**Mid-term feedback from students in SOSGEO4801 spring 2022**

The evaluation is based on an hour-long conversation with a group of 5 students who self-selected to take part in the evaluation group in the first lecture. They were asked to talk to their co-students and get responses from them as well.

Overall, students are quite happy with how the course has proceeded. They find the syllabus and the format for the class good. They say that the design of this course is “more creative” than most modules. They explain that typically modules do not create much room for people to discuss issues or ask questions. Therefore, they appreciate the format for SOSGEO4801 where we leave the second half of each class meeting to discuss examples and issues related to social movements and diversity. According to the students, there is a lot of potential to connect ideas, etc. during the discussions, and that that potential has largely been fulfilled in practice. They agree they learn more from discussing the ideas from the lectures and readings than just having 100 percent lecture.

Students also appreciate the detailed materials used in class, including slides. The examples used in class have been very helpful for understanding the material. Students who are learning to be teachers have said that the themes and materials used in class are very useful and that they would consider using these when they themselves teach classes. Materials based on current events or news items were also particularly appreciated. Students thought it was good to be able to analyze current events using the theories and frameworks they learn about in the course.

Many students described the course as “fun” and as “one of the best if not the best course” that they have taken. Many look forward to coming to class. Students say they often discuss the topics outside of class and even with friends.

One sentiment shared by many students was that the course really pushes the envelope when it comes to including different voices and perspectives that otherwise would not be covered in a more traditional sociology course. There is a feeling that the course delivers on the promise of a more active anti-racist academia by acknowledging these perspectives. Students have said the course is inspirational to them and allows them to make sense of their own experiences in society.

Students were quite satisfied with having a final essay exam. They thought this was the best option for a course like SOSGEO4801 since it relieved some of the pressure of a traditional sit-down exam and it also allows students to explore their own interests in the topic. Given the flexibility in topics, students also mentioned that it was difficult to settle on one topic and get started. It was suggested that perhaps a model essay could be provided to give students an idea of the scope and breadth of what was expected.

The perspectives and texts shared for the course are varied. One student mentioned that the historical texts in particular shed light on current conditions in the world. While the texts are varied, there were some suggestions for improvement. The first few lectures felt very theory-heavy and some students felt they were drowning in theory for the first part of the course. There was a suggestion for maybe including some more empirical material or case studies during the first part of the course to divide up the theory-heavy part.

There was also a sense among some non-sociologists that the discussions and lecture material for the early part of the course was a bit sociology-heavy. Such students had to do some background work to search for sociological concepts or theorists that were new to them. It was suggested that these concepts and theorists be defined or explained to everyone so that everyone is on the same page. Another way of integrating non-sociologists would be to include some lecture(s) on the environmental movement, which may be especially relevant for geographers.

Students appreciate that the course allows for the discussion of sometimes sensitive topics like racism, ethnicity, diversity, religion, sexuality, etc. Students suggested that the course convenors and/or lecturers declare at the beginning of the course that the class is a safe space for discussing such issues and that discussion will be civil and respectful even as people learn how to speak about and discuss such issues. Because of potential language barriers (i.e., the course being in English) and the sensitive nature of issues, it is very possible that a student says something unintentionally that could offend another student. In such a space, a civil back-and-forth between students can still happen while we discuss such topics.

Students mentioned that the physical space in which the course convenes is not optimal, particularly the auditorium in Eilert Sundts hus. Breaking into groups is not as easy, and there are often some people who sit on the outside of the group who do not say too much during the group discussions.

Other concrete suggestions included starting a list of films, series, or podcasts that touch on the subject material in the course. It was suggested that the course convenors and lecturers could start the list, but then that students could also add to the list too. To ensure student responses, this could also be done for a few minutes during class. An additional suggestion for improving understanding among all students was to create a word list with definitions of certain key concepts. This might be relevant for foundational sociological concepts that are mentioned in the course, but that are not part of the social movements or diversity material.