Synopsis

The Senior Thesis

The Senior Seminar is a research workshop in which all students will develop and write a senior thesis. In short, producing a senior thesis will task you to (1) choose a topic and to develop a highly focused inquiry into your chosen object of study, (2) to situate your research questions within context of existing research on your topic, (3) to identify and articulate theoretical perspectives relevant to your prospective research, (4) to develop a theoretically-informed and methodologically appropriate research design that will produce findings and evidence indicative of an original contribution to the advancement of sociological knowledge, and (5) to compose your written and oral presentation of the above into a format and style that will appeal to academic and lay audiences.

Classroom sessions will revolve around two primary activities: (1) reviewing texts that reflect on the art of good writing and on the craft of scholarship, and (2) student presentations, discussions, and evaluations of work in progress. Thorough and thoughtful classroom attendance and participation is fundamental to the success of the course. The quality of capstone experience largely depends on creating a supportive forum for sharing incisive feedback on your individual research efforts.

Capstone Experience Requirement

Successful participation in the Senior Seminar fulfills Macalester College’s revised graduation requirement for a capstone experience within major concentrations (see Appendix A).

Honors Thesis

All students enrolled in the senior seminar who have a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher are eligible to participate in the College’s honors program. As detailed in the college catalog, “the Honors Program is designed to enable seniors with demonstrated ability to undertake substantial independent work that culminates in a project of exceptionally high quality.” The course work in the senior seminar satisfies most of the departmental requirements for the sociology honors program. As such, the sociology faculty strongly encourages all qualified students in the senior seminar to declare their candidacy for the honors program at the beginning of the fall semester (see Appendix B).
Course Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Part I. Crafting a Research Proposal

*Week 1. Topics, Questions, Problem Statements, and Significance
September 5


Recommended:
9 copies on reserve at the Wallace Library: Q130.55.M4B66

Assignment One: Prospective Research Topic and Problem Statement.

Week 2. From Topics to Sources: Literature Reviews
September 12


Recommended:

Week 3. Elements of Research Proposals
September 19


*Week 4. Methodology
September 26

Assignment Two: Research Proposal (~15 pages).
Due Wednesday, September 26

SSRIB Proposals also due Wednesday, September 26
http://www.macalester.edu/committees/irb/ssirb/

Part II. Data Collection and Write-Up of Findings

Week 5. Work-in-Progress Presentations and Discussions
October 3

**Week 6. Work-in-Progress Presentations and Discussions**  
October 10

**Week 7. Work-in-Progress Presentations and Discussions**  
October 17

**Week 8. Work-in-Progress Presentations and Discussions**  
October 24

**Midterm Break, October 25-28**

**Part III. Writing a Complete, First Draft**

*Week 9. Formatting*  
October 31

Assignment Three: Summary of Research Findings (~10 pages).  
Due Wednesday, October 31

**Week 10. Composing Introductions and Conclusions**  
November 7


**Week 11. Writing Well**  
November 14


**Part IV. Evaluating, Revising, and Presenting Research**

*Week 12. Peer-Reviews*  
November 21

Assignment Four: First Draft of Senior Thesis (~30 pages).  
Due Tuesday, November 21st
Thanksgiving Break: November 22-25

*Week 13. Art of Public Speaking
November 28
Assignment Five: Peer Review
Due Wednesday, November 28th

Week 14. Formal Research Presentations
December 5

*Week 15. Formal Research Presentations
December 12
Assignment Six: Final Revised Draft of Senior Thesis
Due Wednesday, December 12th

Fall Term Ends

Grade Distribution

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<thead>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Research Proposal</td>
<td>15</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Summary of Research Findings</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 First Draft of Senior Thesis</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td>5 Peer Review</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 Revised Draft of Senior Thesis</td>
<td>25</td>
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Appendix A: Capstone Experience Requirement

The purpose of the capstone experience is for students to demonstrate their proficiency in the methods and in the modes of communication of the discipline in which they have majored. This proficiency is demonstrated through the creation and/or performance of a piece of advanced work in the major. This end product of the capstone experience is peer-reviewed so that other students in the major will reflect on what constitutes acceptable, good, and excellent work at this point in their careers. Furthermore, this advanced work should be shared with the Macalester community through public presentations and performances, providing an opportunity for celebrating the range of scholarly achievements engendered by a Macalester education. The capstone experience is the final stage in the developmental sequence within the major and as such should represent a culmination of the learning process within the major.

