

# **SOC 776/978**

## **WRITING SOCIOLOGY**

**B. Nadya Jaworsky**

Room 3.59

Consultation Hours:

**Tuesdays 14.00-15.00**

**or by appointment**

# REQUIREMENTS FOR WEEKS 11-12

- **2-3 page summary of work** to date that expands your initial sentence, including: development of *research question* and potential *hypothesis or answer*; touch upon *literature* available; how you will actualize – *method*; hint at your *potential argument* – due **TUESDAY, MAY 3, 2016 at 23.59.**
- **Meeting with me BEFORE MAY 10:**
  - Elevator story (90-seconds)
  - “Stuck on an elevator” story (5-10 minutes)
  - Receive feedback on the 2-3 page summary

# My elevator story (90 seconds or less)

- I am working on the problem of (state your question).
- I think I can show that (state your hypothesis) because (state your reasons).
- My best evidence is (summarize your evidence).

# FINAL ESSAY

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- 3,500-4,000 words ~ 10-13 pp.
- 2.5 cm. margins, 12-pt or larger font, left justified
- **PLEASE REMEMBER TO NUMBER THE PAGES and INCLUDE YOUR NAME!** Ideally, you would do this in the header or footer.
- -Title page and abstract (150 words or less)
- -Text w/footnotes (I prefer them to endnotes)
- -References (using ASA format)

# FINAL ESSAY TIMELINE

- **FINAL ESSAY DRAFT** for in-class peer review due to your partner and in the Homework Vault by **Saturday, May 14 at 23.59.**
- **PEER REVIEW COMMENT SHEET** for your partner due in Homework Vault by **Tuesday, May 17 before class.** Bring a hard copy to class for your partner.
- **FINAL ESSAY** due **Sunday, June 12 at 23.59.**

# useful phrases for writing a proposal/introduction

- <http://www.phrasebank.manchester.ac.uk/>

# **Assembling the core of your argument**

- **Turn your working hypothesis into a claim/thesis statement**
- **Evaluate your claim**
- **Support your claim with reasons and evidence**
- **Acknowledge and respond to readers' points of view**
- **Use warrants if readers question the relevance of your reasons**

# **Your argument answers the following questions:**

- What are you claiming?
- What are your reasons?
- What evidence supports your reasons?
- But what about other points of view?
- How are your reasons relevant to your claim?  
(see Turabian pages 72-73 on warrants)



# Three types of flawed arguments

- The ***individual argument***: "The individual is free to make choices, and any outcomes can be explained exclusively through the study of his or her ideas and decisions."
- The ***human nature argument***: "Humans are by nature X, therefore it is not surprising that Y."
- The ***society argument***: "Society made me do it." (reification)

# Some rules of evidence

- Sociology is an empirical discipline; this means basing your conclusions on evidence documented and collected with as much rigor as possible.
- Empirical evidence usually draws upon observed patterns and information from collected cases and experiences, not just from isolated, anecdotal reports.
- **Above all else, remember that your opinion alone is not sufficient support for a sociological argument.**
- Even if you are making a theoretical argument, you must be able to point to documented instances of social phenomena that fit your argument. Logic is necessary for making the argument, but is not sufficient by itself.

# Structure of a Research Essay

- Introduction
- Review of Literatures
- Method/Methodology
- Argument/Findings/Data
- Discussion (often intertwined with Findings)
- Conclusion

# **Planning your first draft:**

- **Create a plan that meets your readers' needs**
- **Converting a Storyboard into an Outline**

# Four-part scheme for Introduction

- Current Situation (what your readers now think or do)
- You are disrupting something and challenging it.
  - I used to think..., but....
  - Most people think..., but...
  - What events seem to show..., but...
  - .Researchers have shown..., but...
- Research questions (what your readers need to know but don't)
- Significance of the Questions (SO WHAT?)
- Answer (what your readers should know) **DON'T BE AFRAID TO GIVE AWAY YOUR ANSWER.** It's not a mystery novel!

