CO-TEACHING SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS IN A JOINT SOCIOLOGY/ ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT

by

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Abstract: In the course of developing and co-teaching Social Research Methods (SRM), an interdisciplinary, upper-division undergraduate course at the University of Illinois at Springfield (UIS), the authors discovered that this type of partnership is ripe ground for exploring integration of anthropology and sociology on epistemological and methodological levels. Their attempt to make disciplinarity and the process of interdisciplinary integration transparent to students has transformed the course, student experience in the joint major, departmental goals, and the authors' own scholarship. This paper describes challenges in the development of the course and provides disciplinary "toolkits" from sociology and anthropology, which are illustrated through a semester-long, hands-on project involving a campus racial climate survey.

1. Introduction

In 2006, we—a cultural anthropologist and a sociologist—decided to co-teach the undergraduate Social Research Methods (SRM) course in our small, interdisciplinary Sociology/Anthropology department. Over the past five years, this collaboration has transformed our pedagogy and scholarship, as well as students' experiences in the class and in the department. This paper describes the process of getting to know each other's disciplines, learning to represent our own disciplines to colleagues, and developing strategies to make the convergences and divergences of our disciplines explicit and practicable for our students. We recount the challenges involved in developing this increasingly integrated and hands-on course as well as its role in our department.[1]

This paper also reflects the importance we place on sharing the key methodological and theoretical features of each discipline through on-going interdisciplinary conversation as the foundation for our collaboration. Although our department has always provided a joint major with required courses in each discipline, there had been no explicit integration of methods or content prior to the development of this course. Sharing our experience and presenting this model of how to communicate across disciplines will provide a resource for instructors teaching materials in interdisciplinary courses and programs.

In *Models and Best Practices for Joint Sociology-Anthropology Departments*, Kain, Wagenaar, and Howery (2006) summarize historical trends in the housing and consolidation of the two disciplines in joint departments. Such consolidations may occur on an administrative level but with little or no attention to shared intellectual roots or contemporary tendencies toward overlapping topics and methods, and may result in significant conflict (p. 5). This friction involves resource allocation, prestige, and intellectual frameworks. In such an environment, a vital opportunity for integrating the two disciplines may be lost. Instead, Kain, Wagenaar, and Howery encourage us to acknowledge that there is a "growing intersection between the two disciplines, making them increasingly ripe for interdisciplinary teaching and coexistence" (p. 5).

The search for ideas and strategies for our joint department leads us to broader research on interdisciplinarity. Since the development of interdisciplinary teaching has not emerged from one single source (DeZure, 2010, p. 374), it is not surprising that practitioners have a difficult time

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[1] Our experience in integration led to the presentation "Teaching Research Methods in a Joint Sociology/Anthropology Department" at the 2008 Association for Integrative Studies (AIS) conference. We received tremendous feedback from the audience, which has provided direction for this paper and our continued reflection and growth as teacher-scholars with an interest in interdisciplinary integration.

reaching consensus about pedagogical best practices. Various theorists provide rich resources for understanding disciplinary distinction, types of integration, and guidelines for the process. Allen Repko defines a discipline as "a particular branch of learning or body of knowledge whose defining elements—i.e., phenomena, assumptions, epistemology, concepts, theories, and methods—distinguish it from other knowledge formations" (2008, p. 4). Solid training in such an established core of knowledge results in "disciplinary depth" (p. 9), although in interdisciplinary work the emphasis may be on "competence in pertinent knowledges and approaches" (Klein, 1996, p. 212). The idea that each discipline has its own "perspective"— means of viewing a problem, how key elements are used to illuminate a problem (Repko, 2008, p. 170) may be expressed in different manners. Huber and Morreale (2002) describe disciplines as having different "styles," which correspond to Schwab's "'conceptions that guide inquiry' and the 'pathways of enquiry [scholars] use, what they mean by verified knowledge and how they go about this verification.'" (p. 2)

The idea of disciplinary distinction may be viewed as both problematic, in producing obstacles, and positive, in producing the difference necessary to integration (Repko, 2008, p. 248). The term "conflict" is often employed, and in empirical accounts of interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching, an underlying assumption of conflict resolution is normally stated or at least implied (Lessor, Reeves, & Andrade, 1997; Gorka & Niesenbaum, 2001). With our students, we choose to emphasize an appreciation of contrast (rather than "conflict") on the path to integration (rather than "resolution"). Although we were both accustomed to drawing on information from other disciplines, in this methods class we seek to capture the disciplinary elements that produced the information. We explore how the epistemologies (frameworks, ways of knowing) and methodologies (ways of finding out, of producing meaningful information) of the disciplines complement one another in addressing a topic of interest.

The process of shifting from co-existence—simply residing side-by-side in a shared department—to a more profound understanding of integration has highlighted the richness of contrasting such fundamental disciplinary orientations. As a result of our active reflection, research, and communication, the SRM course has become a cornerstone for the integration of theories and methods in the curriculum of our department. This paper is intended as a "course portfolio," wherein we describe how we developed the SRM course. In reporting on our progress to date, we begin with a brief description of the department and the history of the course. Next, we open our respective disciplinary toolkits and identify our epistemologies and methodologies. In the second half of the paper, we discuss the pedagogical challenges we faced in developing the SRM course, particularly how to present and integrate the research methods of our respective disciplines in conjunction with developing a hands-on research project.

Shaking Things Up: Rethinking the Disciplinarity of SRM

There are many ways that disciplines can come together to form a single department. Kain, Wagenaar, and Howery refer to these variations as a "continuum of jointness" (p. 7). The particular history and politics of the Sociology/Anthropology Department (SOA) at our institution directly influenced the development of the SRM course. Since its inception in the 1970s, SOA has always had a shared major degree program and has offered separate minors in sociology and anthropology. The distinction between sociology and anthropology is made clear by the structure of the minors: Students take only the core courses specific to their discipline and two electives taught by faculty from that discipline (Table 1).