Guidelines for Capstone Experience (abbreviated)

1. The department or interdepartmental major may choose to place the capstone requirement within the context of a seminar, specific courses, an independent or honors project, or any combination of these.
2. The capstone experience must lead to the creation of a piece of advanced work appropriate to the discipline. This end product could be a paper that presents original research, a performance, or a presentation of original work.
3. The nature of and the weight given to the peer-review process is at the discretion of the department or interdepartmental major. Thus, for example, review might be restricted to a small number of students within a senior seminar, or all majors in this discipline might participate in the peer-review process. The peer-review process should be accompanied by instruction in what to look for and how to give constructive feedback.
4. The results of the capstone experience should be made available to the Macalester community, ideally through public presentations and performances. How these works are disseminated is left to the discretion of the department or interdepartmental major.
Appendix B: Sociology Department Honors Program

Eligibility

All students enrolled in SOCI480, Senior Seminar, who have achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.3 are eligible to participate in the honors program.

Requirements

1. Successful completion of a senior thesis in the Senior Seminar.
2. Successful completion of revisions to the senior thesis in accordance with the recommendations of the candidate’s honors committee.
3. Successful oral defense of the honors project.

Procedures and Timetables

1. **Notifications.** Students who wish to participate in the honors program shall notify the chair of the sociology department no later than the second week of the fall semester.

2. **Formation of Honors Committee.** The honors committee is a three-member panel of faculty who supervise and evaluate the honors project. Two members of the committee shall be drawn from the permanent faculty of the sociology department, and college regulations stipulate that one member of the honors committee must be drawn from the faculty of another department at Macalester College or another university or college. One of the two sociology faculty members shall serve as the honors project adviser of record and chair of the honors committee. Honors candidates shall select a project adviser no later than November 1st in the fall of their graduating year. With the advice and consent of the project adviser, honors candidates shall select the other members of the committee, otherwise called readers or examiners. One reader shall come from the sociology department faculty and be appointed no later than the end of the fall semester. The second reader shall be appointed no later than March 1st.

3. **Oral Defense.** The chair of the honors committee shall schedule an oral defense of the honors project no later than the third week of April. Upon deliberation immediately after the oral defense, the honors committee may elect to (1) pass the honors project, (2) issue a conditional pass and defer approval of the honors project pending the completion of further revisions deemed appropriate by the committee and subject to the final approval of the chair of the honors committee, or, (3) withhold approval for lack of sufficient progress.

4. **Final Editing.** The Office of Academic Programs formats honors projects to add them to the holdings of the Wallace Library. Students are responsible for formatting their thesis in accordance with OAP guidelines and submitting the requisite copies to their office in the first week of May.
Declaration of Intent to Participate in the Sociology Honors Program

To: Terry Boychuk, Chair
   Sociology Department

From: _______________________________________________________

   (printed name)

Date: September ______, 2007

Please accept this notice as my declaration of intent to participate in the sociology department honors program.

Further, I acknowledge that I have read and understood the sociology department honors policy.

Signed: ___________________________________________________
Appendix C: Senior Seminar Research Proposal

1. Title
2. Introduction (~2-3 pages)
3. Literature Review (~5 pages)
4. Research Design (~5 pages)
5. Bibliography (~1-2 pages)

Title

Give the shortest possible, preferably lyrical, description of your study.

Introduction

Announce clearly your problem statement/research questions.

Offer a *prima facie* rationale for the importance of your study that underscores the broader implications and significance of your research efforts.

Imagine your audience. Assume that your reader has a passing, but not detailed, familiarity with your topic that one might gather from popular accounts of current events – newspapers and television – or from general knowledge imparted in a college-level education. Establish a brief context for your research that will inform and refresh your reader’s understanding of your subject and provide enough background so that you can generate curiosity, excitement, and suspense in your reader’s mind about the unresolved questions that you propose to explore in your research. Avoid arcane, technical jargon as much as possible. If you do resort to sociological and other academic neologisms, define these terms in a common vernacular for your reader.

