Application for Editorship of *Teaching Sociology*

**Editor:** Stephen Sweet, Ph.D.  (Ithaca College)

**Associate Editor:** Michele Lee Kozimor-King, Ph.D.  (Elizabethtown College)

**Vision Statement**
Currently the American Sociological Association has two channels to disseminate information related to instruction: the Teaching Resources and Innovations Library for Sociology (TRAILS) and *Teaching Sociology*. Both have specific, but sometimes overlapping purposes and it is important that these resources operate in harmony. My vision is to continue to advance *Teaching Sociology* as the primary venue for the scholarship of teaching and learning, as well as the venue in which broader theoretical and political discussions concerning pedagogy, curriculum, and the centrality of teaching in the profession are made visible. I would intend to coordinate efforts with the editor of TRAILS, such that authors of articles and notes published in *Teaching Sociology* would be encouraged (and sometimes expected) to contribute related instructional materials to TRAILS. This will enable readers of *Teaching Sociology* to learn about innovative teaching strategies and gain access to ancillary resources.

I see the position of editorship as having two primary responsibilities: (1) advance the discipline by directing the publication of scholarship in the domain of the journal’s range of interest, and (2) provide guidance to maximize the development of high quality submissions. My objective in editing *Teaching Sociology* would be to encourage potential authors to submit to the journal and to provide the feedback necessary for promising submissions to reach their highest potential impact. But beyond this, my efforts would be directed to help authors (irrespective of the decision concerning their submissions) grow by providing them with carefully crafted feedback.

Perhaps the biggest shortcoming of many journals is a protracted review process. This not only discourages submissions to journals that are particularly slow in response, but also undermines the career prospects of authors who have interests that cohere with the journal. I would intend to follow the example set by outgoing editor Kathleen Lowney, providing prompt decisions to authors. I anticipate feedback will almost always be returned within three months of initial receipt of submission (and usually sooner).

Submissions to *Teaching Sociology* commonly will not have prospects for publication outside of the journal. For this reason, the editorial processes must provide authors with ample opportunity to refine articles that show promise, but also respect the demands placed on
reviewers. One means of doing so is for the editor to consider the likelihood of favorable responses in advance of sending submissions out for review. If articles are missing fundamental elements or have critical structural concerns, there are advantages to the editor returning these submissions back to authors with a suggestion to withdraw the submission so as to enable later consideration within the blinded review process. In general, articles detailing teaching strategies that lack robust assessment components will be returned to the authors with encouragement to submit when this component is integrated.

Recruitment of reviewers will initiate within 3-4 days of receipt of any submission. Reviewers will be instructed to return critiques within 3-4 weeks of agreement to perform the review. If reviews are not received within 3 weeks, a reminder email would be sent. This leaves time for the recruitment of additional reviewers in circumstances where reviewers fail to fulfill their obligations. Three reviews would be requested for each submission, but in the event of difficulties in securing a third review within the three month window, and if there is consensus between the other two reviewers and myself, a decision may be reached on the basis of two reviews.

A dedicated editorial board is a key element in facilitating expertly-written timely reviews and guiding the journal editor’s efforts. My expectation is that the board would provide “fall-back” reviews in the event that promised reviews are not fulfilled, or in the event that a manuscript proves particularly difficult to attract reviewers. The board would also convene at the annual meeting and provide guidance on particular projects that might be pursued. Reappointment of current editorial board members would be made in consultation with the outgoing editor. My extensive network of relations within the Section on Teaching and Learning would provide a robust set of new editorial board members. Within that network I would select not only highly experienced individuals, whom I personally know will be responsive, as well as more junior scholars. The latter group is included both to continue to breathe new life into the board, as well as to help mentor the next generation of leaders.