Table 1
Core Courses

2 Sociology Cores	2 Anthropology Cores	2 Other Cores for Majors
Social Research Methods & Sociocultural Theory	Human Evolution & Understanding Cultures	Senior Seminar & choice of: Social Psychology, Diversity in the U.S., Social Stratification, or Women, Gender, and Society

However, the disciplinarity of many courses is not always evident to SOA *majors*. Many students entering the SOA program mistakenly assume that they are majoring in sociology, and the structure of the major does little to clarify that it is a dual major. Majors take six core courses and two unrestricted electives, very few of which carry clear disciplinary titles. In fact, the faculty must periodically debate the disciplinary home of particular courses. In other words, disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity are not always explicit at the level of course content or departmental structure. Finding ways to address this issue through advising and in the classroom may become a new departmental goal.

Until 2006, the SRM course was primarily sociological in content, taught by a sociologist. However, Kain, Wagenaar, and Howery point

out the tendency to talk about certain courses "belonging" to sociology versus anthropology in joint departments, and how it is important to start questioning these assumptions:

> Rather than thinking about courses or topics as "owned" by a discipline or by a specific faculty member, however, it is useful to ask questions… [to] help guide discussions about courses that might be productively cross-listed, or cross-taught (p. 9).

This prompted us to question why our department assigned research methods to sociology rather than to anthropology. In our experience, sociology emphasizes quantitative methods and domestic populations and institutions, and methods courses have played an integral part of undergraduate training. Cultural anthropology, on the other hand, emphasizes qualitative methods and cultures abroad, requiring intensive, long-term fieldwork; while undergraduates are trained to interpret others' work, they rarely participate in such research. This perception is supported by Kain, Wagenaar, and Howery, who go on to note an effect of "jointness"—in increased emphasis on qualitative methods as compared to stand-alone sociology departments (p. 6).[2]

Our joint department had long assumed that any students planning graduate work in sociology had more need to provide evidence of passing an undergraduate, disciplinary methods course. Thus SRM was a core sociology course for decades. Both serendipity and thoughtful development played a role in the shift toward integrating sociology and cultural anthropology in the SRM course. Prior to fall 2005, we used two sociologists and two anthropologists to teach our core courses. Thus, an anthropologist (Manthei) stepped in for the year, establishing a strong anthropological presence in the methods course, and was joined the following year by a sociologist (Isler). The new SRM course has provided an excellent forum for integrating the curriculum by explicitly addressing disciplinarity and interdisciplinarity with representatives from both sociology and cultural anthropology co-designing and co-teaching the course. Indeed, SRM has become a cornerstone of inter-disciplinarity in the department, which is progressing toward more overt integration both within the classroom curriculum.

The change benefits our departmental development and culture, and meets a need, indicated by students through the yearly SOA exit interviews, for more

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[2] The authors also discuss a broader tendency toward convergence in methodology (p. 5), discussed later in this paper.

clearly delineated disciplinary *and* interdisciplinary tools and perspectives (SOA, 2007, pp. 12-14). They are not alone: According to Newell (2006), this call is seconded by the "repeatedly expressed contention of Western seniors that they could do a better job of integration in their senior projects if they received more and earlier training in it, or if integration were at least explicitly discussed in their interdisciplinary courses" (p. 102). Even if courses offered explicitly disciplinary skills, students could not independently access and integrate them in their own work for lack of preparation. If a program attempts interdisciplinary integration on any level, faculty members themselves need to (1) understand the goals and how they relate to their courses; (2) reorient departmental structures toward these goals—including course requirements, sequencing, and content; and (3) model their integrative strategies explicitly in the classroom. As Kain, Wagenaar, and Howery note, "Students should not be primarily responsible for the integration of the disciplines. Any joint department should have careful advising and knowledge of core course objectives and content to help students achieve… integration" (p. 8).

The SRM course has proven to be a catalyst for conversations about integration in our department. We also gained momentum through participation in the 2008 AIS conference, with several faculty members presenting in a panel entitled "Exploring Interdisciplinarity in a Joint Department" (SOA, 2008). The co-authors contributed to this panel more specifically by discussing how our particular team-taught SRM course contributed to interdisciplinary teaching within our department. Engagement with the literature and community of interdisciplinary teacher/scholars has also influenced our faculty recruitment strategies; in 2009, we hired a sociologist with interests and some expertise in cultural anthropology, who is able to provide cross-disciplinary instruction in our core Sociocultural Theory course.[3] In short, attention to issues in interdisciplinarity has created a new dynamism in our joint department and brought us together in an intellectually stimulating project. Faculty members feel reinvigorated in our disciplinary realms in our collaboration. The SRM course has played a distinctive role in this process. In the following section, we share the results of analyzing the similarities and differences of our disciplinary approaches and developing practical toolkits for application in the classroom.

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[3] This course has always been taught by a sociologist and counted toward the sociology minor, for much the same reasons as the methods course. Cultural anthropological theories, insofar as they were addressed, were integrated in the course Understanding Cultures.

Opening our Disciplinary Toolkits: Comparing Epistemologies and Methodologies

An essential component of interdisciplinary research is to develop adequacy in each other's epistemologies and methodologies (Repko, 2008, pp.142, 189; Szostak, 2011, p. 9). We must also learn to represent our own discipline in a useful manner. Attempting to speak for one's discipline is a tricky endeavor, fraught with the perils of internal politics and issues of representation in our disciplines, but critical to our conversation. Furthermore, there is enormous diversity within disciplines, which are not necessarily cohesive wholes and have tendencies toward fragmentation (Fuchsman, 2009, pp. 73-75) and also change over time.