Literature Review

Your literature review situates your study within broader, ongoing debates among differing theoretical perspectives on your object of inquiry and briefly surveys previous findings of relevance to your research agenda.

Your summary of existing studies should demonstrate to your reader that you have the depth and breadth of knowledge to research intelligently your topic.

It should also focus and guide your empirical research, that is, allow you to make difficult choices about planning your research design – what to observe and how to observe.
Research Design

Choice of Method

Detail and substantiate your choice of method(s) for generating evidence on your subject: Comparative-Historical Sociology, Historical Case Study, Case Study, Ethnographic Interviewing, Field Research, Content Analysis, or Social Survey, etc. Identity and briefly discuss the strengths and limitations of your choice of method. How does your methodology hold out the prospect of creating new findings that overcome the limitations of previous research on your topic and producing new insight into your topic?

Study Population and Sampling

Study Population. Your reader will want to know what group, class, collection, or population of social things, or cases, about which you will provide a window of insight. Your study population may consist of . . .

- human artifacts: musical scores, roads and bridges, housing tracts, books, etc.
- events: elections, revolutions, births, marriages, and deaths, insurrections, social movements, wars, public policies, etc.
- individuals: voters, students, peasants, workers, religious adherents, etc.
- social institutions or organizations: schools, sports teams, governments, social clubs, charities, families, etc.

Social things have temporal and spatial dimensions. Time and place are parameters of these populations. Be specific about these attributes, e.g. democratic revolutions in Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s, contemporary student protests on liberal arts campuses in the US, St. Paul public housing developments in the 1950s, Chinese peasants in the 1970s, mental health agencies in MN before WWII, voters in the 2004 federal election, articles in the New York Times in 2005, etc.

Unit of Analysis. Define and describe your unit(s) of analysis – in other words – what elements of these social things will you observe and describe?

Sampling. How will you select the cases that wish to observe? Representative-probability or purposive sample?

Operationalization

Simply put, what kinds of evidence are you looking for and how will you record and order your observations?
Social Survey. Detail the specific questions asked of respondents and the choice of answers allowed them.

Interviews. Detail the specific questions asked of interviewees and how you will interpret their responses.

Comparative-Historical/Historical /Case Studies/Content Analysis. Your data may come from primary sources, including but not limited to, publicly and privately archived records, personal accounts, etc. and secondary sources – studies that collate and synthesize evidence from primary sources. What specific evidence is of interest to you? What does it indicate? How will you categorize and interpret it?

Bibliography

Follow the ASA Style Guide for citing works and listing references.
Name

Department

Your E-Mail Address

Faculty Adviser (for this project)

Project Title

1. Briefly describe the objectives of your proposed project (this description could include purposes, research questions, and/or hypotheses as appropriate as well as a discussion of the benefits of the proposed research)

2. Which of the following research methods will you use in the project? (check all appropriate)
   - Ethnography / participant observation
   - In-depth / semi-structured interviewing
   - Survey
   - Focus group
   - Experiment
   - Other(s) – specify: ________

3. Describe the research study design and what you will ask participants to do.

4. Identify potential risks to study participants (including yourself) and explain how you will minimize these risks.

5. Briefly describe the sampling procedures you will use to determine participants. What are the criteria for including or excluding participants? How will you select potential participants for your study? Who is the study population? Do you have a target number of participants?
6. Briefly describe the process you will use to recruit participants for your project.


7. Briefly explain how you will insure informed consent.


8. Briefly explain provisions you will make to maintain confidentiality.


9. Briefly describe the training or coursework that you have completed in research ethics and/or research subjects’ protection.


Please attach to this form any of the following that you will use:

☐ Consent form
☐ Sample recruitment materials (letters, flyers, and the like)
☐ A copy of the survey
☐ A schedule of interview questions / topics

Student: My signature below indicates that the information that I have provided is accurate and that I will inform my advisor and the Social Science Institutional Review Board (SSIRB) of any changes in research procedures or problems that develop during my research. I understand that I am not to begin or modify my research until I have received clearance from the SSIRB.

