Closing the loop:

Based on assessments of outcomes in Sociology 1301 over the past two years, I have implemented the following changes and additions to the way the course is taught, and how materials, readings, and links are presented on the class website:

1. With reference to Learning Outcome “Identify and critique alternative explanations for claims about social issues and human behavior,” I have developed and presented an analysis of same-sex marriage in the context of a lecture on “Family.” Students were then invited to submit a written, 140 character maximum, Twitter-like “tweet” in response. This also was done in an effort to “include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written communication.”

2. Similarly, with reference to Learning Outcome “Demonstrate knowledge of the appropriate ethical methods, technologies, and data that social and behavioral scientists use to investigate the human condition,” I have developed a presentation, and included a reading relevant to Laud Humphreys’ controversial work, “Tearoom Trade.” Students were invited to submit a “tweet” in response to the relative gains and risks to his work in a manner similar to above, also in an effort to enhance communication.

3. With regard to Learning Outcome “Empirical and Quantitative Skills ...” I’ve added two formal presentations of data from my recently completed funded research project, “Seeking the Moral Community.” Students were presented with, asked to critique, and then examined with reference to findings comparing various measures of religiousness in light of social behavior such as alcohol use, sexual behavior, and illegal drug use. This process also was used to challenge students to apply critical thinking skills and offer suggestions – via “tweet” for further research on these issues.

4. With reference to “Social Responsibility ...” I have added readings from current research literature which demonstrate how race, ethnicity, and gender biases influence social policy and social interaction. I’ve also included on the class website visuals which compare the representation of women in media and film in light of their age, and perceived attractiveness. This demonstration bears on further discussion of the prevalence of eating disorders in America, as distinct from other parts of the Western World.

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