

## ***USI Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice Studies Statement of Teaching Excellence***

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Criminal Justice Studies at the University of Southern Indiana is serious about its teaching responsibility and is dedicated to excellence in teaching. We expect full-time and part-time faculty to challenge students by instilling critical thinking, developing their knowledge base, and requiring academic rigor. When students are challenged and expected to work hard, their academic achievement, class attendance, sense of responsibility, and future prospects increase.

The work required of students can take numerous forms, including reading, papers, presentations, projects, mandatory preparation for class, and class attendance. Faculty legitimately differ in the emphasis they allocate to these activities in their particular classes (e.g., some faculty prefer more writing, while others place more stress on heavy reading loads). Courses should reflect the legitimate requirements of a four-year university. Also, we expect that faculty teaching upper division classes will build in a higher level of rigor and achievement.

Our faculty will give grades that reflect the standards appropriate for their courses. Grades should be based upon a careful evaluation of each student's performance, which reflects his/her ability to understand and use the sociological information and ideas presented in the course. We specifically support our faculty in their resistance to the nation-wide tendency toward grade inflation.

The department also supports a variety of teaching methods, as well as innovations and experiments with these techniques. Along with the traditional university teaching methods of lectures, reading assignments, and classroom discussion, we support faculty's use of library work, videos, outside speakers, social simulations, debates, panel discussions, mandatory attendance, field trips, use of computers in the classroom, ethnographic interviews, content analysis, observation projects, and archaeological digs.

In order to maintain quality teaching and excellence in the classroom, faculty will have regular peer and student reviews. This evaluation process of your teaching will include classroom visits and review of syllabi and evaluation forms by the department chair and/or evaluation committee. Faculty members also are encouraged to submit, or may be asked to submit, any of the following: classroom exercises and tests, sample class projects or other assignments, class grade distributions, reading lists, or any other material deemed relevant for student academic achievement and academic standards.