

Advancing the Pedagogy of Student Teamwork: Development and Assessment of the TEAM Rubricⁱ

Michael Francis Johnston

Stavros N. Karageorgis

Abstract

Instructors encounter several obstacles when seeking to adopt student team paper assignments. One of the most difficult obstacles concerns the allocation of points to individuals for their participation in producing the collective product. We have developed a Team Evaluation and Assessment Matrix (TEAM) rubric specifically to address the problem of grading individual performance in teams. In this article, we will discuss the development and nature of the TEAM and then results of an initial assessment from three *Introduction to Sociology* classes. As background, we provide a brief description of a classroom structure for managing team paper assignments. We argue that the TEAM helps students perceive team paper assignments as a valuable method of learning, a method that helps improve their mastery of course content, enhance their writing skills, and increase their appreciation of real-life, instrumental task-oriented teamwork activities.

In teaching, do sociologists have an obligation to behave as if the classroom itself is an ongoing social situation which they are partly responsible for constructing and directing? If so, perhaps sociologists should draw upon the theories, methods and knowledge of their discipline when choosing material to cover, methods of evaluation, and ways of integrating the two. Since teaching and learning are social in character, both content and form matter, a fundamental sociological point made by Simmel (1908/1971). Unquestionably, the methods (*form*) of teaching play a critical role in determining student sociological *content* learning; arguably form determines whether students learn at the level of memorizing facts (knowledge) to deeply understanding content to applying content to real world situations to analyzing content, etc. (Lovell-Troy 1989, p. 28-29; Bloom et al 1956).

In terms of *teaching content*, sociologists have developed a large body of disciplinary knowledge concerning social life. Unlike medicine and several other disciplines (Smith 2005), there is no evidence that the instructors who teach sociology courses have begun to utilize on a wide scale student-centered pedagogical methods promoting student communication, teamwork, and leadership.ⁱⁱ It is very plausible that traditional pedagogical methods are still conventional methods in which *teaching form* consists largely of instructor-dominated lecture, impromptu discussion characterized by sequential dyadic interaction centered on the teacher, and individual (non-collaborative) assignment/examination evaluation, thereby reflecting and perpetuating the atomizing tendencies of modernization. Whereas *content* exemplified in sociological theories and concepts demonstrate a concern with the importance and value of social life, *form* as expressed in a typical sociological classroom structure fosters alienation among students from the social life of learning. One specific mechanism for aligning the *content* of sociological theories and concepts with the *form* of teaching is teamⁱⁱⁱ paper assignments which encourage students to collaborate in researching, planning, composing, and delivering written work. For such assignments, however, it may be very difficult to assign grades to students for their participation in team activities.

Building on theoretical and substantive concepts from sociology, we designed the Teamwork Evaluation and Assessment Matrix (TEAM) rubric to assist sociology instructors in

assigning grades to individuals for co-developing team papers. The TEAM provides a structured way for students who participated together in teams to evaluate the contributions of themselves and each of their team members to the team paper that they collectively produced. We present empirical results from implementing this rubric in three separate *Introduction to Sociology* classes. We preface this theory and results with a discussion of the ways in which these three classes were structured so as to enable student team paper assignments in the three *Introduction to Sociology* courses. We find that students report that the TEAM is a useful rubric for facilitating an improvement in their mastery of course content, leadership, and writing skills. Our specific contribution to the literature is the first published peer assessment instrument for teamwork amongst sociology students, along with a preliminary empirical assessment of its effectiveness.

Sociological Implementation of Student Team Paper Assignments

Woodberry and Aldrich (2000) advocate that instructors effectively plan, communicate, and execute classroom exercises. Their advice certainly holds for team paper assignments. In the classes discussed in this paper, the instructor instituted a class structure aimed at meticulously assisting students to collaboratively produce the first of three team papers. The first team paper assignment is critical because it powerfully affects the chances that the students see them as *fair and effective*. Students use their experience in writing the first team paper as an evaluative benchmark of whether the benefits flowing from the team process outweigh the extra individual burdens. To that effect, from the first day of class until the first paper is due, the instructor devoted some parts of class time to minimizing the risk of negative and maximizing the likelihood of positive results, so that students experience the first team paper assignment, in the net, as a rewarding process.