In our reflection and discussion, we explored what cultural anthropology and sociology have in common and what *distinctive* strengths they offer in addressing a social problem. We capitalized on our experience teaching introductory courses to help clarify the major tenets and tools of our respective disciplines for students in the SRM course.

Sociology and cultural anthropology both fall in the "social science" category, which, according to Repko (2008), "seek to explain the human world and figure out how to predict and improve it" (p. 67). Disciplines within the social sciences have some degree of tension between objectivity and subjectivity, and draw on qualitative and/or quantitative methods in addressing social problems (p. 67). In our experience, we find that practitioners from both disciplines tend to:

- Focus on studying collectives, emphasizing the group as a primary unit of analysis;
- Express an interest in investigating different groups' worldviews and experiences based on social identity factors (e.g., race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, region, etc.) and intersectionality (identities based simultaneously on multiple factors);
- Recognize the importance of ethics in research, including the protection of participants and researchers;
- Acknowledge and attenuate sources of subjectivity in research, including the social identity and personal interests of the research or funding institution;
- Address the politics of research, including a commitment to activism and movement toward more collaborative or public research methods;

- Use the classroom as a vehicle for training students to be more informed citizens and more savvy consumers and producers of information.

Nevertheless, sociology and anthropology have developed as distinct, institutionalized disciplines, with both historical convergences and divergences.[4] Our work in presenting the basic orientations of our disciplines produced significant differences in terms of content, expression, and organization. It bears repeating that, in writing the encapsulated versions of our disciplines below, we are well aware that they are, inevitably, our own *personal* interpretations and do not represent a single, unified, disciplinary perspective.

Sociology in a Nutshell

Sociology is the study of "things social"—including the lives of individuals and members of groups or societies, or society itself. "Society" is defined as the aggregate of relationships and institutions of a large group of people. A major tool of the trade is the "sociological imagination," a term coined by C. Wright Mills. The main thrust of this key concept is to see relationships between the histories of individuals and societies. As students develop their sociological imaginations, they begin to see how an individual's identity, perspective, experience, and actions influence and are influenced by larger social forces. They are better able to see how they themselves fit in the social world, and to see how individuals exhibit agency in social history.

Sociologists generally observe the social world from three distinct levels of analysis. Macro-sociology involves observing large-scale phenomena, such as international global economic changes. Meso-sociology focuses on organizational processes, such as the ways that particular schools enact national curricular policies. Finally, micro-sociology (overlapping with *social psychology*) highlights personal interactions between individuals or small groups when conducting research. Sociologists may specialize in one or more of these levels, although specific empirical issues typically lend themselves better to one unit of analysis over another. Although sociology has historically focused on domestic populations and issues, the discipline now includes substantial international work.

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[4] For instance, Calhoun and Rhoten (2010, p. 103) point out that while sociology traditionally treats human behavior as a "natural phenomenon," anthropology understands humans via more "subjective understandings" of social life, in particular shared culture.

Regardless of the unit of analysis, traditional sociological methods courses are split into three subfields: quantitative, statistical reasoning; comparative-historical analysis of existing documents, including archival research; and qualitative methods, which may involve ethnographic or field methods. Quantitative methodology is more common and usually considered hegemonic in the field. This predominance is particularly evident when one looks at research published in leading journals such as *The American Journal of Sociology* (AJS), although the other two methods have been given a good deal of legitimacy and attention in recent decades. Hypothesis-testing sociology, an overtly positivistic approach to social science methodology, is not employed by all sociologists, but is much more common in sociology departments relative to anthropology. Larger sociology departments are able to offer more specialized training through a variety of courses, but in smaller departments, sociologists are typically generalists methodologically speaking. Indeed, the sociologist in SRM is trained to teach quantitative/statistical as well as historical/comparative methods, but specializes in qualitative methods.

Although sociological concepts, methods, and information may be used for a variety of purposes, the main disciplinary organization highlights its purpose in relation to service:

> The American Sociological Association (ASA), founded in 1905, is a non-profit membership association dedicated to advancing sociology as a scientific discipline and profession serving the public good.

Anthropology in a Nutshell

Anthropology is the study of humans, past and present, and traditionally includes four interrelated "fields": archaeology, physical or biological anthropology, linguistic anthropology, and cultural or sociocultural anthropology. There are "applied" or "practicing" dimensions of each field, and some universities have distinctive programs as well as units with contracted work outside of academia. The anthropologist in SRM focuses on culture with training in medical anthropology (a type of applied anthropology). Thus the primary unit of analysis she brings to SRM is "culture." Definitions vary but tend to capture these elements: (1) learned, shared patterns of thought and behavior, and material culture; and/or (2) a store of knowledge that allows people to meet basic needs in a particular environment.

Cultural anthropology has a strong tradition of studying international populations, particularly tribal cultures and empires, but has expanded its focus to include groups in the U.S. and other commercial-scale societies. Anthropological levels of analysis distinguish between ethnology (cross-cultural comparisons) and ethnography (in-depth study of a single culture). It is important that cross-cultural comparisons be based on deep understandings of each culture. The emphasis on studying people across time and space positions anthropologists to assess whether certain features are particular to a very few cultures, generalized over several cultures, or universal—existing across all cultures, and thus potentially biological. This framework is a powerful tool when discussing issues such as gender, race, and relationships with the environment, power, and leadership.