I will rely on my associate editor Michele Lee Kozimor-King, to manage book and film reviews. Dr. Kozimor-King comes with considerable experience and we have worked together on teaching presentations and other related initiatives. We share a common vision of goal to solicit high quality reviews. In order for reviews to be useful, it is essential to publish reviews while the material is still relevant. Books and films will be accepted and solicited from academic publishers and film distributors within two years of the date of publication or release. In addition, advanced undergraduate students at Elizabethtown College will assist in identifying potential books and films from the latest catalogs. Once the books or films are determined, Dr.
Kozimor-King will identify potential reviewers from sources such as conference presentations, membership in the ASA Section on Teaching and Learning, and self-nominations. Upon selection, book or film reviewers will be provided with guidelines and a review timetable. When possible, reviews of publications that fit within identifiable themes will be published together.

I would welcome the prospect of guest editorships for issues devoted to specific concerns. I would also attempt to publish two special issues. One issue would be on the topic of “The Sociology Curriculum.” This special issue would address the challenges of coordinating learning between classes and strategies of creating a cohesive array of classes. Relatively few articles in *Teaching Sociology* have addressed these concerns, and yet the recommendations of the ASA Task Force on the Undergraduate Major concluded that it is one of the most important means by which learning is advanced. The second special issue would be “The Use of Media and New Technologies in the Classroom.”

In addition to these activities, I propose one additional new contribution to the journal. There is an outdated index of *Teaching Sociology* that sets a good example of what can be gained by classifying publications on the basis of specific topical areas (Burgess, Tara, Pauline Pavlakos and Jeffrey Chin. 2000. *Cumulative Index of Teaching Sociology, 1973-1999*. Washington, DC: Teaching Resources Center, American Sociological Association.). There is much to be gained by creating an updated comprehensive and searchable catalog of articles and notes previously published in *Teaching Sociology*. This catalog, the *Teaching Sociology Index* would be published on the *Teaching Sociology* website and structured in a manner so that future editors would be expected to update it upon publication of subsequent issues of the journal. In this manner, the *Teaching Sociology Index* would be a current and complete catalog, facilitating the creation/refinement of courses, as well as a means to document the frequency of publication of specific topics and concerns within the journal. While I have a vision for the structure of this index, I would consult with the editorial board to determine all facets of articles to be classified. I would organize the creation of this catalog/index with the help of paid undergraduate assistants at Ithaca College through the College’s Dana Fellowship program.

**Abbreviated Anonymous Vision Statement**

My vision is to continue to advance *Teaching Sociology* as the primary venue for the scholarship of teaching and learning, as well as the venue in which reviews and broader theoretical and political discussions concerning pedagogy, curriculum, and the centrality of teaching in the profession are made visible. As editor I would seek to advance the discipline by directing the publication of scholarship in the domain of the journal’s range of interest and provide guidance
to maximize the development of high quality submissions. Key to the journal’s success is providing prompt review decisions to authors, and I would follow the example of outgoing editor in providing a fast turn-around and quality feedback to authors. The journal’s editorial board would provide “fall-back” reviews in the event that promised reviews are not fulfilled, or in the event that a manuscript proves particularly difficult to attract reviewers. The board would also convene at the annual meeting and provide guidance on particular projects that might be pursued. The journal will continue to provide book and film reviews, focusing on most recently published works. I would welcome the prospect of guest editorships for issues devoted to specific concerns and hope to publish two special issues on the subjects of “The Sociology Curriculum” and “The Use of Media and New Technologies in the Classroom.” I propose one additional new contribution to the journal: The Teaching Sociology Index, an updated comprehensive and searchable catalog of articles and notes previously published in Teaching Sociology. This catalog would be published on the Teaching Sociology website and structured in a manner so that future editors can update it upon publication of subsequent issues of the journal. In this manner, the Teaching Sociology Index would be a current and complete catalog, facilitating the creation/refinement of courses, as well as a means to document the frequency of publication of specific topics and concerns within the journal.