_________________________  ____________________________
Student Signature                     Date

Faculty: My signature below indicates that I have read and support the above proposal and agree to oversee the research.

_________________________  ____________________________
Faculty Signature                      Date
CONSENT FORM
[Insert Title of Study]

I am conducting a study of [Insert general statement about study]. You were selected as a possible participant because [Explain how subject was identified]. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: [Name of PI, department (indicate University affiliation)]. My faculty advisor for this project is [Name, Department, contact information]

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things: [Explain tasks and procedures: subjects should be told about video or audio taping, assignment to study groups, length of time for participation, frequency of procedures, etc.]

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Macalester College [or with other cooperating institutions, insert names here]. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The study has several risks: First, [Risk]; Second, [Risk] (Risk must be explained, including the likelihood of the risk)

The benefits to participation are: [Benefit(s)] (If no benefits, state that fact here.)

Compensation: [if applicable]

You will receive payment: [Include payment or reimbursement information here.] (If subjects receive class points or some other token, include that information here. Explain when disbursement will occur and conditions of payment. For example, if monetary benefits will be prorated due to early withdraw.)

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject in any paper or presentation I make based on this research. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. (If tape recordings or videotapes are made, explain who will have access, and when they will be erased.)
Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact me or my faculty advisor. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Macalester College Institutional Review Board at 1600 Grand Avenue, Saint Paul MN 55105 or by phone at 651-696-6153.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature:_______________________________________ Date: __________________

Signature of Investigator:___________________________ Date: __________________
Appendix D: Style Guide for Senior Theses

Use the following formats in the final write-ups of your research papers.

Title Page

The first page of your paper will be a title page listing the title of the paper, your name, the course title, the department name, the college, and the date. No other information need appear. Center the text.

e.g.

Bagpipes, Haggis and Higher Education

by

Mac Scot

Senior Seminar
Department of Sociology
Macalester College

Fall 2006

Headings

First-level Headings

Use bold type for first-level, or major, headings. Left justified. Do not indent.

e.g.

Introduction
Literature Review/Previous Research/Theoretical Perspectives
Data and Methods
Findings
Conclusion
Bibliography
Second-level Headings

For second-level headings, or sub-headings, use italics. Left justified. Do not indent.

e.g.

**Theoretical Considerations** (first-level or major heading)
_Socioeconomic Backgrounds_
_Pre-adult Integrative Experiences_ (second-level or sub-headings)
_Ethnic and Racial Identification_
_Summary_

Third-Level Headings

For third-level headings, use bold type. Indent as with the beginning of a paragraph. Place a period after the heading. Begin your paragraph immediately after the period without hitting the carriage return.

**Data and Methods** (major heading)
_Data Collection and Sample Characteristics_ (second-level or sub-headings)
_Variables_
- **Dependent Variables.** In past studies . . . (third-level headings)
- **Independent Variables.** It is our . . .
- **Attitudes.** To determine the . . .
- **Background Experiences.** Previous research . . .

Type

**Double Spacing**

Double-space your sentences within a 25 page minimum length and 35 page maximum.

**Extra Spacing Between Paragraphs**

Hit the carriage return twice, not once, between the last sentence and first sentence of consecutive paragraphs.

**Indenting**
Indent the beginning of each paragraph.

Justifying

Justify both left and right margins.

e.g.

You write a term paper by doing whatever reading or research is required throughout the term and working out the paper in your head as you go along. But you only write one draft, usually the night before handing it in. College students have no time for rewriting, since they often have several papers due at the same time. Teachers know all this. If they aren’t aware of the mechanics, they know the typical results and don’t expect papers more coherent or highly polished than such a method can produce.

As opposed to left justified only:

As long as that document is kept confidential, in the conventionally private teacher-undergraduate relationship, it won’t embarrass the author too much. But the social organization of writing and reputation changes in graduate school. Teachers talk about your papers, for good or bad, to their colleagues and to other students. With luck, the papers grow into qualifying papers or dissertations, read by several faculty members.

