

## Stephen Appold Teaching Activities

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My classes give students the skills they will need to argue for particular points of view and organizational courses of action by developing a “helicopter view.” That is, they combine a broad overview with the ability to zoom in on specific technical details. Taking a “rhetorical” approach to teaching, I merge the discussion of issues, based on often classic reading material, with the application to real-world situations. Students need to know how to argue for a point of view on the basis of empirical data; a simple t-test, properly framed, can make a powerful argument. Real learning is an accident and I try to create the situations in which serendipitous events can occur. Oral presentations and written exercises as well as debates encourage active learning and develop the ability to articulate a point of view and defend it. This format occasionally places a heavy responsibility on the students to structure the new material for their fellow students, much as they might for their colleagues in a policy analysis position or any organizational situation.

Many students will have, what are now being termed, “boundaryless careers,” that is, a series of inter-connected employment situations in arenas of their own making that cross the lines of formal organizations. External visibility is key to their career success. Therefore, I include project experiences in my classes that result in tangible products that students can include on their resumes. For example, every student on the *Sociology of Work* can claim authorship of publicly available work.

### Major accomplishments at NUS

- Coordinated one large course, held sole responsibility for four courses, shared responsibility for two courses and a workshop. Developed significant new content for each including substantive information and analytic tools.
- Cultivated a teaching style that involves students in lectures and discussions and as producers of new knowledge. Exemplary assignment reports posted to the web.
- Created original lectures, supported by PowerPoint, including graphics, Singapore-based data, and key points.
- Developed significant new teaching materials including an original cyber-text, original projects and exercises, and reference materials. Some are internationally indexed and used.
- Involved undergraduate students in original empirical research and published their reports to the web. Engaged students in actively creating course textbooks. These are read internationally and some have inspired similar projects overseas.
- Contributed to the development of both “applied” sociology graduate course work program and “research” graduate program.

### Courses Taught at NUS

#### *Introduction to Sociology* (First-year course)

I’ve co-taught this course twice and have been a guest lecturer since. I often discuss social networks and Singaporean social organization and the relationship between demographic processes and age relations.

#### *Methods of Social Research* (Second-year required course)

This large (enrollment 200+) required course (offered three times) attempts to train students to argue from data and shows them how to do so by leading them through a series of exercises requiring direct observation, interviews, and survey analysis. I developed a set of teaching materials and a series of project-based exercises to provide a substantive focus and increase relevance, including those investigating romantic relationships and sexual behavior and university experience from a student perspective. Some of the exercises and materials have been used by other universities. The experience of teaching this course has led to a paper, “Examining student life in a large research methods course” (under review).

*Sociology of Work* (Second-year course) [formerly *Industrial Sociology*]

Beginning with very fluid negotiations over the division of labor and becoming progressively institutionalized, this course (offered six times) shows how the world is socially constructed through work. Parts of the argument are recorded in a cyber-text, Work, Organization, and Society, developed because no suitable text could be found. Because there is very little empirical research on Singaporean work situations, students were commissioned to perform individual and group ethnographies (collected in cyber-anthologies, Rice Bowl, volumes I and II and in Hawkers!) and survey research (collected in cyber-anthology, Who's the Boss?).

*Population and Society* (Second-year course)

Many of Singapore's most salient policy and social problems are rooted in demography and demography, by turning moral problems into measurement issues, is the paradigmatic policy science. The course (offered twice) attempts to combine a theoretically-informed discussion of substantive issues with a series of data gathering and analysis exercises, including the use of demographic measures as social indicators, population pyramids, life tables, projections, the index of dissimilarity, and geo-demographic map-making.

*Sociology of Organizations* (Fourth-year seminar)

This course (offered five times) is run as a true seminar with a totally new reading list (and set of concerns) each year. Students take different roles as reporters, critics, and summarizes and, through the help of individualized take-home "mid-term" exam questions, collectively write a textbook. The results can be found at Organizational Analysis, volumes I, II, III, and IV. The course has explored issues of the organization of bureaucratic management, artistic production, religion, social movements, and creativity. A semester covering the social organization of terrorism is planned.

*Social Policy and Planning* (Fourth-year seminar)

This seminar (offered once), run as a group project, analyzed the Singapore 21 effort from a broad theoretical and narrower substantive perspective.

*Honors Thesis Workshop*

This workshop was designed to help fourth-year students make progress on their honors thesis.

*Foundations for Social Research / Advanced Social Research Practice* (Required graduate thesis practicum)

This course, the first of its kind in the university, was meant to help beginning graduate students focus on a research topic, formulate a research question, advance a claim, and develop a methodology. After two years, the idea was picked up by the Faculty and now all departments are required to offer a similar required course.

**Teaching-Related Publications**

"Competing to Improve? A Difficult Terrain." Forthcoming in *Proceedings of the Third Symposium on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, Center for the Development of Teaching and Learning NUS (2004).

