be saved in \*.rtf, \*.doc, or \*.docx (preferred). Blackboard does log your submissions; you can return to an assignment yourself to see if you have submitted it correctly, and I am happy to show you how to do this so that you will not need to email me to see if I have received your work.

*Course Technology:* Students are expected to check their RIC email addresses and Blackboard frequently, at least a couple of times per week, and to have sufficient Internet access to complete readings & assignments via Blackboard. If you primarily use another email account, you must forward your RIC email, as I do use email to disseminate important information about the course. If you are not able to access email or Blackboard, you should seek assistance from User Support Services right away (<https://www.ric.edu/departments-directory/user-support-services> or 456-8803).

*Students with Disabilities:* Students with disabilities should be sure that they are registered with Disability Services in order to ensure access to the full range of services available at Rhode Island College. Information about these services and about registration is available at <https://www.ric.edu/departments-directory/disability-services-center> If you have a disability that requires or would benefit from accommodations to ensure you have equal access to success in this course, it is your responsibility to come and speak with me as early as possible in the semester so that we can develop a plan together. All reasonable accommodations will be made.

*Discrimination and Sexual Harassment:* Rhode Island College and its faculty are committed to creating a safe and open learning environment for all students. The College prohibits all forms of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking. RIC encourages all members of the community to seek support from, and report to, the Office of Institutional Equity. You may contact the Office at 401-456-8218, or learn more about college policies by visiting the [Office of Institutional Equity's website](#). If you have experienced, witnessed, and/or received information about a potential violation, [you may submit an incident report](#). Incident reports are routed to the Director of Institutional Equity / Title IX Coordinator, and will initiate outreach from the Director to the individual(s) who have experienced harm.

**All faculty and staff are now mandatory reporters.** This means that if we learn about something that might be sex discrimination (e.g., sexual harassment, sexual assault, intimate partner violence, stalking, pregnancy discrimination, LGBTQ discrimination), then we must report what we know to the Title IX Office. Usually, reports will only leave a record of concern, but sometimes, a report can be escalated into an investigation without a victim's consent. Mandatory reporters are expected to share information learned in all settings, including during class activities, assignments, office hours, and outside of class. **Please be thoughtful about what you disclose to me.**

*Pregnancy Modifications:* Rhode Island College prohibits differential treatment or discrimination against students based on their current, potential, or past parental, family, marital status, or pregnancy or related condition. Students experiencing pregnancy or related conditions may meet with the Title IX Coordinator to discuss reasonable modifications by [initiating a request](#). The College's Pregnancy Policy is available at <https://www.ric.edu/pregnancy>. College policy requires all employees, upon receipt of a disclosure of pregnancy or related condition from a student, to refer that student to the Title IX Coordinator.

*Basic Wellness Needs:* To learn effectively, you must have basic security: a roof over your head along with a reliable place to sleep and enough food to eat. If you're having trouble with any of those things, please contact Learning for Life ([l4linfo@ric.edu](mailto:l4linfo@ric.edu), or phone 401-456-6320). Students dealing with heightened feelings of sadness or hopelessness, thoughts of harm or suicide, or increased anxiety may schedule an appointment at the Counseling Center (401-456-8094). Students in distress can call 401-456-4673 (HOPE) to confidentially speak with licensed clinician 24/7 at no cost. If you are experiencing a financial emergency, the FAST Fund provides small grants, outside of the RIC financial aid system. Learn more or apply at <https://fastfundric.wixsite.com/fast>.

*Writing Lab:* Everyone, even excellent students, benefits from having another set of eyes on their writing, so visit the **Writing Lab** early often to help develop your ideas, organize your writing, and improve your drafts: <https://www.ric.edu/department-directory/division-student-success/student-services/academic-success-center/writing-lab>.

If you would like more information about the resources available at RIC or help navigating them, you can ask me at any time this semester. You do not need to tell me why you are asking to get help, whether for a friend, another student, or yourself.