

Research Paper & Student Conference Sequence - Prompts

Soc. 125: Nature and Society

This assignment will allow you to further explore a topic related to our course that you find particularly intriguing. It is designed to encourage you to thoroughly engage with the draft process. Accordingly, you will submit a paper proposal, draft paper, peer review sheet filled out by another student in class, final paper, cover sheet that describes your writing process across these steps, and a research poster. This will ensure that the final version of your essay is of the highest possible quality. It will also increase the likelihood that your thinking about your topic goes through several phases of both increasing clarity and nuance.

At the end of the course, you will present your poster at our student conference. The conference will be structured like an academic poster session. You will have a scheduled time to stand by your poster and discuss your research and answer questions about it as other students and visitors circulate. During the rest of the time, you may visit other students to look at their posters and ask them about their research. This gives you an opportunity to exchange ideas with your peers, practice speaking about your research interests, and be an active learner. This event will be attended not only by students in this class, but also faculty and graduate students from the broader campus community. You are welcome to invite guests as well.

I encourage you to work in groups on your final project, although this is not a requirement. If working in a group, your group size may be between 2 and 4 people. Note that if you work in a group, your poster presentation will be graded as a single, group presentation in which all group members receive the same grade, but your papers will be written and graded individually.

Proposal

Due Nov. 13th, in class

Write a one-page, typed mini-proposal that describes the subject of your research paper and the tentative argument you might make about this subject. Bring a hard copy to class. Be sure to identify how your project links to our class readings. Describe which class readings you plan to use in the paper. When drafting your argument, favor narrower arguments that will enable you to go into more depth in your paper, rather than broad arguments that will likely result in superficial papers.

Draft Essay

Due Dec. 2, in class

Bring two hard-copies of your essay to class, one to turn in and one for peer-review. Your draft should contain:

- A thesis statement that is underlined or printed in boldface.
- References to 2 course readings
- References to as many other readings as you need to write a strong draft (the final essay will need to reference 2 course readings and 5 scholarly readings not assigned in class)

Your draft should be:

- 5-10 pages long
- Typewritten
- Double-spaced
- Written in 12 point font
- Formatted with 1 inch margins and page numbers
- Appropriately cited using the American Sociological Association's reference format. For guidance, see the following resources:
 - In-text citations: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/02/>
 - Reference list: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/03/>

Final Essay

Due date: December 17 at our student conference during our scheduled finals period.

Location: College Eight Sociology Lounge, room 201

Time: 12-1:45

Your essay should be organized around a central argument that you develop based on your own thoughts and research. It should be a polished, well-organized essay complete with an introduction, conclusion and body paragraphs that contain topic sentences and smooth transitions between ideas. You should make use of course materials (readings, lectures, films, etc.) throughout your essay.

Audience: Write your essay as if your audience is a peer-scholar - someone who is smart and somewhat familiar with sociology and environmentalism, but who hasn't taken this class or done the readings. Make sure your discussion is detailed and clear enough that this person would be able to easily follow your paper.

Grading: Your grade will be based on the extent to which your essay demonstrates the following:

- Depth and quality of research presented on material not already covered in class
- Ability to link your subject compellingly to class themes and readings
- Quality of the argument made and the evidence used to support it
- Overall quality of writing

Your final essay should:

- Make direct connections to at least two of the course readings
- Use at least five other scholarly readings identified through your own research
- Use as many other non-scholarly sources as necessary

Your final essay should be:

- 8-10 pages long
- Stapled to the back of a cover sheet (available on e-commons), and to the front of your draft essay, peer-review sheet, and essay proposal
- Typewritten
- Double-spaced
- Written in 12 point font
- Formatted with 1 inch margins and page numbers
- Appropriately cited using the American Sociological Association's reference format or another consistently applied citation style. For guidance, see the following resources:
 - In-text citations: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/02/>
 - Reference list: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/583/03/>

Cover Sheet

Due date: December 17 at our student conference during our scheduled finals period.

Location: College Eight Sociology Lounge, room 201

Time: 12-1:45

On your cover sheet, include your name, the title of your paper, and typed responses to the questions below:

1. Please explain how you engaged in a draft process for this essay.
2. What are the most significant differences between your first draft and the draft you're turning in today?
3. Is there anything in particular you'd like me to address in my feedback to you?

Please compile the final version of your paper and your evidence of a draft process into one package (with a binder clip, folder, envelope, etc.). It will help me if you put them in the following order:

1. A cover sheet with typed answers to the questions above
2. Final version of essay
3. Draft version of the essay
4. Peer-review sheet on your draft essay
5. Mini-proposal

Poster Presentation

Due date: Posters are due on December 17 during at student conference during our scheduled finals period.

Location: College Eight Sociology Lounge, room 201

Time: 12-1:45

Your research poster will provide an overview of the research you conducted for your final paper and the argument that you made. You will present your poster at our student conference. The conference will be structured like an academic poster session. You will have a scheduled time to stand by your poster and discuss your research and answer questions about it as other students and visitors circulate. During the rest of the time, you may visit other students to look at their posters and ask them about their research. This gives you an opportunity to exchange ideas with your peers, practice speaking about your research interests, and be an active learner. This event will be attended not only by students in this class, but also faculty and graduate students from the broader campus community. You are welcome to invite friends and mentors to this event as well. Please ask them to arrive at 12:20 to give us time to set up.

I expect each of you to actively engage your peers about their research projects by asking them questions, and to practice respectful, engaged listening when they respond. I ask that presenters come prepared to speak clearly about their work and that learners do their best to acknowledge the work that has gone into the presentations, as well as the difficulty many people have feeling comfortable speaking in front of a group, by creating the most comfortable and respectful atmosphere possible.

Each poster must use text and visuals to convey information effectively. Here are guidelines to work within:

- Limit total word count on the poster to no more than 800 words.
- Include
 - Title, name, date
 - Your argument
 - Short description of why your research question matters
 - Short discussion of research findings
 - Visuals to interest viewers in your work and help explain your argument
 - Complete list of references

If you work in a group, you will present your final project to the class together, but will write the accompanying papers individually.

For advice on how to create an effective scholarly poster, see these resources:

- <http://guides.nyu.edu/posters>
- <http://colinpurrington.com/tips/academic/posterdesign>

Peer Review Worksheet

Name of author:

Name of reviewer:

1. In just one or two sentences, restate the argument you think the author is making in your own words. Place stars around the sentence that you think presents the thesis on the draft itself.
2. On the back of this sheet, make an outline of the paper.
3. List the kinds of evidence used to support the writer's argument. Which pieces of evidence do you think are the strongest? Which are the weakest?
4. Underline any passages that you had to read more than once to understand what the writer was saying.
5. After reading the draft essay, do you agree or disagree with the writer's argument? Why or why not?