

2012

Principles of Sociology (SOC 150) City as Classroom Project Report

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Recommended Citation

Bogle, Kathleen PhD, "Principles of Sociology (SOC 150) City as Classroom Project Report" (2012). *City as Classroom Projects*. 17. http://digitalcommons.lasalle.edu/city_as_classroom/17

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City as Classroom Initiative
Fall 2010 – Spring 2011

Course Description

SOC 150/Principles of Sociology

This course is designed to help students learn what it means to think sociologically. A major focus of the course is identifying and explaining patterns of human behavior.

Project Description

“The Unwritten Rules of Urban Life”

In class, we discussed the concepts of “norms” and “unwritten rules.” To understand the concept of unwritten rules/cultural norms better, students had to choose a location in Philadelphia, observe the behavior there, and then write a short paper identifying the unwritten rules for that place/event.

Places students went to observe behavior:

- 30th Street train station
- Sporting event
- Concert
- Philadelphia art museum
- Rittenhouse Park
- Church or synagogue in Philadelphia (to watch a mass or other service)
- Other urban location you choose

Outcomes

There was a wide array of papers written for this assignment. Students went to places all over the city. Some students went to urban locations together; others went to locations on their own. Regardless, each student developed his/her own paper and many papers were very well done.

Lessons Learned

Many students mentioned in my course evaluations that the course made them think about things they had never even considered previously. I believe this assignment contributed to them developing their sociological imagination, which is one of the goals of the course.

Student Feedback

The student feedback, both quantitative and qualitative, was overwhelmingly positive. Virtually every student agreed that this assignment was a positive experience. They learned the concept of unwritten rules more in depth and had a fun experience in the city as well.