"Electronic Publishing as an Outlet for Student Research." Pages 29-35 in Vincent Ooi, ed., *Teaching Symposium: Grounded Experiences in University Teaching and Learning*. Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences-Center for the Development of Teaching and Learning (2003).

"Building a Graduate Studies Learning Community." *CDTL Brief* 6 (6):4-7 (2003).

"Learning to Teach: Lean Production in Universities." Pages 280-285 in *Proceedings of the Second Symposium on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, Center for the Development of Teaching and Learning NUS (2002).

## **Courses Taught Prior to Arriving at NUS**

### At Mississippi State University

Undergraduate distribution option: *Introduction to Sociology*

Undergraduate sociology major requirement: *Social Theory*

### At Carnegie Mellon University

#### Population

Phd paradigm course: *Demography*

MS elective: *Population and Policy*

#### Methods

MS elective: *Survey Design and Analysis*

Course projects included: Small Neighborhood Businesses and Community

Development in Pittsburgh, Entrepreneurship among Blacks and Whites in

Pittsburgh, Religious Organizations and Community Welfare, Biases in Community

Organization Service Delivery

#### Economic development

Phd Seminar: *The Social Control of the Economy*

Public Policy Issues Seminar: *Local Economic Development*

Course projects included: Global Trends and their Impact on the Heinz School and A

Survey of Images of Blacks in Television News Stories in Pittsburgh

#### *Project courses*

Co-taught Impacts of Retirement Trends (year-long)

Co-taught Automobile Emissions Testing in Pennsylvania (semester-long)

Co-taught Ensuring Equal access to

Computer and Information Technology in Allegheny County (semester-long)

Co-taught Nine Mile Run: Sustainable Development at a Brownfield Site (semester-long)

### At University of North Carolina

Undergraduate distribution option: *Social Problems*

## Individual supervision at NUS

### *PhD by research:*

Mathew Mathews, "Seeking Therapy: An examination of help-seeking behavior for problems of living among Singaporeans." (December 2002-present)

Nilanjan Raghunath, "Alliances for Advantage: A Study of IT Professionals in Bangalore." (March 2004-present)

### *Masters by research:*

Chua Kynn Hong, Vincent, "Interpersonal Networks/Choice and Community in Singapore" (July 2001-July 2004) [degree completed]

Mathew Mathews, "Minorities in Majority Settings: The Case of Cross-Cultural Clergymen in Singapore and West Malaysia." (October 1999-October 2001) [degree completed]

Shaikh Yasser bin Shaikh Idris Mattar, "Production, Consumption, and Institutional Intermediaries: the Marketplace of Popular Music in Singapore" (October 2000-December 2002) [degree completed]

### *Masters by course work theses:*

Cheng, Joy-Lynn, "IT Use in Schools." (July 2002-December 2003) [degree completed]

Dang Thi Tan Huong (Master in Public Policy 2000/2001) "What Measures Should the Program of Iodine Deficiency Disorder Control (Idd Program) in Vietnam Adopt in Supplying Iodized Salt to the People in Mountainous Areas?" (February 2001-November 2001) [degree completed]

Goh Kim Seng, "The Dynamics of Strategic Decision-making Processes in Organizations." (November 1999-July 2004) [degree completed]

Gouw Lan Eng, Joice, "Faith at Work: A Study of Presbyterian and Lutheran Christians in Singapore." (April 2000-August 2001) [degree completed]

### *Honors-year theses:*

(Students are no longer required to write theses)

#### 2002-2003

Goh Yong Yau, "Peninsula Plaza: The site of identity for the Burmese in Singapore."

Neo Sze Hui, Audrey, "The Career Paths of Full-time Christian Workers."

#### 2001-2002

Chia Ban Chuan, Darren. "Invasion of the Little People: Toy Collecting as an Aspect of Youth Culture."

Muhammad Ismail Bin Abdul Rahman. "Tropical Fish Keeping as a Leisure Time Activity."

#### 2000-2001

Chua Kynn Hong, Vincent. "Stress and Alienation in a Local Outreach Church."

Lin Yong Ching, Andrea. "Getting Close: An Exploratory Study of Premarital Sexual Behavior."

Oh Boon Loon, Keith. "Embracing the New Economy: Studying IT Professionals and Their Work."

#### 1999-2000

Koo Chiew Tee, "Exploring Internet Relay Chat (Irc): Presentation of Self in a Cyber Sub-culture."

Ng Chee Hoon, Kathryn, "Preaching the Social Gospel: the Salvation Army, Church or Charity?"

#### 1998-1999

Mathew Mathews, "Organizing for Growth in Singaporean Charismatic Churches."

Yeo Seow Ling, "Stabilizing Flight? Regularizing Work and Family Among RSAF Pilots."