

Memorandum

To: Members of the Undergraduate Committee

From: Franklin Goza, Professor

Subject: Class observation report

This is a report of my observation of Antwan Jones' SOC 101—*Principles of Sociology* class on November 27, 2007 from 8:00-9:15. As his advisor, I was invited to observe his class, to prepare a written evaluation of his teaching abilities, and to provide constructive feedback. Below are my observations and comments.

Prior to the beginning of class, I observed that the Olscamp 223 lecture hall was very crowded. Given that class began at 8:00 am, I was pleasantly surprised by the large turnout. In fact, there were relatively few empty seats in the room.

Mr. Jones began the class by distributing handouts to accompany his forthcoming PowerPoint presentation. He next asked the class if they had any questions regarding the prior class or the day's readings. No questions were asked, so he proceeded to discuss Mill's concept of the power elite. Later he would focus on various aspects of the economy, various labor force issues and eventually arrive at the topic of social change. I was impressed by the quality of his PowerPoint presentation. It was very complete and students actively copied parts of it in to their notes. This presentation also was replicated in the handouts he earlier provided. However, I realized that the handouts left out key portions of the overhead presentation. For this reason, students had to pay attention in order to complete the missing portions of the handout. This was a clever way of making certain that the students paid constant attention to the material being presented. In fact, the students seemed to be fully engaged, as none read newspapers and very few conversed with their neighbors or surfed the internet on their computers.

I found the information covered to be interesting, informative, and clearly presented to this group of young students. I also liked the way Antwan paused after every slide to ask if there were questions. Unfortunately, not once on this day did a single student ask a question during his lecture. At the end of the class period, however, Mr. Jones raised a series of questions that were contained in the handout and in reference to the day's lecture. Approximately six students participated in volunteering responses to these questions. During this limited period of interaction, it was apparent there was rapport between Mr. Jones and at least of few of his students.

Since Mr. Jones is a beginning teacher, I will attempt to provide a bit of constructive criticism to help him improve as a teacher. To begin his lecture stayed very close to the PowerPoint presentation and deviated little. I fully expect this to change with practice and experience. Still, there were several points during the lecture when Mr. Jones' explanations would have benefited from the presentation of an additional example or two to help clarify and reinforce the concept being presented on the big screen. I would also suggest that Mr. Jones continue to attempt to bring more of his students into the class discussions. To do this there are various strategies that

might be attempted. Two possible suggestions include calling on people and posing provocative and controversial questions more likely to generate debate.

In sum, I found Mr. Jones' teaching style to be engaging as he interacted well with those students who opted to participate. He was also demonstrated that he has a sound knowledge of the material being presented. I fully expect that with additional experience and time that he will become a top-notch teacher.