One dimension of the class structure involved the delivery of lectures on sociological insights about teamwork (collaborative instrumental task-oriented activities). Students often respond positively to some lectures, so long as the lecturer is at least reasonably skilled (Smith 1996, p. 72; Klemke 1974). The *Introduction to Sociology* lectures consisted of a theoretical discussion of topics related to small groups and teamwork, along with examples that illustrated

the abstract ideas, particularly in reference to the classroom as a small group (Billson 1986) and students' own experiences. In some instances, students were given the opportunity to raise examples and discuss the theoretical ideas amongst themselves during class time. Topics that were covered in the first few weeks of the class included: types of groups, ranging from primary to secondary (including teams); team needs for leaders and the roles they may play (special emphasis on expressive and instrumental leaders); and team processes such as submission to authority, conformity to peer pressure, and *groupthink*.

Lectures on teamwork served several purposes. First, they covered topics that are commonly taught in introductory sociology classes. Second, they helped students draw upon their different life experiences with teamwork processes and think about them in more sociological ways. This is to say, the lectures were built on the recognition that students have already been engaged in cooperative activities and so have a pre-discursive understanding of or 'feel' for teamwork. Lectures and associated in-class discussions help them to abstract from and generalize about these experiences. Third, these teamwork lectures allowed the instructor to frame the idea of teamwork in a college classroom setting in such a way as to minimize problems commonly associated with team-processes, especially free-riding (McKinney and Graham-Buxton 1993) and transaction costs (Yamane 1996).

For pragmatic reasons, students were provided with an opportunity to self-select their team members, although they did so with a great deal of experiential information about their peers. When students are more actively involved in shaping their learning process, they have more of a stake in making the process succeed (Hilligoss 1992). So as to equip students with information about their classmates, the instructor implemented approximately one in-class, ten-minute, pre-announced team activity per week, oftentimes involving discussion of aspects of assigned readings. Sometimes students were randomly assigned to small teams and other times the instructor facilitated placement in groups according to student commonalities in terms of knowledge and experience (Thompson 1993). The instructor pointed out that these teams provided each student with the opportunity to assess if his/her team members had completed the homework, whether or not they understood it, and how well they could collaboratively discuss it.

The six in-class team activities put each student in contact with approximately twelve different peers, thereby providing them with information for choosing partners for the first team paper. The syllabus marked the day of the class session during which students were to choose teammates and in that session, students reported their teams to the instructor and then discussed the assignment and asked clarification questions.

The third type of classroom initiative designed to maximize the opportunity for positive experiences in the first team paper assignment involved the provision of structure for the teams, one designed to promote positive and productive interactions among team members, over several class sessions. Activities included: making ground rules for producing the paper (with each team member signing off); collectively assessing three student papers from previous semesters using the TEAM (described in detail in the next section below); brainstorming ideas and developing an outline; writing and agreeing upon a thesis statement; managing conflict in teams; turning in a first draft; finalizing a team paper, etc.. These classroom activities were implemented over the course of approximately two weeks, from the time the first team-paper assignment was formally given until it was due. Fourth, the first team-paper only accounted for 10% of a student's overall course grade, as was also the case for the second and third team papers.

Employing Sociological Theory to Inform Design of the TEAM

Assigning points to individuals for their performance in producing the student teamwork product is a considerable conundrum involving several interrelated questions: Should all members of the team receive an equal number of team points? When a final score is assigned to the team, how should team points be allocated to individual team-members, and by whom? Should the instructor assess student efforts and allocate the team points accordingly? Should student team members assess each others' contributions to the team effort and allocate the team points accordingly? Or, should the instructor somehow combine these three methods of allocating points?