Although cultural anthropologists make use of a wide variety of research strategies, including quantitative methods, the core of methodological training is qualitative, and specific to the discipline. Consider the explanation provided by the American Anthropological Association:

> Research in sociocultural anthropology is distinguished by its reliance on participant observation, which involves placing oneself in the research context for extended periods to gain a first-hand sense of how local knowledge is put to work in grappling with practical problems of everyday life and with basic philosophical problems of knowledge, truth, power, and justice.[5]

This definition reflects the contemporary politics of cultural anthropology. Although early anthropological ideas and methods were well suited to European imperialism, in the 20th century cultural anthropology became increasingly committed to combating social inequality and human suffering (as well as environmental devastation), much of which was engendered by European imperialism.

Embedded in this definition are also major epistemological and methodological issues. Anthropologists may be skeptical of cultural information that is not produced through participant observation—doing "fieldwork" that requires extensive emersion in the population of study. Long-term, intimate contact is critical to holism—studying how a particular cultural element relates to the whole culture, and how the culture relates to larger contexts as well. Holism is an important part of cultural relativity—studying human beliefs and behaviors within their cultural context, which

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[5] http://www.aaanet.org/about/WhatisAnthropology.cfm

promotes understanding and respect. The cultural relativist sees that one culture is not better/more evolved/more rational than another, but that each culture makes as much sense (and nonsense) as the next. We also come to understand cultures through <u>historical particularism</u>—the idea that each culture has been influenced by its own particular context and history (rather than some sort of universal sequence of stages). These tenets of anthropology are critical to what counts as knowledge. If information is not produced in this manner it is considered highly suspect.

Side-By-Side

Setting ourselves the task of clarifying our toolkits for ourselves and for our students has been challenging, and remains a project in progress. We hope that sharing our results here contributes to further conversations between and among anthropologists and sociologists. Based on our work so far, we have typified and compared basic elements of epistemology and methodology in Table 2.

Table 2
Basic Comparison of Disciplinary Foci

Sociology	Cultural Anthropology
• Studies people, particularly in relation to society (relationships and institutions)	• Studies people, particularly in relation to culture (patterns in thoughts and behaviors, environment)
• Traditionally domestic, now includes international	• Traditionally tribal/international, now includes domestic/commercial scale
• Macro-level (large-scale, global), meso-level (organizational), and micro-level (inter-personal) analyses	• Ethnography (in-depth study of a particular culture) and ethnology (cross-cultural comparisons)
• Traditionally quantitative, positivist, hypothesis-testing, now includes qualitative analyses (texts, oral histories, interviews)	• Traditionally qualitative, discovery, participant observation and texts, symbolic analysis, now includes quantitative

It is not our intent to create a complex, highly nuanced, lengthy product for an extremely limited academic audience; rather, we hope to provide building blocks for instructors who wish to reach outside their disciplines, collaborate, and/or present information to undergraduates in an accessible

manner. This approach provides a foothold for integrative work and practical applications such as collaborative research. Using this type of table and basic descriptions of disciplinary methods sparks research questions and strategies: What institutions may influence our topic? Do we want to look at the level of individual experience or global trends? Are we curious about a particular culture, or do we want to compare cultures? How can we research the way our topic relates to other elements of the culture in question? What form of evidence do we want to produce and analyze?

Like the contributors to Huber and Morreale's edited volume, we have each felt, through the process of delineating and comparing epistemologies and methodologies, that each discipline "has distinctive contributions to make to a larger project to which other disciplines can contribute as well" (p. 20). In this manner, we consciously develop a curriculum for SRM that intentionally highlights some of the conflicts and points of congruence between our disciplines. As Seabury notes, the "scholarship of interdisciplinarity…[is] a contribution to knowledge about interdisciplinary activities that explicitly addresses their interdisciplinary features" (2004, p. 59). Next, we discuss our experience applying these toolkits and strategies in the classroom, with an illustration involving race research.

The Classroom Experience: Hands-on Research with Undergraduates

In their discussion of an interdisciplinary language and environmental conservation course that takes students to Costa Rica, Barbara Gorka and Richard Niesenbaum emphasize the importance of *experience* (p. 103). Although we do not leave campus, we do our best to provide our students with a dynamic, meaningful foray into research that allows them to more deeply understand their toolkits and flex their intellectual, practical, and ethical muscles.

Focusing on a particular theme, issue, time frame, or region that cuts across disciplines and elicits central disciplinary concepts provides important grounding and purpose for interdisciplinary courses (Vess & Linkon, 2002, p. 92; Wentworth & Davis, 2002, p. 19); it is also a critical component across models for interdisciplinary research (Szostak, 2011, p. 9). In our case, identifying shared interests and specific research topics has been one of the easiest aspects of the class, thanks to our individual and disciplinary foci on social inequality and activism. According to Kain, Wagenaar, and Howery, common areas of interest in anthropology and sociology include race and ethnicity, globalization, and the environment, as well as families, gender,

aging, and social stratification (p. 9). Thus it is not surprising that we chose to do an environmental audit for our college (with subgroups specializing in social stratification and globalization) in 2007, a racial/ethnic campus climate study in 2008, and a healthcare survey in 2009.[6]

On the other hand, fitting basic training in anthropological and sociological methods, with attention to their integration, and a multi-phase, hands-on research project into a 15-week semester has proven to be far more challenging. It involves a balancing act of depth and breadth, theory and application, and general grounding in methods versus topical information specific to the particular research project that semester. Every year, we have to prioritize particular materials and jettison others, and strategically arrange the schedule to provide training that matches and is timed with the sequence of events required of the study at hand. It is a time-intensive endeavor that requires enormous flexibility and reflection.

