

Memorandum

Date: April 21, 2008

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 April 10, 2008 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 lecture hall was very crowded. Given that class began at 8:00 am, I was pleasantly surprised by the large turnout. I was also pleased that no students arrived late for this class, nor did those present read papers, converse with peers, or play with laptops.

Mr. Jones began class by distributing handouts to accompany his forthcoming PowerPoint presentation. He next asked the class if they had any questions regarding the day's readings or homework. There was one question, which was carefully answered, prior to collecting the day's homework.

Today's lecture focused on various issues related to the labor force. I was again impressed by the quality of Mr. Jones' PowerPoint presentation. It was very complete and students actively copied parts of it into their notes. This presentation was also replicated in the handouts he earlier provided the class. However, because the handouts left out key portions of the overhead presentation, students had to pay attention in order to complete the missing portions. This was a clever way of making certain that students paid constant attention to the material being presented.

I found the information covered to be interesting, informative, and clearly presented to this group of students. I also liked the way Antwan paused after every slide to ask if there were questions. I am also pleased to report that Antwan has grown as a teacher since I last observed him teach during the fall semester. He appeared more confident and comfortable in front of the class. In addition, his examples and explanations were more complete and better conceived.

Still, since Mr. Jones is a relatively new educator, I will attempt to provide a bit of constructive criticism to help him improve as a teacher. In reference to today's lecture, the labor force, I would have liked to see Antwan explain a few additional terms that I believe are especially relevant to this topic. Two of these are "work force" and "discouraged worker." Perhaps they are discussed well enough in the text making such a discussion redundant. There were also 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 overhead screen. For example, various bivariate tables were presented (e.g., race by occupation). My concern is that students might not have understood the many issues

leading to both the observed distributions and their important social consequences. I believe that a little extra discussion might benefit the class's understanding of these important phenomena. I also will continue to encourage Mr. Jones to attempt to bring more of his students into class discussions. My favorite strategies for making this happen are to call on people and to pose provocative and controversial questions 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 also demonstrated that he has a sound knowledge of the material being presented. Finally, he continues to grow and mature as an educator. With additional experience, I fully expect that he will become a truly top-notch teacher.