The TEAM is specifically designed to address the rewards-performance conundrum in grading team papers (see Figure 1). The TEAM is based upon the principle that team members assess and agree upon their relative contributions and allocate accordingly their team points. We assume that the total number of points that a three-person team achieves for their collaborative paper is on a scale of 0-100, which would mean that with a perfect paper (100 points) and points distributed evenly, each team member would receive 33.3 points. An example assignment and scoring criteria used by the instructor are included in Appendix 1. The TEAM requires each team-member to assess oneself and the remaining two team-members on their performance and contributions to the making of the actual team paper. Thus, sooner (hopefully) or later (lamentably) each student recognizes that he/she can sanction team-members, and be sanctioned by them, for acting opportunistically and/or with guile (Longmore, Dunn, and Jarboe 1996; Yamane 1996).

Development of the TEAM was stimulated by an engineer-designed form for students to assess their relative contributions to teamwork, a form similar to the one reported by Longmore, Dunn, and Jarboe (1996, p. 90). The TEAM was developed specifically for teams to assess their relative contributions to creating a team paper in an *Introduction to Sociology* class, although we assume that it is also potentially useful in many other sociology classes. The TEAM utilizes sociological concepts and skills from *Introduction to Sociology*, so that students can apply these concepts. In the following paragraphs, we discuss these concepts: instrumental and expressive members, role, and clearly writing about sociological processes (thereby avoiding sociological jargon). One important set of sociological concepts used to develop the TEAM is the venerable one of an *instrumental leader*^{iv} and an *expressive leader*.^v The former is assessed via two specific items in the TEAM: 1. setting deadlines for the team and 2. keeping meetings on time and on track. Two items are used to measure expressive leadership activities: 1. helping the team maintain a positive attitude and 2. encouraging participation by others. In a lecture devoted to explaining the use of the TEAM, the first author introduced, discussed and explained the above concepts, thereby integrating form and content.

An important sociological concept in *Introduction to Sociology*, "role"^{vi} (Hamlin and

Janssen 1987, p. 49-50), is applied in the items under teamwork skills. To the status of *student* in an *Introduction to Sociology* class, our approach adds the role of *team member*. As a result, students in a class with team assignments are expected to participate in team activities, prepare for team meetings, and treat other team members with respect. These expectations are added to those traditionally attached to the status of *college student*.

Finally, in light of Howard Becker's constructive efforts to improve sociological writing, the TEAM contains a category entitled "Paper Writing" that consists of three items: structuring, writing, and revising the paper. Becker (1986) notes that sociology graduate students pick up bad writing habits in high school that are solidified in college, habits which involve writing only one draft and neglecting to proof-read. The three items under "Paper Writing" help to encourage better habits and also provide an opportunity to assign credit for sharing the workload.

For the class session immediately following the submission of team papers, students were asked to reach consensus and submit one TEAM for the team as a whole. The instructor honored this consensus, although allowed for more dialogue about the consensus if there was a sense of dissatisfaction or unfairness. For example, a student might wish to seek out the instructor during office hours to express that the team consensus undervalued their actual work. Or, a student who missed the class period in which the consensus was reached may feel that it did not fairly reflect his/her work. To minimize the chance that such events occur, it is very helpful to review principles of conflict-management before beginning the consensus-building activity, and note that more dialogue with the instructor is possible if students feel uncomfortable with the results.

The TEAM helps bring to the fore a dilemma usually submerged in teamwork, namely, the possible trade-off between a *high-quality* product and a *superb* teamwork process. A contrast between a hypothetical team 1 and team 2 illustrates this dilemma. Imagine for Team 1 that a singular team member *individually* writes the majority of an excellent 'team' paper. Suppose that the TEAM was filled out so that this one individual received 80% of the points and the other two members 10% each. Suppose further that the instructor scored the collective product as 100 points. Imagine that a Team 2 cooperated fully and assessed each others as such with the

TEAM, so that each student received 33.3% of the points. Imagine further that the instructor scored their team paper as also deserving 100 points. The resultant ordering illustrates the potential dilemma: From team 1, one person would receive an individual score of 80 points; from team 2, each of the three individuals would receive an individual score of 33.3 points; and from Team 1 the other two individuals would both receive a score of 10 points.

