**RUBRIC**

**End of Semester Statement of Beliefs — Final Draft**

This essay is worth **18** points. Don’t directly penalized students for poor writing (e.g., grammatical or spelling errors, run-on sentences) … but if their writing is not clear, of course their grade may suffer. Essays **cannot** be turned in late! (But, be a *little* liberal … an hour or so late is fine). We don’t accept papers any way other than Canvas.

We should not grade based on what students say … we should grade based on whether students took the assignment seriously and answered the questions coherently, completely, and to the best of their ability. The difference between the “beginning of semester” essay and this one is this: They need to reflect on how their ideas changed in response to class materials. From the syllabus: “**In this essay, focus on how course materials, in-class discussions, and your CEL work changed your answers to the questions above. If your answers to the questions above changed because of SOC 3452, what specific things (e.g., readings, discussions, CEL experiences) caused them to change? If they did not change, how do you respond to arguments or evidence from course materials that contradict your thinking and beliefs?**“

For each question **a**, students can earn a maximum of **2** points. For questions b through **e** below, they can earn a maximum of **4** points each. For question **a**, give between 0 and 2 points based on how thoroughly they answered the question. It will be harder for them to reflect on how SOC 3452 changed their answers to this, so be lenient on that.

For questions **b** through **e**, they can only get full credit if they do a good job of explaining how their ideas and answers changed (or were unchanged after being challenged) in SOC 3452.

Essays should be about 2,500 words. Deduct points from specific questions/answers for lack of completeness. That is, don’t just deduct points for brevity … deduct for inadequate content (which will come with brevity).

The Questions:

* 1. **What kind of education did you experience from when you were born until today?**

Consider all the schools you have ever attended, the teachers you have ever had, and other educational influences in your life (e.g., churches, family, coaches). What kinds of schools did you have? What kind of teachers did you have?

* 1. **Did you have more opportunities than most people in the United States … or fewer?**

Did you have better quality schools and teachers … or worse? In what ways did you have better opportunities, teachers, schools, etc.? In what ways did you have worse?

* 1. **How were your educational opportunities and experiences influenced by:**
  2. Where you happened to live (i.e., what city, suburb, or neighborhood you lived in, whether you lived in a rural, suburban, or urban area, etc.) when you were growing up?
  3. How much money your family had while you were growing up?
  4. Your racial or ethnic background and your country of birth?
  5. Your gender?
  6. Your sexual orientation?
  7. **Why have you been successful in your education?**

To what extent have your educational successes — you’ve all made it to college, so you’re all successful to some extent! — been because of:

1. Your own merits (e.g., your own hard work, intelligence, and perseverance)?
2. Having certain personal attributes (e.g., being female, being gay, being Latina, being disabled)?
3. Luck or chance (e.g., being in the right place at the right time, being born to the right family)?
   1. **Can anybody succeed in their education in America if they just try hard enough?**

Many people argue that anybody—regardless of their gender or race/ethnicity or other attributes and regardless of the family they were born to—can succeed in America’s schools and education system if they just work hard and persevere. What do you think? Can anybody succeed in America’s schools and education system? Explain.