

**SOC b2500**  
**Sociological Writing**  
**(“Making Sociology Speak”)**

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Office 3.66

Consultation Hours:

**Wednesdays: 13.00-14.00 or by  
appointment**

# NEW! FINAL ESSAY TIMELINE

- **PRESENTATION** in class, May 13 (5-7 min.)
- **FINAL ESSAY DRAFT** for peer review due to your partner and in the Homework Vault by **Wednesday, May 20 at 23:59.**
- **PEER REVIEW COMMENT SHEET** for your partner due in Homework Vault and to your partner by **Monday, May 25.**
- **FINAL ESSAY** due EITHER **June 25 or September 25. Email when uploading!**

# FINAL ESSAY

## TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS

- 3,500-4,000 words ~ 11-13 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)

# PEER REVIEW PARTNERS

- **Grahovac, Marko & Grauerová, Gabriela**
- **Cercnik Pusavec, Nika & Janzekovic, Nejc**
- **Rüster, Karl-Albert reads Konschuh, Veronika**
- **Konschuh, Veronika reads Rachůnková, Nadia**
- **Rachůnková, Nadia reads Rüster, Karl-Albert**

# **Avoid Procrastinator's Tricks**

- **Don't substitute more reading for writing.**
- **Don't keep revising the same pages over and over**
- **Don't focus on how much more you have to do.**
- **Don't allow yourself to do anything else during your writing time.**

# Revising the Draft: Check Intro, Conclusion, Claim

Your readers should see:

- Where your introduction ends
- Where your conclusion begins
- What sentences in both state your main claim

# Revising the Draft:

## Make sure body is coherent

Readers should see:

- The key terms running through your paper
- Where each section ends and the next begins
- How each section relates to the one before it
- What role each section plays in the whole
- What sentence in each section and subsection states its points
- What distinctive key terms run through each section



# Revising the Draft:

## Check your paragraphs

- Each paragraph relevant to the point of the section
- Good topic sentences at beginning or end
- Avoid strings of short paragraphs
- See if the topics sentences make sense out of context; make an outline of them



# Revising the Draft:

## The final Intro & Conclusion

Introduction three goals:

- Put your research in context
- Make your readers think they should read your paper
- Give them a framework for understanding it

Conclusion should:

- Leave readers with a clear idea of your claim
- Reinforce its importance

# Revising the Draft: The final Introduction

- Here's what we think we know (stability)
- Here's what we don't know (disruption and danger; dragon is the research question)
- Here's why we need an answer (the dragon's fire is a problem that must be solved)
- Here's the answer (resolution; you are the knight in shining armor)

# Revising the Draft: The first sentences

- A striking quotation
- A striking fact
- A relevant anecdote
- Combine all three

# Revising the Draft: The Conclusion

- Restate your claim
- Point out a new significance, a practical application, or new research
- Write your title last!

# Writing an abstract:

- Peer reviewers (and eventually, readers) typically will read the abstract first to make sure that the paper is worthy of further consideration.
- Most abstracts are between 150 and 200 words. Generally, the shorter the better.
- Key elements of the abstract:
  - General purpose
  - Specific goals
  - Research design
  - Methods
  - Expected Results/Significance

# Example of a good abstract:

The research addresses two major deficits in knowledge regarding the adaptation of immigrant students to the U.S. school environment: a lack of information about the impact of immigration on students at different age levels and the absence of longitudinal data regarding post-migration adjustment. The focus of the study is on the emotional, behavioral, and academic adaptation of immigrant children and adolescents, in relation to their level of post-migration stress and the support provided by their social networks. Participants are 600 newly immigrant elementary, middle, and high school students. Participating students are interviewed shortly after school entry, with a second assessment two years later. Higher levels of stress and lower levels of social support following migration are associated with poorer adaptation. The proposed research provides a much-needed window on the initial adaptation of immigrant children and adolescents

# Revising Sentences

- Focus on the first 7 or 8 words of a sentence
  - Make subjects short and concrete
  - Avoid interrupting subjects with more than a word
  - Put key actions in verbs, not in nouns
  - Put familiar information at the beginning of a sentence, new at the end





# Revising Sentences

- Avoid long introductory phrases
- Choose active or passive verbs to reflect the previous principles
- Use first-person pronouns appropriately
- Diagnose what you read
- Choose the right word
- Polish it off (read aloud or backwards)

# Becker – One Right Way

- The shame and embarrassment of re-writing
- No one ever tells you about the backstage
- “Only dummies have to do it over and over”
- Getting out that first sentence
- Write the introduction (a map) last
- Writing a “spew” draft; then the outline
- Talk about problems instead of wishing them away

# Becker – Editing by Ear

- Rules and Guidelines – sometimes a matter of taste
- Unconscious heuristics – “It just sounds right.”
- “..line by line editing is easy because the things to fix fall into classes.”

# Becker – Editing by Ear

1. Active/passive.
2. Fewer words (page 81)
3. Repetition
4. Structure/content (syntax)
5. Concrete/abstract (“relations”)
6. Metaphors (alive)