Parenthetical References

Use parenthetical references consistent with the author-date citation format described in further detail in this style guide.

Footnotes/Endnotes

Do not use footnotes or endnotes.

Page Numbers

Page numbers should appear in the top right-hand corner of each page beginning with 1 at the first page of the introduction. Do not number your title page or abstract page.

Tables

Place tables, diagrams, and figures at the end of the bibliography.
Quotations

Block Quotations

Long, or block, quotations (4 lines or more) in your essays should appear 1.5 spaced, set apart from the other text with a double carriage return, left and right justified, and indented. Do not use quotation marks for block quotations. Do not italicize them.

e.g.

The letter I got was four double-spaced pages, and I won’t quote all of it or quote it in sequence because Rosanna was thinking out loud when she wrote it and the order is not crucial. She began by remarking,

Somewhere along the line, probably in college, I picked up on the fact that articulate people used big words, which impressed me. I remember taking two classes from a philosophy professor simply because I figured he must really be smart since I didn’t know the meaning of the words he used in class. I spent class time writing down the words he used that I didn’t know, going home and looking them up. He sounded so smart to me simply because I didn’t understand him. The way someone writes – the more difficult the writing style – the more intellectual they sound.

Embedded Quotations

Short, or embedded, quotations (under 4 lines) appear in the text delineated with quotation marks.

e.g.

Academic writers commonly develop arcane vocabularies to overcome their status insecurities. They could just as easily describe in plain English their observations and insights. Jargon serves the purpose of erecting and maintaining status boundaries that exclude most people from academic discourse. “The lack of ready intelligibility in scholarly writing,” asserts C. Wright Mills, “usually has nothing to do with the subject matter. The desire for status is one reason why academics slip so easily into unintelligibility . . . To overcome the academic prose you have to overcome the academic pose” (1959: 218-19).

Style

Proof read your paper. Revise for clarity and conciseness. Keep the prose simple, direct and concrete. If researchers whose work you cite use excessive jargon to make their point, don't simply copy it. Take it as an invitation to translate their writing into accessible language if you can do it without losing any essential meanings.
References:


Author Citations

When citing other research and authors in your paper, use the standard referencing practices of sociology journals and books.

*Author-Date-Page Number Citations*

In the text, cite in parentheses the name of the author, the year of publication of the work and the page number from which the reference is drawn.

e.g.

People often perform rituals to influence the result of some process over which they have no rational means of control (Malinowski 1948: 25-36).

Theoretical works on the economics of nonprofit institutions only began to appear in the early 1970s (Newhouse 1970; Feldstein 1971; Pauly and Redisch 1973).

*Date-Page Number Citations*

When you mention the author’s name in the text, cite only the year and page numbers in parentheses at the end of the sentence.

e.g.

We also need to interpret rules so that the result we get is reasonable, not some foolishness resulting from blind rule-following. Harold Garfinkel describes this practice, which he calls ad hocing, as a fundamental feature of all human activity (1967: 21-24).

Bibliography

For constructing a bibliography, refer to your copy of the American Sociological Association’s *Style Guide*. 
Appendix E: Senior Thesis, First Draft

1. Title (1 page)
2. Abstract (1 page)
3. Introduction (~3-5 pages)
4. Literature Review (~5-10 pages)
5. Research Design (~3-8 pages)
6. Findings (~10-20 pages)
7. Conclusion (~3-4 pages)
8. Bibliography (~2-4 pages)

Title

Give the shortest possible, preferably lyrical, description of your study. Follow the conventions of the appended Style Guide.

Abstract

In 150-200 words, state your research questions, give a précis of your research design, and summarize your main arguments and findings.

Introduction

Announce clearly your problem statement/research questions.

Offer a *prima facie* rationale for the importance of your study that underscores the broader implications and significance of your research efforts.

Imagine your audience. Assume that your reader has a passing, but not detailed, familiarity with your topic that one might gather from popular accounts of current events – newspapers and television – or from general knowledge imparted in a college-level education. Establish a brief context for your research that will inform and refresh your readers understanding of your subject and provide enough background so that you can generate curiosity, excitement, and suspense in your reader’s mind about the unresolved questions that you propose to explore in your research. Avoid arcane, technical jargon as much as possible. If you do resort to sociological and other academic neologisms, define these terms in a common vernacular for your reader.