Editor/Co-Editor Background Information

Editor

I am currently associate professor of sociology and department chair at Ithaca College. My vita shows that I have authored numerous books and articles concerning teaching, as well as in the areas of work and family. Of most importance to this application is my longstanding dedication to the journal and my prior editorial experiences. I have served on the editorial board of Teaching Sociology for a total of 9 years. I have published 1 Introduction, 3 articles, 3 reviews, and 3 notes in the journal, including an article on radical pedagogy (1998) that was the focal point of the issue. I have published in many other journals as well. In addition to my work with Teaching Sociology I serve on other editorial boards and have written over 100 article reviews in the past decade for these publications. I have significant experience as an editor, including co-editing a special issue of Teaching Sociology on the subject of cultivating quantitative literacy (2006). I guest edited the journal Community, Work and Family on the subject of international comparative analysis and that issue was later selected to be republished in book format (2012). My most recent book the Work-Family Interface (2014) includes submissions from 22 authors, and my co-edited book The Work-Family Handbook (2006) contains 34 chapters written by leading scholars in the field. I served as co-editor of the Sloan Work and Family Encyclopedia (2007-2010), recruited reviews and guided the publication of 45 entries by leading scholars. I also served as the Sloan Work and Family Research Network’s Teaching Resource Specialist,
organized numerous presentations and workshops, as well as recruited publication of 35 teaching resources and 95 syllabi. I also edited an ASA Teaching Resource Guide - *Teaching Work-Family* (2006). Beyond these experiences, I bring a sincere dedication to the journal *Teaching Sociology*. Early in my career the feedback provided by former editor Jeffrey Chin made a remarkable difference in my professional development and professional identity. One of the primary reasons why I want to be editor is to pay this forward to the next generation of teacher-scholars.

**Associate Editor**

Dr. Michele Lee Kozimor-King is currently associate professor of sociology at Elizabethtown College. Of most importance to this application is her record of meritorious teaching and her dedication to innovative instruction, mentoring, and professional development of students. Her vita shows that she has been the advisor on over 20 award winning student research papers and multiple student publications. Furthermore, she has a strong conference presentation record on topics related to teaching and learning in sociology and is currently working on several articles for publication co-authored with former undergraduate students. For example, she will be co-presenter of research evaluating the use of *Star Power* to teach social inequality in a thematic session this year at the ASA Annual Meeting. In addition, she has proposed a workshop on using community-based learning to teach research methods and statistics (a previous version was presented at the 2012 Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting) which has been accepted for presentation at the 2014 ASA Annual Meeting. Dr. Kozimor-King is very active within the discipline. She is a member of the Cooperative Initiatives Committee within the ASA Section on Teaching and Learning. She currently serves as the Region III Representative for Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD) where she is chair of the awards committee and the mentorship program committee. In addition, she will co-chair the planning committee for the AKD pre-conference teaching workshop at the Eastern Sociological Society Annual Meeting in 2014. She has previously held leadership positions with the Mid-Atlantic Council on Family Relations (President) and the Pennsylvania Sociological Society (Vice-President). Finally, she was recently awarded the McGraw-Hill Excellence in Teaching First Year Seminars Award, a national award that recognizes one exceptional teacher who has achieved great success in teaching first-year seminars and who inspires student learning, development, and success.

**Institutional Support**

I have discussed prospect of editorship with my department colleagues and with my dean (see letter of support provided). All have agreed that a 2 course release (one course per semester beginning in Fall 2014 and ending in Spring 2017) would be supported if I am selected as editor. During the first two of the years as editor, I will be serving as department chair, which also
carries a 2 course release. As a consequence, I will only be responsible for teaching one class per semester for 2 years of the editorship, and in the remaining year this would be 2 classes (likely with only 1 preparation). While the combination of chair and editorship responsibilities will require significant effort on my part, I am confident that this arrangement will provide sufficient time resources.

Ithaca College does not have a graduate program in sociology, and as a consequence I will not have access to graduate students. In discussion with outgoing editor Kathleen Lowney, I learned that ScholarOne technology absorbs much of the work that had historically been performed by graduate students, and as a consequence I do not see this as a concern in moving manuscripts through review. For this reason, I would plan to assume the duties sometimes assigned to a managing editor. I anticipate that funds for the construction of the *Teaching Sociology Index* will be provided through the Ithaca College Dana Fellowship program, which pays students to work on academically enriching experiences. I have received 3 Dana grants in the past. Ithaca College will provide office supplies for the editor. To enhance the quality of publications, a copy editor would need to be employed either through existing human resources at Sage or by a provision of funds that could be used to contract work out. The associate editor will need funds to cover the expense of mailing books and movies for review.