We recommend that the instructors who adopt the TEAM explicitly address and resolve the *high-quality* product versus *superb* teamwork trade-off dilemma in the following way. Given that the point of the TEAM is to promote cooperation, the perfect paper should be considered one in which all team members contributed equally (33.3%) and scored by the instructor as 100 points. In such a scenario, each individual would receive 33.3 points. In light of this ideal, we recommend setting a ceiling on points so that for teams lacking equal cooperation, an individual could earn up to 32 points. With such a principle in place, the high-performing student from the hypothetical Team 1 above would receive 32 points, an A, without breaking the curve and the people who contributed less would receive lower grades (10 points), thereby sanctioning “free-riding.”^{vii}

Results

The TEAM was first used in two classes of *Introduction to Sociology* of Fall Semester 2004 and then again in the same class in Spring Semester of 2005; each class enrolled approximately 40 students, a majority of whom were under twenty-five, female, and white. Table 1 categorizes and displays consensus by student teams concerning individual contributions to the team as reflected in the TEAM. If, for example, there was consensus that all three team members contributed equally, then each team member would receive an overall score of 33.3%. On the other extreme, unequal contribution, there could be consensus that one member would receive an overall score of 100% on the Team Assessment Form and the other two would receive 0%. Across the paper assignments, the largest differential was 50%, in which one person was team-evaluated as having not participated at all, and the two other team members as having contributed equally. To simplify the display, we group team consensus about individual

contributions into four categories: 1 point (i.e. the difference between the team member with the highest and lowest number of percentage points is 1 point), 2-5 points, 6-10 points, and greater than 10 points. A substantial number of teams evaluated individual contributions to the first paper across the entire range of possibilities, from entirely equal to very unequal. A similar result occurred for the second paper, however there was a movement to the extremes for the third paper: either a mostly equal or very unequal distribution of points. This trend suggests that implementation of the TEAM allows students to negotiate work loads for the paper consistent with their other obligations and expectations for final course grade, though there seems to be a preference for relatively equal work loads.

Largest Percentage Point Difference Between Individual Team Members	1 st Paper	2 nd Paper	3 rd Paper
0 points	32%	40%	65%
1 point	24%	11%	3%
2-5 points	9%	14%	2%
6-10 points	15%	16%	0%
10+ points	20%	19%	30%
Number of Teams Writing Papers	34	37	37

One of the most valued methods of evaluating instructional innovations is through assessment of student learning, especially through objective test items (Michaels 1980, pp. 334-336).^{viii} As one way of assessing the validity of grading using the TEAM, we correlate student's performance as measured by an individual assessment (scores on quizzes) with their performance as measured by a team assessment (the TEAM). Forty students were enrolled in *Introduction to Sociology* in Spring Semester, each of whom completed four individually-taken quizzes composed of objective answers (multiple-choice, matching, and true-false). We take the sum of quiz scores as a measure of a student's performance in mastering *Introduction to Sociology* material as an individual. Each student also completed three team-papers, receiving a percentage of the team score based on the TEAM. We take the sum of these three scores as a measure of a student's mastery of *Introduction to Sociology* material in a teamwork setting.

The overall correlation between these two variables, a student's performance in an

individual and teamwork context, is 0.36. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and correlation for these two variables. To further identify the relation between the two variables, we carried out a bivariate regression. We sought to understand if performance in a team is associated with individual performance. Table 2 shows the numeric results - a strongly significant correlation and a moderate r-squared. We did not expect the magnitude of the association between the variables to be extremely strong. In general, student performance on fixed-response items (e.g. multiple choice questions) and constructed response items (e.g. essay questions) is not equivalent because they measure different levels of cognitive abilities (Becker and Johnston 1999; Dufresne et al 2002). Constructed response items are only able to reliably and validly measure cognitive abilities at the level of knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis, but are unable to adequately measure skills in synthesis and evaluation (Martinez 1999; Hancock 1994; Simkin and Kluechler 2005). In our sample, there is a significant association between these two variables, which is very impressive given that the size of the sample is small by quantitative survey research standards (n=40).