Give an overview of your main arguments and how you conducted your research.

Close your introduction with a plan of your essay.
Literature Review

Your literature review situates your study within broader, ongoing debates among differing theoretical perspectives on your object of inquiry and briefly surveys previous findings of relevance to your research agenda.

Your summary of existing studies should demonstrate to your reader that you have the depth and breadth of knowledge to research intelligently your topic.

It should also focus and guide your empirical research, that is, allow you to make difficult choices about planning your research design – what to observe and how to observe.

Research Design

Choice of Method

Detail and substantiate your choice of method(s) for generating evidence on your subject: Comparative-Historical Sociology, Historical Case Study, Case Study, Ethnographic Interviewing, Field Research, Content Analysis, or Social Survey, etc. Identity and briefly discuss the strengths and limitations of your choice of method. How does your methodology hold out the prospect of creating new findings that overcome the limitations of previous research on your topic and producing new insight into your topic?

Study Population and Sampling

Study Population. Your reader will want to know what group, class, collection, or population of social things, or cases, into which you will provide a window of insight. Your study population may consist of . . .

- human artifacts: musical scores, roads and bridges, housing tracts, books, etc.
- events: elections, revolutions, births, marriages, and deaths, insurrections, social movements, wars, public policies, etc.
- individuals: voters, students, peasants, workers, religious adherents, etc.
social institutions or organizations: schools, sports teams, governments, social clubs, charities, families, etc.

Social things have temporal and spatial dimensions. Time and place are parameters of these populations. Be specific about these attributes, e.g. democratic revolutions in Latin America in the 1980s and 1990s, contemporary student protests on liberal arts campuses in the US, St. Paul public housing developments in the 1950s, Chinese peasants in the 1970s, mental health agencies in MN before WWII, voters in the 2004 federal election, articles in the New York Times in 2005, etc.

**Unit of Analysis.** Define and describe your unit(s) of analysis – in other words – what elements of these social things will you observe and describe?

**Sampling.** How will you select the cases that wish to observe? Representative-probability or purposive sample?

**Operationalization**

Simply put, what kinds of evidence are you looking for and how will you record and order your observations?

**Social Survey.** Detail your variable constructs and hypotheses. Detail the specific questions asked of respondents and the choice of answers allowed them. Describe how you recoded responses if it was required, or, how you created any new variables from the raw data.

**Interviews.** Detail the specific questions asked of interviewees and how you will interpret their responses.

**Comparative-Historical/Historical/Case Studies/Content Analysis.** Your data may come from primary sources, including but not limited to, publicly and privately archived records, personal accounts, etc. and secondary sources – studies that collate and synthesize evidence from primary sources. What specific evidence is of interest to you? What does it indicate? How will you categorize and interpret it?

**Findings**

Use your research questions to frame the presentations of your findings.

Your analysis of your findings should correspond to the interpretive frameworks discussed in your literature review and the operationalization described in your research design. Your literature review and data and methods section presage the kinds of evidence that you will specifically seek out.
For qualitative studies, refer to:


**Conclusion**

In your conclusion, accomplish three things: state your main points, qualify your arguments, and explain how your findings might inform future research.

Recapitulate your research question, the principal arguments, and the findings of your paper.

Acknowledge significant gaps in what is known about your topic. Briefly elaborate on information and evidence that you would have wanted to, but could not, generate or discover that might provide more convincing support for some aspects of your argument.

Alert the reader to important new directions in research on your topic that grow out of your study.

Refer to:


**Bibliography**

Follow the ASA Style Guide for citing works and listing references:

Appendix F: Peer Review

Reviewer: ______________________________________________________________

Review of: ______________________________________________________________

By ______________________________________________________________

Part I. Basic Composition

Title

Does the title depict elegantly and accurately the topic of the paper? Or, alternatively, is it wordy or confusing?

Abstract

Does the abstract give a thumbnail sketch of the author’s research question(s), research design, and main findings? If not, what is missing?