*People in the United States have always differentiated between the native-born and the foreign-born; however, nowadays there is a new category – “illegal.” So-called illegal immigrants suffer exclusion at both the social and symbolic levels because people classify them as “impure” and unworthy of inclusion in the “American” mainstream core.* How does this happen in a small city where large numbers of immigrants have changed the demographic makeup in the past decade? What are the cultural structures underpinning the ways in which residents of Danbury, CT categorize each other? *By revealing the ways in which this process occurs in the small city of Danbury, we learn about the processes of inclusion and exclusion in the civil spheres of democratic nation states.* Residents of Danbury use both moral and legal criteria to decide who “belongs” in their city (or in the United States at all) by drawing symbolic boundaries around three categories of people: Americans, Immigrants or Aliens.

# Beginnings of organization

- **Identify Key terms that unite your paper:** for every major concept, identify a key term. My key terms are – illegal, symbolic, boundaries, cultural, inclusion and exclusion, moral, legal
- **Find the key terms Distinctive to Each Section**  
- use subheads wisely!



# Order sections by ordering reasons

- **Straightforward and standard:**
  - **Chronological.** Earlier to later or vice versa.
  - **Part by Part.** Ordering by relationship.
- **What readers like:**
  - Short to long, simple to complex
  - More familiar to less familiar
  - Most acceptable to most contestable
  - More important to less important (or vice versa)
  - Step-by-step understanding. Cover events, principles, definitions first.



# Filling in the blanks

- **Sketch in a brief introduction to each section and subsection**
- **Sketch in evidence and acknowledgements**



**STOP!**  
**GRAMMAR**  
**TIME!**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=otCpCn0l4Wo>

# Definite Article: *The*

Use *the* before nouns that are specifically identified.

- Wear *the* boots you bought at *the* Vietnamese market.
- Jana had *the* most compelling performance.
- *The* sun rose at six.

Each of these nouns is specifically identified by the context.

# Definite Article: *The*

***The* should not be used with plural or non-count nouns.**

- The state covers the cost of teaching students.
- News magazines report studies about picking colleges.

Generally, do not use *the* with proper nouns that name people, places and things. But of course, there are some exceptions: *the Alps*, *the Great Lakes*, *the Czech Republic*.

# Indefinite Articles: *A and An*

Use *a* or *an* for singular count nouns not specifically identified.

- Apple started *a* revolution in personal computers.
- Petr has *an* interesting insect collection.
- It's *a* beautiful day outside.

# Indefinite Articles: *A and An*

As a rule, *a* before consonants; *an* before vowels.

- A rabbit; an awkward rabbit
- An umbrella; a blue umbrella

H depends on whether it's hard or soft:

- A hand
- An hour
- But if you want to be really pretentious: *an* historical

Don't use *a* and *an* with plural nouns.

- Tereza borrowed enough money to cover expenses.
- The exhibit consisted a hastily arranged grouping of native costumes

# Indefinite Articles: *A and An*

In general, don't use *a* or *an* with non-count nouns.

- Lara wrote about pollution
- While you are shopping, please get beer and vodka.

If you want to show a particular amount of a noncount noun, put a count noun first and add of.

- A case of beer
- A bottle of vodka

# NEXT WEEK'S READINGS

1. Boellstorff, Tom. 2008. "How to Get an Article Accepted at *American Anthropologist* (or Anywhere)," *American Anthropologist* 110(3): 281–283. (2 pp.)
2. Boellstorff, Tom. 2010. "How to Get an Article Accepted at *American Anthropologist* (or Anywhere), Part 2" *American Anthropologist* 112(3):353-356.
3. Boellstorff, Tom. 2011. "Submission and Acceptance: Where, Why and How to Publish Your Article." *American Anthropologist* 113(3): 383-388. (5 pp.)
4. <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2011/10/18/the-peer-review-process/> (read comments)