		Mean	S.D.	Min	Max
Total Quiz Scores		15	3.8	7	23
Total Paper Scores		64	9.7	44	80
Correlation		0.36			
	Coefficient	S.E.	P-Value	R ²	
Intercept	6.4	3.8	0.10		
Slope	0.1	0.1	0.02	.13	

As a supplemental outcomes measure (Michaels 1980, p. 335) of the TEAM innovation, we administered to one class in Spring 2005 a questionnaire consisting of six items with Likert responses ranging from “very dissatisfied” to “very satisfied” regarding student perceptions of fairness, learning, and skill improvement. The questionnaire was administered anonymously to students at the beginning of class when the instructor was not present. On the day the

questionnaire was administered, 26 of 40 students were present. One issue of particular concern was whether or not students consider the TEAM to be fair, especially since the American educational environment is currently structured so that instructors assess individuals. As a result, students lack experience in assessing contributions to teams and therefore may not feel that the TEAM leads to fair results.

The overwhelming majority of students indicated that they understood the TEAM (73% responded affirmatively and 15% negatively, see Table 3). A plurality of students considered the TEAM to be a fair way of assessing work: 43% agreed and 31% disagreed. A large majority of students thought that working in teams helped them to better understand the readings: 58% agreed and 23% disagreed. An overwhelming majority felt that student teams were a worthwhile way to apply and improve sociological leadership skills, in that 77% agreed that student teams helped them develop leadership skills and only 12% disagreed. A large majority of students also agreed that student teams provided a worthwhile venue for improving their critical thinking skills (62% agreed, 16% disagreed). Finally, a plurality of students thought that student teams helped them to improve their writing skills (38% agreed, 27% disagreed).

Finally, we describe a “secret ballot” vote by students that took place shortly before the third team paper. Over the course of Fall semester and the beginning of Spring semester, colleagues helping to troubleshoot the TEAM wondered if students were receptive to the idea of writing papers in teams. In response, the first author decided to let the students vote as to whether they would write the third paper as individuals or as teams. At the beginning of two separate class periods, students were given an opportunity to address the class with their views and told there would be a vote on the first class session of the following week. Outside of class, students had ample opportunity to talk about the issue amongst themselves. When the third paper assignment was given in class, students were allowed to vote, anonymously, about whether the third paper assignment would be structured as either an individual or team project. Of the 26 students present, 73% voted in favor of student teams and 27% voted to write the papers individually.

	Understand Teamwork Assessment Form	Think the Teamwork Assessment Form is Fair	Teams Improved Comprehension of Readings	Teams Improved Leadership Skills	Teams Improved Critical Thinking Skills	Teams Improved Writing Skills
Strongly Agree	23%	12%	31%	35%	27%	23%
Somewhat Agree	50%	31%	27%	42%	35%	15%
Neutral	12%	27%	19%	12%	23%	35%
Somewhat Disagree	15%	27%	8%	8%	12%	15%
Strongly Disagree	0%	4%	15%	4%	4%	12%

Discussion

Increasingly, student teams (collaborative learning groups) are seen as a valuable tool for improving learning in sociology (Rau and Heyl 1990; McKinney and Graham-Buxton 1993), though there are a number of obstacles to implementing student teams in sociology classes (Yamane 1996), one of which is anxiety about grading, specifically the allocation of rewards to individuals for effective collaborative effort (Petronito 1991, p. 500). The Teamwork Evaluation and Assessment Matrix (TEAM) rubric is designed precisely to address this issue: it specifies the dimensions for the role of *team-member* for students. This feature is all the more relevant because it is reasonable to assume that most students do not share a clearly defined understanding of what constitutes “being a good team member.” Based on anecdotal evidence and our experience, we speculate that, e.g., “contributing good ideas” may compete quite vigorously with “treating others with respect” or “setting deadlines for the team” as a criterion for assessing whether one has been a “good team member.” In its current form and in the manner in which it was deployed, the TEAM ensures that students know in advance that they themselves will play a significant role in and the lines along which they will evaluate, and be evaluated by, other team-members.

The specificity of the TEAM can also be seen to be a great weakness. Students do not get a chance to express their opinions on these matters in any class-related setting, nor do they get a chance to experience the various ways in which actual work teams/groups may and do develop the content of roles and criteria of evaluating role-performance (e.g. based on long-established local or craft traditions, along the lines authoritatively imposed by super-ordinates, democratically, etc.). As there are important, patterned differences in how the preceding take place within different types of work-groups and in different cultural, social and organizational settings, the TEAM's advantage in terms of clarity of the 'definition of the situation' for students may come at the expense of an opportunity for them to actually experience, in the context of their class-related activities, social processes discussed and highlighted in the 'content' covered in their readings and during lectures. The links between what is taught in the class, how it is taught, how students are expected to learn it, and how they are evaluated are, thereby, not as strong as they could be to teams outside of the classroom in work and other settings.

Another, potentially greater weakness of the TEAM also deserves discussion. Since sociology instructors may easily adopt the TEAM, it is conceivable that they could do so without much thought or planning, which would likely result in students not gaining any wisdom or disciplinary knowledge about teams. In order for the TEAM to facilitate higher-level learning, instructors need to take ownership of the form. One way to do so is by modifying the TEAM through substituting categories and dimensions of evaluation, thereby aligning the TEAM to match with their teaching of sociological content. To the extent that instructors treat the TEAM as a stultifying tool of uniformity, thereby McDonaldizing team papers (Ritzer 2004), the TEAM has the potential to promote a tyrannical and alienating parody of respectful and creative relationships among team members.

Despite these potential limitations, we consider the TEAM to be a useful pedagogical innovation that sociology instructors may use to amplify teaching about teamwork based on our disciplinary theory (*content*) through the implementation of student teams in the actual practice of teaching (*form*). Fostering solid theoretical understanding of teams and acquiring positive practical teamwork skills are desirable goals for an *Introduction to Sociology* class, we argue,

given our discipline's concern with society as both a subjective and an objective reality and the fact that teams are playing an increasingly important role in this reality, especially in the workplace, the military, and in voluntary associations. The TEAM, when combined with coverage of important sociological theories, concepts and findings provides an opportunity to strike a balance between the value-rational goal of effectively imparting the theoretical and empirical knowledge of our discipline with the instrumentally-rational goal of teaching students skills in an *Introduction to Sociology* class that will surely prove useful to them in future academic and also extra-academic endeavors.

Figure 1: Assigning Points for the Team Paper Assignments

The instructor will assign between 0 & 100 points to each paper. Team members will reach consensus about relative contributions to the paper with this form. This consensus will be used to split points amongst team members.

Please rate all members of your team, including yourself, on the following ten questions by distributing 10 points through each row. Percentages will be used to assign points to each individual for the assignment. For example, if your team earns 80 of 100 possible points, and your team agrees you should receive 33% of possible team points, the score you will receive on the paper will be $80 \times .33 = 26$ points.

Your Full Name _____

Names of Team Member	Self		
Instrumental Leadership	-----	-----	-----
1. Set deadlines for team			
2. Kept meetings on time/track			
Expressive Leadership	-----	-----	-----
1. Promoted positive attitude			
2. Encouraged participation			
Teamwork Skills	-----	-----	-----
1. Prepared for team meetings			
2. Participated in team activities			
3. Treated mates with respect			
Paper Writing	-----	-----	-----
1. Helped structure paper			
2. Helped write paper			
3. Helped revise paper			
Total Points			

Indicate your satisfaction with your team’s performance, do you feel:

- Very satisfied
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Neutral
- Slightly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

Is there anyone on your team that you feel did an exceptional job or is held your team back? If so, please explain who it was and the situation on the back.

Figure 2: Questionnaire for Students to Assess the Teamwork Assessment Form

1. I understand how the instructor assigns points to an individual for writing a team paper
1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

2. The instructor's method of assigning points to individuals for writing a team paper is as fair as other methods for assigning points to individuals for writing a team paper.
1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

3. Team writing assignments helped me to better understand readings assigned for the papers
1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

4. Working in a team to write papers helped me develop leadership skills, either as an instrumental leader or expressive leader.
1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

5. Working in a team to write papers helped sharpen my critical thinking skills (in this context, critical thinking refers to understanding the linkage, or lack thereof, between an argument and evidence).
1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

6. Working in a team to write papers helped me to improve my writing skills.
1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

Appendix A: Example Paper Assignment

Write a five-page, double-spaced paper in which your team develops an argument about the impact of contemporary religious organizations upon social capital. To exercise critical thinking skills, discuss evidence from *Bowling Alone* that both supports and disconfirms your position. Additionally, draw upon personal experiences as a source of evidence. The following five criteria, each ranging from zero to twenty points, will be used to assess these papers.