Introduction

Does the introduction . . .

. . . state clearly and precisely a research question or set of interrelated research questions?

. . . develop a compelling rationale for the study?

. . . summarize well the basic arguments of the paper?

. . . provide a concise overview of the remainder of the essay to guide the reader through the discussions to follow?

Literature Review

1. Does the literature review give you, as a novice, a good sense of the relevant scholarship on the author’s chosen topic? More precisely, do you feel that you understand the range of differing perspectives and findings of existing research on this topic?

2. Does the author communicate well how their proposed research fits into their field of study? More specifically, what elements of existing research does the author find useful in developing their own study? In what ways does the author imagine that their approach will qualify, extend, or otherwise depart from, existing knowledge in the field?

3. Does the literature review forecast nicely the analysis and evidence to follow in the remainder of the essay?
**Research Design**

1. Is the author’s research design appropriate to the topic? Does the author identify the strengths of their chosen method? The limitations?

2. Evaluate the method for selecting the cases observed in this study. Into what larger aggregate of social things (artifacts, events, individuals, collectivities) do these cases provide insight? If the cases are not representative, what other sampling considerations motivated the case selection? Are they reasonable?

3. Does the author detail the kinds of evidence that they will generate or locate? (refer to Appendix C for greater detail)

4. Does the author indicate how will they interpret, classify, or, code the evidence that they find?

**Findings**

1. Do the author’s findings answer their research question(s)?

2. Does the presentation of the findings correspond well with the analytical foci that the author proposed in their literature review?

3. Do the findings correspond well with the description of the research design?

4. Do the presentation and analysis of findings make sense to you? Does the evidence presented support the analysis and conclusions of the author? Or, in other words, do the findings lend plausibility to the main arguments of the paper?

**Conclusion**

1. Does the conclusion refresh the reader’s recollection of the basic arguments and findings of the paper? Is this discussion consistent with the introduction and findings sections of the paper?

2. Does the author reflect on the limitations of their study and suggest ways to overcome them? Is the discussion merely perfunctory, or, is it thoughtful and convincing?

3. Do the last paragraphs of the paper touch upon remaining gaps our knowledge of the topic and suggest how future research might fill them? Is this discussion genuinely purposeful?

**Bibliography**

1. Does the bibliography follow ASA guidelines for referencing published and unpublished sources? Detail the necessary stylistic corrections.
2. Do the entries in the bibliography match the author citations in the text? Are some references missing?

**Summary Evaluation, Part I**

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<td>Abstract</td>
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<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>Literature Review</td>
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<td>Data and Methods</td>
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<td>Findings</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
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Key

- **M** = missing
- **IMP** = improvement needed to meet minimum criteria for good work
- **SAT** = satisfactory, meets minimum requirements but not outstanding
- **VG** = exemplary, few improvements needed

**Part II. Formatting**

**Title Page**

Does the title page observe the conventions detailed in the Style Guide?

**Headings**

Does the author follow the type-setting conventions for differentiating first-level, second-level, and third-level headings?

Do the headings effectively signal important transitions in the text?

Do the second-level headings (sub-headings) effectively allow the reader adequate pauses to reflect on the arguments presented? Are they under-used? Are they over-used?

Do the second-level headings effectively signal the presentation of *important* theoretical perspectives, methodological considerations, empirical arguments, and analytical distinctions?

**Type**

Is the manuscript...

...double-spaced?
... extra spaced between paragraphs?
... indented at the beginning of each paragraph?
... left and right justified?
... wise to avoid endnotes and footnotes?
... properly paginated at the right-hand, top corner of the page, beginning with the introduction?
... presented with tables and diagrams at the end of the bibliography?

Quotations
Does the manuscript follow the convention for setting apart long, or, block quotes from the text?
Are the short, or, embedded quotes properly delineated with quotation marks?

Citations
Are the author-date-page citations properly formatted? e.g. (Mills 1959: 218-19).

Part III. Overall Assessment
Coherence
How well do the parts of the paper hang together as a coherent whole? Does the author successfully keep you focused by reiterating important, unifying themes of the essay in each section?