Over time, we have settled on core areas of training that must be integrated into each semester to meet the goal of helping students become more savvy and conscientious consumers and producers of information, as summarized in Table 3. We tend to address the first four in this order, at the beginning of the semester; the rest are integrated in relation to the specific research project trajectory. Materials used to illustrate or strengthen each area may vary slightly, depending on the research topic of the semester. We often integrate research project components from previous semesters into our portfolio of resources. The disciplinary modules are generally integrated into some stage of the qualitative and quantitative modules, in tandem with the study at hand.

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[6] Also, in 2006, the anthropologist led qualitative and quantitative research projects on issues surrounding same-sex marriage. These issues of social justice create a sense of urgency and need for collaboration; as such, they remind us of those who were interested in "area studies" that emerged after WWII to better understand the complex factors underlying war (Calhoun & Rhoten, 2010, pp. 106-107). Unfortunately, with few exceptions, jurisdictional battles made it difficult to sustain interdisciplinary scholarship and teaching for long—an opportunity lost.

Table 3: Core Training Components

Fallacies	Students learn to spot problems of logic and argumentation, and source bias. We learn terms such as slippery slope, argument from authority, appeal to pride, etc. (Verlinden, 2005), which students identify in their own lived experience and products from the mass media. *Jointly taught.*
Quality of Evidence	We talk about the comparative value of different types of evidence, what makes for stronger or weaker evidence, using an adaptation of Perella's Hierarchy (ibid.). *Jointly taught.*
Science	We investigate notions of science, discussing how science is embedded in culture and politics, as well as influenced by subjectivity (rather than a universal, objective "Truth"), and the importance of intersubjectivity in research. *Jointly taught.*
Research Ethics	Before undertaking research, students receive extensive training in ethics, focusing on the history behind the Internal Review Board (IRB), the process of the IRB for our particular project, and specific training to protect students and participants in conducting our particular qualitative and quantitative research. *Jointly taught.*
Qualitative Methods	Students are instructed in the strengths and weaknesses of various qualitative methods, including observation, content analysis, surveys, and unstructured/semi-structured/structured interviews. They generally conduct research using at least three of these methods each semester, depending on the project. Developing research questions and then operationalizing them as interview or survey questions, phrasing, clustering, and flow are highlights, as well as self-presentation and interactive strategies with participants. Students learn various methods for organizing and analyzing qualitative data (coding, searches, tables) as well as strategies for presenting qualitative data as evidence. *Led by the anthropologist, with the sociologist's input and active participation.*
Quantitative Methods	Students learn basic skills in statistical analysis, including sampling methods, types of variable, levels of measurement, causation versus correlation, probability, generalizability, and standard deviation. Each semester, the students help design, implement, and analyze the predominantly quantified data of a survey using the statistical software package SPSS. *Led by the sociologist, with the anthropologist's input and active participation.*
Disciplinarity and Integration	The anthropologist and sociologist provide, separately, a discipline-specific, historical review of epistemology and methods, essentially orienting students to how we think about and collect information. Each illustrates aspects of these methods through presenting on their own research. When both toolkits are "on the table," both apply core concepts to the research topic at hand in a side-by-side manner, pointing out shared territory, issues of terminology and organization, and divergences.

As indicated in Table 3, our teaching is highly collaborative. There are a very few instances in which one of us will lead an entire class. Most of the time we alternate in presenting materials or even co-lecture, co-discuss, or co-facilitate group work; when one of us does lead a section, the other may serve as a model learner or a resource for information or disciplinary perspective (Wentworth & Davis, 2002, pp. 21-27). This classroom style is important on several levels. We relish the opportunity to model how scholarly professionals interact, sharing and negotiating ideas from different individual and disciplinary perspectives. The value of modeling this behavior is particularly useful when addressing controversial topics (Allen, Floyd-Thomas, & Gillman, 2001), which is often the case in SRM. A particular merit of co-teaching is the ability to create a dynamic interaction between disciplines, venturing into new areas as they arise, so that the students witness the conversation. As deRoche and deRoche point out, social science methods courses do well to convey the idea that it's not just about teaching facts; rather, science is full of controversy and dialogue, and requires reflexivity.

Students are also required to collaborate with each other throughout the project—they brainstorm ideas, report experiences to the class, and work with partners to conduct interviews. They also develop subgroups, based on shared interests, to collect and analyze data and present results (although the actual term papers are written individually). We talk about this cooperation as an important experience that mimics many real-world work scenarios and, despite some scheduling issues and isolated personality conflicts, students report that this is the best group work experience they've ever had as undergraduates. Work in subgroups also benefits students through what DeZure (2010, p. 376) and others call "collaborative" and "cooperative" learning, allowing them not only to reflect upon the theories and methods of different disciplines but also to respect the distinct educational backgrounds of their classmates as they negotiate their topics and approach.

The research project has its own trajectory. At first, we followed this order: students brainstorm and identify a topic → develop research questions → select methods → develop one instrument (e.g., qualitative) → Institutional Review Board (IRB) process → implementation of first phase → consolidation of data → (qualitative) analysis, leading to → development of another instrument (e.g., quantitative) → IRB process → implementation of second phase → consolidation of data → (quantitative) analysis → combined analyses in group presentations → individual research papers.

This proved to be overreaching. We knew that the schedule would be subject to modification—there can be delays to IRB approval, a student can fall through with a key contribution to the group, participants can cancel or not show up, etc. It was difficult to anticipate just how uncomfortable undergraduates would be with the contingent nature of the course, or the importance of their own timely and quality contributions. We learned to prepare the students quite thoroughly for the level of real-world time and responsibility involved, and that has made an enormous difference. We also check in on a regular basis, assessing progress and reflecting on the process.

Over the years, we have experimented with submitting IRB proposals before the beginning of the semester, to reduce the delay of waiting for approval twice during the semester. Of course, this strategy affects the amount of student input in the topic and methods used. We want the students to feel more ownership and be more engaged by developing consensus around an issue and type of study. However, we have found that the course runs much more smoothly if we select a broad topic of current interest and submit a general, provisional proposal to the IRB, then work with the students to develop the specifics and submit follow-up paperwork. This process still allows the students to choose foci within the topic, and develop the particular instruments, but the IRB process is quicker, which allows us to meet deadlines and accomplish more tasks during the semester, reducing stress for all involved.

Reducing stress through feasible projects and goals has been critical to student satisfaction, as demonstrated by standardized student evaluations of instructors and courses. Ratings of the course improved dramatically with the shift to a single large-scale data collection, from 53% to 67% finding the course well planned and organized. However, we are both accustomed to scoring in the 90% range for this category! It was not until we tried undertaking only one major data gathering project in the semester that our scores jumped into the usual range of satisfaction for this evaluation item. In Spring 2010 we focused on developing an original qualitative project, but had the students use the existing database from the racial and ethnic climate survey to practice their quantitative skills. Thus the class only had to develop and deliver one large-scale survey instrument, and we did not have to perform data entry, although students still got to analyze local data using the SPSS software package. A few students would have appreciated participating in a large-scale quantitative project. However, the message from students' evaluations of the classroom experience was clear: Most students preferred a more stable, predictable schedule over the breadth of hands-on experience that we had offered in previous years.

Of course, what makes students "happy" is not necessarily what we instructors think is "good for them." Indeed, SRM is one of our most advanced courses (although it has no prerequisites), and we want to challenge students to be more responsible and flexible, dealing with multiple tasks, interpersonal relations and possible conflicts, contingency planning, and accountability—skills that will benefit them in the workplace. We also want to challenge them to understand through interdisciplinarity and other means that there is no Truth but rather that "knowledge is relative to and constructed within a context" (Haynes, 2002, p. xiv). In fact, we want them to be dissatisfied with a single lens, and to realize the partiality of their knowledge (Wentworth & Davis, 2002, p. 17).

On the other hand, we want to earn tenure, which requires good student evaluations. Many of our students find fundamental intellectual challenges and high levels of responsibility and problem solving quite stressful. They are not pleased to discover that what they have learned is partial or even tenuous. Also, as Allen, Floyd-Thomas, and Gillman note, team-teaching often brings down ratings, and teaching on sensitive issues can compound the problem (pp. 319-320). Add to that the challenges of hands-on research, and you may find yourself in a difficult practical position as a faculty member.

Thus there has been more than one trade-off involved in our strategies. Through trial and error, we have sought a balance between student ownership of course content and repertoire of student research experience, on the one hand, and faculty comfort levels with workload, student evaluations, and control over project decisions, on the other. Fortunately, we have very strong qualitative evidence from our students that they value the experience. Like Lessor, Reeves, and Andrade, we found that students sometimes complained of the workload during the experience, but increasingly recognized its value as the semester progressed and even afterwards (pp. 143-144). In supplemental evaluations and reflections, students consistently describe a sense of pride and accomplishment for playing a role in *real* research and developing *practical* skills.

Applying Our Toolkits: The Racial/Ethnic Climate Survey

In planning for the spring 2009 semester, we decided to organize the class around the topic of race—in particular, racial and ethnic campus climate—for a few reasons. First, in the city where we both live and work, officials were recognizing the 100-year anniversary of a horrific race riot. People in

the community, including those affiliated with the university, took part in commemorative, reflective events, and these discussions were foremost in our minds. Second, the city was also celebrating the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth, so there were discourses and celebrations surrounding the abolition of African American slavery in the U.S. Third, with the successful presidential campaign of Barack Obama, the discussion over race in the United States reached a level that we have not seen publicly for decades. Finally, as individuals, both authors are interested in race research and felt that it would be a key moment to capitalize on shared public and student interest, and generate useful information for our campus.

In preparation, we submitted an IRB proposal in the fall outlining a research sequence in which each stage informed the next, and carefully guided our students' increased involvement in a volatile issue. Before the class began, instructors interviewed key participants from across campus, such as the Diversity Center, Housing, and Office of International Student Services, and the faculty advisors for student ethnic organizations,[7] soliciting their ideas and needs for the research project. Then we contacted the student presidents of the ethnic organizations, priming them for interviews. In the spring semester, the class finalized the interview questions for faculty and students, and achieved IRB approval. In pairs, students conducted semi-structured interviews (students and faculty separately) and reported their data through transcribing and then posting their data to a Blackboard site, creating a qualitative database. As a class, we conducted content analyses with an eye to informing a larger, quantitative questionnaire. We finalized the survey and students administered it in public spaces on campus and in a sampling of diverse classes. The data created by 303 participants (nearly achieving statistical significance on our campus) was entered into SPSS. The class brainstormed particular topics of interest and formed subgroups according to their interests, analyzed the data and presented their findings together. Individually, the students drew on both the qualitative and quantitative databases to write their term papers.[8]

It was an intense semester. Methodological training and both quantitative

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[7] The African Caribbean Student Association, the African Student Association, the Black Student Union, the Chinese Student Association, CERCA, the Indian Student Organization, the International Student Association, the Japanese Club, and the Organization of Latin American Students.

[8] The faculty also shared findings individually with interested faculty and staff, and organized a student poster of the data the following spring at the university's First Annual Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences Research Symposium.

and qualitative research with undergraduates crowded the schedule, and nothing was as sorely missed as significant topical reading. In the past, we had attempted to integrate library research, but time constraints made for such limited work that we felt it was counterproductive—sending the message that something other than extensive, systematic reading could lead to an adequate understanding of a complex social issue. Since library research is taught in other core courses in the department, we have to satisfy ourselves with lecturing on main points, integrating some videos and clips into lectures and discussions, and providing key reference materials—in this case, students incorporated university-level statistics from institutional sources into their papers.

We chose race as a major issue of social inequality and activism, and we took the opportunity to integrate disciplinary messages about race, employing our toolkits and summaries as guides. In fact, we were spurred to develop this approach through preparing for an AIS conference—a clear example of teacher-scholarship. As you read the sociological and anthropological summaries (radically shortened for this article), parallels with the "nutshell" descriptions above should be apparent.

A Sociological Perspective on Race

Sociologists and other social scientists used to think race was biological—that there are distinctive human races with internal features that correlate with visible, external features. For example, they posited correlations between intelligence and skin color. Today, most sociologists believe that race is a social construction—that is, they recognize that race is a series of socially constructed biological characteristics.

Sociologists approach race and other social issues using three levels of analysis: macro, meso, and micro (large, medium, and small-scale) analysis. Macro-sociologists focus on structural concerns, most often inequality, at the global and/or national level. Topics of interest include unemployment, housing discrimination and segregation, political disenfranchisement, formations of ethnic enclaves, and other concerns. They look at race and ethnicity primarily utilizing statistical data, often drawn from surveys and other quantitative tools. Thus racial categories tend to coincide with such materials as census data. This research is done in order to measure and predict trends in explaining social relationships between racial and ethnic groups.

At the meso-level, sociologists look at organizations in trying to understand these relationships. Organizations often range in size and scope, but all data is collected from members of tangible groups; for instance, the ethnic student organizations in our class research project. Meso-sociologists study the relations both among groups (how the African Student Organization and International Student Organization interact) and within groups (how leaders and members of the Chinese Student Association get along).

At the micro-level, often drawing on theories of symbolic interactionism, sociologists analyze the contents of interpersonal relationships at the individual level. This includes behavior ranging from communication patterns, body language, interpersonal (and in particular interracial and interethnic) romantic relationships, and other similar behaviors. We ascertained this type of information by asking a broad range of students not only what they felt the racial campus climate was like "in general" but rather what they thought about inter-racial relationships, what they felt others might feel about these relationships, and whether or not they agreed that more inter-racial interactions was a positive step towards improving relations on campus.

In short, sociologists have been and continue to be fascinated with race relations, and at the same time the level of analysis (macro, meso, or micro) dictates what types of methods are available to use to gather and analyze qualitative, quantitative, or both types of data. Sociologists are typically interested in looking at the "causes" and "effects" of a variety of social behaviors. In studying race and ethnic campus climate the sociological approach hinges on simultaneously exploring qualitative concerns, issues, comments from campus community members and understanding the causes of potential campus conflict, harmony, and proscribing potential solutions or outcomes based on survey data. Combining qualitative and quantitative data can provide specific policy recommendations alongside with setting a baseline that can be reflected upon in the future.

Anthropology and the Study of Race

Like sociologists, anthropologists once believed that race was biological—in fact, they thought that different climates produced different races, and that "better" climates produced "better" people. They also believed that all populations evolved along a single continuum of evolution, from savage to barbaric to civilized. Europeans were, unsurprisingly, considered the "civilized" races and destined to rule, whereas "inferior" races were destined to disappear through processes of natural selection. The assumption that

racial others were "inferior"—and thus fair game for the more "evolved" cultures—was a handy ideology to justify European colonization, genocide, and enslavement of Others.[9]

Franz Boas, the "father of modern anthropology," was the prime mover in overthrowing this perspective on race. He brought his scientific background to bear on systematic research demonstrating that there is no biological basis for creating "racial" categories as we know them, much less any connection to behavior or worth. The discipline then dismissed the issue of race for some time as an invalid unit of analysis. However, contemporary anthropologists recognize that race exists in people's minds, in their lives, in their relationships, health, access to resources, etc. Therefore, it is a critical site of inquiry. The American Anthropological Association has designed a website for teachers, scholars, students, and the general public in an attempt to make some of anthropology's messages about race accessible within and beyond the discipline, reflecting the activist stance of its practitioners (American Anthropolical Association, (n.d.) *Race: Are We So Different?*).

In anthropology, "race" is considered a cultural construction, meaning that it is not biological but rather social, and varies from culture to culture. The wealth of information on cultures across space and time (ethnology) allows anthropologists to illustrate how different cultures may (1) ascribe different meanings to physical features such as skin color; (2) highlight entirely different physical features and even non-physical features in creating "races;" or (3) not include racial categories at all.

Thus when anthropologists approach race research among particular populations (ethnography), they are likely to problematize the terms and categories used and assess their symbolic meanings, interpret the power dynamics inherent in their historical creation and contemporary deployment (cultural, political, and economic context), examine the interstices of categories (e.g., "multiracial" identities), explore intersectionality with gender, class, sexuality, religion, and other identity markers, and disaggregate both qualitative and quantitative data according to race to reveal the experiences and perspectives of different groups.[10] In our class research project, we worked with the terms used by members of the groups themselves, and disaggregated data according to these terms to assess, for example, relations among groups (friendship and romance), and cultural and economic fit with the university.

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[9] For further information, research the theory of unilinear evolution, Social Darwinism, and scientific racism.

[10] For an excellent reading on race and anthropology, see Harrison.

Side-By-Side

In each description, we see the simultaneous overlapping and distinctive structuring of discourses surrounding race. Both the text and Table 4 (next page) also provide an opportunity to highlight disciplinary uses of "social constructions" versus "cultural constructions." In fact, when the sociologist first came to the university and saw the note on the anthropologist's door—"Gender is a cultural construction" (next to photos of men washing clothes and small children)—he chuckled: "typical anthropologist." The sociologist spends his days claiming that "gender is *socially* constructed." Through conversations on the topic we discovered that, as individuals, we are talking about the same thing, but our disciplines have trained our semantics differently. While anthropology foregrounds cultural knowledge and practices, sociology at times moves culture into the background. While the two of us were saying nearly the same thing, these nuanced differences in language do matter; they may direct our attention in a particular direction, affecting the way that we frame research tools to approach the problem at hand. When a sociologist talks about gender, race, or other social constructions, attention is drawn to social forces; when an anthropologist talks about cultural constructions, variability across cultures must be explicit. When we come together, we suggest the phrasing, "race is socially constructed and culturally constituted" as an alternative.

This type of discovery is an excellent example of the way interdisciplinary, team-taught courses prompt conversations that interrogate elements of each discipline and how they can be integrated. By sitting down and conscientiously hashing out these differences or overlapping similarities we can now discuss race or gender from a distinctly interdisciplinary point of view. We can do this in tandem with discussions about our own respective disciplinary lenses as well, giving our students (and ourselves) yet another tool for our collective toolkit.

Drawing on Table 2, we created a handy comparison of how the two disciplines approach race (Table 4). Again, the chart is not complex or comprehensive, and information from each bullet can be found in either discipline. However, such a summary helps students structure and synthesize the more in-depth, complex discussions and readings on race in each field. It provides a touchstone for the instructors when assessing whether the students fully grasp essential background information in preparation for designing research. For example, do the students understand the social, cultural, biological, economic, and political aspects of race? Then, when

designing research methods and questions, referring to these basic factors stimulates topics, sources, and ideas for instruments. Do we want to focus on symbolic aspects? Institutions? Cross-cultural comparisons? History? What do we gain from drawing from each column, each discipline, in approaching the topic of race?

Table 4
Sociology and Anthropology of Race

Sociology & Race	Anthropology & Race
• Race as a "social construction"	• Race as a "cultural construction"
• Biological determinism criticized	• Biological analyses from physical anthropology used to criticize "racial" categories
• Analyses of social uses & applications of race-based ideologies	• The value of ethnology to test universality
• Considers complexity of racial/ethnic groups	• Power issues, historical and cultural specificity
• Institutions, policies, economics, racial/ethnic enclaves & networking	• Symbolic analysis and now quantitative data
• Focus on power inequalities in labor markets, racial formations (Omi and Winant, 1994)	

Conclusion

We have learned that simply sharing information is not as powerful as explicitly comparing the convergences and divergences of our epistemologies and methodologies. As Szostak explains, "It is all too easy, after all, to do *superficial* 'interdisciplinarity': to read one book in sociology and repeat its insights with no understanding of how that book rests within the wider discipline" (p. 5, emphasis added). Instead, we seek to model "*quality*" interdisciplinary research that meets higher standards (p. 8), integrating not only insights but *perspectives* (p. 11, emphases added). Our goal as educators and budding scholars of interdisciplinarity is to make "a contribution to knowledge about interdisciplinary activities that explicitly addresses their interdisciplinary features" (2004, p. 59)—that is, to capture how each discipline's fundamental elements are involved in producing information. The process of working toward this integrative goal is an exceedingly valuable experience, as we conscientiously interrogate our

understandings of our own disciplines in order to teach each other. We have the distinctive advantage of co-teaching, which—in our case[11]—invites an active dialogue between our disciplines and a continual process of discovery. Thanks to the day-to-day negotiation of materials and approaches, we can interrogate shared vocabulary, and find that common themes are woven into methodologies in distinct manners.

According to Vess and Linkon, "Interdisciplinary studies have always been intimately linked with the scholarship of teaching and learning" (p. 87). In our case, the theoretical and pedagogical learning develop in tandem. We want our students to have "access" to both disciplines—a solid orientation that allows them to interpret information generated by each discipline "as it is meant" as well as the ability to relate each discipline to their own interests (Bailis, 2002, pp. 4-5). Furthermore, making the process of integration clear to the students is important to us for both theoretical and practical purposes. Our goal is for students to learn distinctive disciplinary toolkits so that they are able to apply them to real situations. Like many scholars of interdisciplinarity, we believe that facility with a variety of skill sets—and their complementarity—is a powerful means of enhancing our understanding of complex social issues and thus our capacity to act (Allen, Floyd-Thomas, & Gillman, p. 322; Bell, 1998, pp. 100-101; Lessor, Reeves, & Andrade, p. 134). Indeed, Repko (2008) emphasizes that "the purpose or product of the research process is a cognitive advancement or interdisciplinary understanding of a particular problem. Integration is a means to that end, not an end in itself" (pp. 20-21). Creating a unique, hands-on research project—ideally on a topic that is meaningful to the students and potentially useful to the campus community—has the distinct advantage of making methods real for the students, giving them practical skills to take forward. This type of research with undergraduates has its own challenges for both students and faculty, but it communicates our individual and disciplinary focus on activism, helping us use the classroom as a means of passing the torch for social justice to the next generation.

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[11] We are a fortunate pairing, as genuinely curious about and respectful of each other's disciplines, flexible, equally untenured, with low levels of ego to negotiate, and able to present a united, professional but friendly relationship to the students. Thus we passed, without knowing it, the main points set out by Wentworth and Davis on integrating a so-called "dream team" (2002, pp. 21-27). Szostak emphasizes the importance of trust and sharing ideals (2011, p. 16), and these have certainly been critical not only to the quality of the course but also our enjoyment and willingness to persevere.

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