Criterion 1: Do team members have a thesis statement that clearly indicates their position and integrates the ideas found throughout the paper?

- 20 points=Excellent= Succinct statement that describes a specific argument and compellingly communicates paper's structure
- 15 points=Good=Thesis is readily identifiable, appropriate for assignment, makes a specific claim, & conveys paper's structure
- 10 points= Adequate= Thesis is lacking in criteria noted under good
- 5 points = Needs Improvement= Thesis is lacking in several of the criteria noted under good
- 0 points= Missing= Unable to identify the thesis statement

Criterion 2: Do team members draw upon the evidence as presented in *Bowling Alone* that supports their position?

- 20 points =Excellent= demonstrates a true mastery of the evidence presented in *Bowling Alone*
- 15 points = Good= evidence is detailed and coherently woven together
- 10 points = Adequate= evidence is presented, but lacks detail or coherence
- 5 points = Needs Improvement= evidence is weak and/or inconsistent
- 0 points = Missing= team presents little or no evidence

Criterion 3: Do team members address counter-evidence as presented in *Bowling Alone* that seems to disconfirm their position?

(Points are the same as #2, given above)

Criterion 4: Do the authors draw upon the personal experiences of each group member to show how their personal experience affects their positions?

- 20 points=Excellent= Experiences are complementary & smoothly woven together
- 15 points=Good=Experiences show different facets of the social process
- 10 points= Adequate= Experiences are non-contradictory
- 5 points = Needs Improvement= Does not discuss personal experiences of all group members
- 0 points= Missing= No discussion of personal experiences

Criterion 5: Do the authors write with sufficient control of composition and mechanics that they do not jeopardize their credibility with the reader?

- 20 points= Excellent
- 15 points=Good
- 10 points = Adequate
- 5 points= Needs Improvement
- 0 points= Missing

Areas checked below could be improved

Sentence Structure: ___ Awkward structures ___ Passive voice
 ___ Sentence fragments ___ Other

Word Choice ___ Vagueness/lack of clarity ___ Misuse of word/wording
 ___ Wordiness/repetition ___ Other

Grammar, etc. ___ Errors in grammar/usage ___ Errors in spelling
 ___ Paragraphs not focused ___ Paragraphs not ordered
 ___ Punctuation problems ___ Other

Other: ___ _____

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Notes

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ii There are however, noteworthy individuals advocating such an approach, many of whom publish in *Teaching Sociology*.

iii We use the terms “team” and “collaborative learning group” interchangeably, referring to small numbers of students working together with at least some face-to-face contact on an interdependent task using interpersonal and group skills (McKinney and Graham-Buxton 1993, p. 403).

iv As taught in *Introduction to Sociology*, an instrumental leader is an individual who tries to keep the group moving toward its goals (e.g. Henslin 2005, p. 166).

v In contrast, an expressive leader is an individual who increases group harmony and minimizes disruptive conflict in a group (e.g. Henslin 2005, p. 166).

vi We follow common sociological usage in referring to role as the behaviors, obligations, and privileges attached to a status (e.g. Henslin 2005, p. 99).

vii We hasten to note however, that those who participate at a lower level may not necessarily be free-riding. For example, they might be taking the class pass-fail. Furthermore, we find that when free riding is the problem, group pressure does not lead to an egalitarian split of points, for which we offer two hypotheses. There is a lecture that explicitly discusses the sub-optimality associated with conformity and group think. Second, since the TEAM is filled out

before teams receive their grades, those students committed to attaining a good grade through high performance are unwilling to “give” up points to team members who did not fully contribute to the team paper.

viii We do not discuss grades as an outcome because institutional culture/policy/norm, the Introduction to Sociology course was expected to have an average grade of a “C.”