Clarity

Sentences
Does the author avoid the common pitfalls of academic writing? In other words, does the author steer clear of excessive reliance on passive constructions, fatiguing run-on sentences, and dull verbosity? Could the prose be more active, direct, simple, and interesting? Alternatively, does the author successfully distance themselves from folksy, stream of consciousness writing that most commonly offends readers?

Paragraphs
How well do the author’s paragraphs express complete thoughts? Did you commonly have trouble identifying topic sentences or seeing how the sentences relate to a specific point?
**Vernacular**

Are the major concepts of the paper couched in academic terminology that obscures as much as it illuminates? Which, if any, academic neologisms appearing in the text are unnecessary? How could the underlying concepts of these terms be rendered in accurate and intelligent words drawn from our common vernacular without sacrificing analytical precision?

Does the author offer precise definitions for academic idioms that do serve as useful shorthand for complex ideas and concepts – ones not worth repeating in the interest of saving space?

**Empirical**

*Research Effort*

Do the literature review and findings of the paper represent a sustained, conscientious effort at identifying, generating, and synthesizing information on their topic?

*Quality of Evidence*

Does the research produce evidence of sufficient depth and breadth to address the author’s research question(s) beyond a superficial level?

**On Balance**

What are the most apparent strengths of this paper?

What are the most apparent weaknesses of this paper?
Appendix G: The Art of Public Speaking

1. The Spoken Versus Written Word
2. Overcoming the Difference
3. The Three Ps: Preparation, Practice, and Presentation

The Spoken Word

Public speakers cannot rely on the attention of the audience. They must earn and keep the audience’s attention. The audience cannot reread points missed or poorly understood, as with written communication.

Overcoming the Difference

Structure: Primacy/Recency Effect

Audiences will recall most clearly the first few sentences of your talk and the last few, closing sentences. Register your main points and make a good case for your topic at the very outset of your presentation. Reiterate your main points in your closing remarks.

Forecasting

Alert the audience where your presentation is headed in the early going.

Example:

Let me begin with a few short observations about previous research on _______. Then I will lead you through the findings of my own study on ________, and then I’ll discuss the need to pay closer attention to _________ to understand _________.

Transitions

Let the audience know when you are moving from one main section to another with transitional phrases that will rekindle their interest.

Examples:

Now that I’ve described the ways that researchers have understood the causes ________, let me introduce the findings of my own study.

Now that I’ve shown you my findings, in closing let me return to the key debates surrounding _________ and how these findings point to the importance of _________ in understanding _________.

The Three Ps: Preparation, Practice, and Presentation

*Preparation*

Write out your speech. For every 2 minutes of speaking, you can expect to read through 1 page double-spaced, large print text.

*Practice*

Read the text aloud to yourself over and over again. Rewrite sentences that make you stumble. If it’s hard to say, it’s also hard to listen to and understand. Time yourself as you do. Do not rush through your reading. Speak at a relaxed pace with ample, short pauses to look into the faces of the audience to keep them focused on your presentation. Most importantly, practice your speech with a friend who can alert you to your strengths and weaknesses.

*Presentation*

Make eye contact with your audience at the very beginning and take a deep breath before saying a word.

Act confident. Do not lower the audience’s expectations of your performance.

Stay within your time limit.

Avoid abstract, jargon-filled, high-blown language.

Don’t fidget or wander around the podium.

Dress sharply.

Read and look. Read from a prepared script, but frequently look up at the audience as you speak. Practice moving your eyes back and forth from text to audience.
Appendix H: Public Presentation Evaluation

Ratings: Needs Improvement/Good/Very Good

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primacy Effect: main point(s) first</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recency Effect: main point(s) last</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forecasting: overview of presentation to follow</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitions: signal to audience new discussions</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Presentation</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial Eye Contact: connect with audience</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidence: set high performance expectations</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time: within appointed limit</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pace: relaxed with ample pauses</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language: clear, accessible speech</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manner: steady without nervous ticks or fidgeting</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appearance: sharpness of dress and grooming</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read and Look: move eyes back and forth from text to audience</td>
<td>NI G VG</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Overall Performance                           | NI G VG|

Comments: