

SYLLABUS
SOCIOLOGY 203, “How to Write and Publish A Lot”
Public Affairs 2292
Time: Thursday noon-2:50pm

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Office hours: Tuesday and Thursday 3-4 pm

COURSE STATEMENT

Nothing is more important to your future success as an academic than developing a regular and productive writing practice. I have designed this class to help you do just that.

Because we will spend a lot of time editing an existing paper draft, this class is most appropriate for students in their second year or beyond, who already have a full draft of their MA paper written. This class provides excellent support for students wanting to revise and publish their MA paper in a timely fashion. It will also be extremely useful for more advanced students wanting to develop a strong writing practice before beginning a post-doc or assistant-professor position.

Each class period will include three 45-50 minute segments. In the first, we will learn skills for planning regular writing time and protecting it from competing demands of teaching, service, and life. We will also learn to set limits on our work time so that we have time for other important life activities, such as friendships, family, sleep, exercise, and so on. We will often conclude this section of class by completing a concrete task related to goal setting or time management, such as listing our writing goals for the next decade, year, month, week, and day.

After a 10-minute break, we will learn how to write in a way that respects specific genres of academic writing. During most weeks, we will focus on the sociology journal article or sections within journal articles (e.g, Introduction, Literature Review, Method, etc.). We will learn to respect general principles of sociology journals and also how to tailor our work to specific journal guidelines. We will also cover in less detail book and op-ed writing. On many days, we will use some of class time to write independently or edit our own or others' work. We will take a second 10-minute break after this segment.

Since good writing is rewriting (and rewriting and rewriting...), the third class segment will focus on the principles of line editing. We will use some of this time to edit our own and each other's work using these principles.

Homework assignments will focus on setting and meeting your own writing goals and applying new skills to a work (or works) in progress.

EVALUATION

- To pass the class, you must attend regularly, participate in discussion, and complete the assignments. If you miss more than two classes, you will not pass this class. If you miss more than two homework assignments, you will not pass this class.
- Homework is due by noon on the Tuesday before class.
- I will base your grade on the following:
 - Homework assignments: 30%
 - Class participation: 20%
 - Class presentations: 10%
 - Completion of your own writing goals: 40%
- This seminar depends on your participation for its success. The more you put into it, the more you (and your classmates) will get out of it. So please come ready to participate!

OTHER LOGISTICS

- You will need to sign up for two presentations, specifying which of the four assigned style guides you'll be using, via signupgenius. I will send you a link.
- Some homework assignments will be posted to the class discussion board, others to a shared Google Drive.
- I will put you in small groups of students with overlapping research interests at the start of the quarter. All of your peer editing will be within this group.

RECOMMENDED AND REQUIRED READING

All available at the UCLA bookstore and on Amazon

Required Reading

Eviatar Zerubavel. 1999. *Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations, and Books*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

- *This is a short and extremely useful guide for time management. We will read and discuss the entire book over the quarter.*

Howard Becker. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

- *A mix of musings and advice, this book sheds light on why writing can be difficult and how to push through the insecurities and get your work out the door!*

Paul J. Silvia. 2007. *How to write a lot, How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. American Psychology Association.

- *Written for psychologists, How to Write A Lot is extremely relevant for*

sociologists as well. Pithy and without sympathy for “binge writers,” Silvia offers sound advice on time management, editing, and even writing cover letters and memos about changes made in response to a peer review. We will read and discuss the entire book; you’ll want to return to it later.

William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White. 2000. *The Elements of Style*, 4th Edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

- *This book offers a quick look-up for those troublesome rules of grammar and offers inspiration for writing direct, effective prose. Many people consider it the definitive word about writing in the English language, although others critique it. Among critiques, some say that it has become dated.*

Style Manuals

You are required to purchase at least one and may choose several

Claire Kehrwald Cook. 1985. *Line by Line: How to Improve Your Own Writing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

- *Written by an expert copy editor, with a heavy dose of traditional grammar and syntax, this book provides an excellent general guide to writing at the sentence level and below. With chapters on baggy sentences, faulty connections, parallelism, punctuation, and a terrific appendix on usage, it would provide valuable guidance for the editing process.*

Patricia O’Conner. 2003. *Woe is I: The Grammarphobe’s Guide to Better English in Plain English*. New York: Riverhead Books.

- *A former New York Times editor offers wise advice in commonsense language. The 2004 paperback edition includes a chapter on writing email. A fun read. Highly recommended!*

Steven Pinker. *The Sense of Style: The Thinking Person’s Guide to Writing in the 21st Century*.

- *In this widely acclaimed new book, linguist Steven Pinker expressly denies that he is trying to replace Strunk and White, but reviewers seem to think he will!*

Bill Walsh. 2000. *Lapsing into a Comma: A Curmudgeon’s Guide to the Many Things That Can Go Wrong in Print – and How to Avoid Them*. Columbus, OH: McGraw-Hill

- *Walsh’s stylistic guide covers conventional usage topics (a vs. an), contemporary issues of the information age (email vs. e-mail), and “Topics of Sensitivity” (e.g., race, sex, and sexual orientation). It can be read from beginning to end or used as a reference guide for specific topics.*

Recommended Reading

Anne Lamott. 1995. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. New York: Anchor.

- *Full of self-deprecating humor, this book made me laugh out loud. Lamott is a novelist – not an academic – and this comes through. Still, a lot of what she has to say about the angst of writing and how to push through it resonated for me. I will assign at least one chapter and will post it to the course website. You may decide you'd like to read the whole book.*

SCHEDULE

Remember, complete reading and homework by noon on the Tuesday before class!

Week 1: How To Write a Lot

September 27, 2018

Reading:

- Paul J. Silvia. 2007. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. American Psychology Association. Chapters 1-3, 5, and first part of Chapter 6 (until p. 90). (Chapters 1-3 discuss time management. The first part of Chapter 6 provides a brief overview of the various sections of a journal article, where as Chapter covers writing style.)
- National Center for Faculty Development & Diversity. "Rethink Your Writing Time."

Homework:

- Commit to a writing goal for the quarter. For most, this will be to revise your MA paper (or another paper) for journal submission and to submit the paper by the end of finals week. For some, it may be to draft a "shitty first draft" of a new paper. Commit to something, remembering that 40% of your final grade will be based on how well you meet this goal, which is an incentive to make it doable! Now, post your goal to our class Google doc, "F2018 Quarter Goals."
- Regardless of your personal writing goal for the quarter, you will all need to select one paper that you will revise over the quarter. Upload a copy of your paper as a Google doc to the class Google Drive (subfolder "Student Paper"). The file name should be "yourfirstname_yourlastname_paper." If your paper is in Word or Pages, upload in that format, then convert to Google doc and delete the Word/Pages document.

Week 2: Developing a Weekly Writing Schedule

October 4, 2018

Reading:

- Eviatar Zerubavel. 1999. *Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations, and Books*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapters 1-2
- Semenza, Gregory. 2014. "The Value of 10 Minutes: Writing Advice for the Time-Less Academic. Vitae. July 18. <http://bit.ly/1qU5cWo>

- Howard Becker. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4, “Editing by Ear.” Pp. 68-89.

Homework:

- Last week in class, you committed to a writing schedule. This week, use Zerubavel’s advice on page 22 to keep track of your effectiveness as a writer. Post a table like Zerubavel’s on page 22 to the class Google drive (subfolder, “Effectiveness Tables”) with the title “*yourfirstname_your last name_table*.” Below the table, write down what changes – if any – you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week. In doing this, consider your own “A-time,” “B-time,” and “C-time” (Zerubavel 1999: 33-35).
- Choose a journal (or 2-3 top choices) where you will submit your paper.
 - Find the “guidelines for authors” for your target journal(s). Upload to our Google Drive (subfolder “guidelines for authors”) as “*nameofjournal_guidelines*,” e.g., “JMF_guidelines.”
- Edit your paper in the Google drive with an eye to finding passive sentences, instances of jargon, unclear words, or unnecessary acronyms. Revise passive sentences to make active and replace jargon, unclear words, and unnecessary acronyms. Use the *suggested edits* mode so that I can see your work!

Week 3: Overcoming Perfectionism and Writing Shitty First Drafts

October 11, 2018

Reading:

- Anne Lamott. 1995. *Bird by Bird: Some Instructions on Writing and Life*. New York: Anchor, “Shitty First Drafts” (pp. 21-28); “Perfectionism” (pp. 28-33); and “Radio Station KFKD” (pp. 116-121).
- Howard Becker. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 3, “One Right Way” (pp. 43-67) and Chapter 6, “Risk.” By Pamela Richards (pp. 108-120).

Homework:

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel’s in the Google Drive, noting down what changes—if any—you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.
- During the last class session, you should have identified your target journal for your article.
 - Identify 1-3 articles recently published in that journal that you admire and are close to your topic. Upload to Google Drive (create a subfolder with your name in the subfolder “sample articles”).
 - Create a spreadsheet in which you calculate the proportion of article dedicated to each section. Save as “*journalname_yourfirstname_spreadsheet*” in subfolder “Spreadsheets of Journal Structure.”
 - Reformat paper according to your target journal’s guidelines for authors and based on your “model” article. Use *suggested edits mode*.

- Insert comments at the start of each section about current length of section and target length based on your spreadsheet.

Week 4: Writing Quantitative Papers

October 18, 2018

Reading:

- Lynn White. 2005. "Writes of Passage: Writing an Empirical Journal Article." *Journal of Marriage and Family*. 67 (November): 791-798.
- Martha Davis, Kaaron Davis, and Marion Dunagan. 1997. *Scientific Papers and Presentations*. New York: Academic Press. Chapter 10, "Titles and Abstracts" (pp. 109-112); AND Chapter 11, "Publishing Data" (pp. 113-121).
- Spend at least one hour reading your style manual of choice.

Homework:

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel's in the Google Drive, noting down what changes—if any—you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.
- You have been assigned a partner for this next editing homework. *Read your partner's entire paper but only edit the title and abstract*, using the *suggesting* edits mode, drawing on what you have learned from Silvia and others in this class. Insert a comment in which you write what you see as a strength of the paper and how the author can further build on that strength. You may also make one additional suggestion for improving the paper. *Do not write this in the body of the paper; use the comments feature.*

Week 5: Writing Qualitative Papers

October 25, 2018

Reading:

- Matthews, Sarah H. 2005. "Crafting Qualitative Research Articles on Marriages and Families." *Journal of Marriage and the Family* 67:799-808.
- Spend at least one hour reading your style manual of choice.

Homework:

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel's in the Google Drive, noting down what changes—if any—you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.
- Write a reverse outline of your paper. Save to Google Drive (subfolder "Outlines" and within that folder, the subfolder "Reverse Outlines") as "firstname_reverse_outline." Use this outline to see if you need to reorganize your paper.
- You have been assigned a partner for this next editing homework. *Read your partner's entire paper but only edit the method section*, using the *suggesting* edits mode, drawing on what you have learned from Silvia and others in this class. *Insert a comment* in which you write what you see as a strength of the paper and how the author can further build on that strength. You may also make one additional suggestion for improving the paper.

Week 6: Writing Literature Reviews

November 1, 2018

Reading:

- Howard Becker. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 8, “Terrorized by the Literature.” Pp. 135-149.
- Jose L. Galvan. 1999. *Writing Literature Reviews: A Guide for Students of the Social and Behavioral Sciences*. Los Angeles: Pyrczak Publishing. Chapters 9 (pp. 83-93) and Chapter 11 (pp. 101-108), and Chapter 13 (pp. 113-116).
- Spend at least one hour reading your style manual of choice.

Homework

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel’s in the Google Drive, noting down what changes—if any—you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.
- Revise your backward outline from last week, using *suggested changes* mode to create a new forward outline of your paper. Save to Google Drive (subfolder “Outlines” and within that folder, the subfolder “Forward Outlines”) as “firstname_forward_outline.”
- You have been assigned a partner for this week’s editing homework. *Read your partner’s entire paper* but only *edit the literature review*, using the *suggesting* edits mode, drawing on what you have learned from Silvia and others in this class. *Insert a comment* in which you write what you see as a strength of the paper and how the author can further build on that strength. You may also make one additional suggestion for improving the paper.

Week 7: Books

November 8, 2018

Reading:

- Paul J. Silvia. 2007. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. American Psychology Association. Chapter 7, “Writing books.”
- Eviatar Zerubavel. 1999. *Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations, and Books*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Chapters 3-4 (required), Chapter 5 (optional).
- Optional: Abigail’s book proposals.
- Spend at least one hour reading your style manual of choice.

Homework

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel’s in the Google Drive, noting down what changes—if any—you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.
- Write an outline of a book you might like to write. Save to Google Drive (Subfolder “Outlines” and within that folder, the subfolder “Book Outlines”) with the title “yourfirstname_book_outline”
- Identify a book on your bookshelf that you would like to emulate. It could be similar to yours in topic or in method. It should be something that you can hold up

- as a model, as you did for your sample article. Share the title of your model book and why you chose it on the discussion board.
- You have been assigned a partner for this week's editing homework. *Read their entire paper* but only *edit the findings*, using the *suggesting* edits mode, drawing on what you have learned from Silvia and others in this class. *Insert a comment* in which you write what you see as a strength of the paper and how the author can further build on that strength. You may also make one additional suggestion for improving the paper.

Week 8: Reaching Beyond the Ivory Tower: Op-Eds and Other Popular Writing **November 15, 2018**

Reading:

- The Op-Ed Project. "Basic Op-Ed Structure." <http://bit.ly/1HZXPRc>
- The Op-Ed Project. "Tips for Op-Ed Writing" <http://bit.ly/NgFHvO>
- The Op-ed Project. "Questions for Op-Ed Writers" <http://bit.ly/1xkYKeE>
- The Op-ed Project. "How to Pitch" and "FAQs" <http://bit.ly/1D7LRHr>
- David Shipley. 2004. "And Now a Word from Op-Ed." *The New York Times*. February 1. <http://nyti.ms/1D7M4dN>
- Spend at least one hour reading your style manual of choice.

Homework

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel's in the Google Drive, noting down what changes – if any – you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.
- Write an outline or first draft of an op-ed on a topic related to your research expertise. Save to Google Drive (subfolder "Outlines" and within that folder, the subfolder "OpEd Outlines") with the title "*yourfirstname_oped_outline*"
- You have been assigned a partner for this next editing homework. *Read your partner's entire paper* but only *edit the discussion/conclusion*, using the *suggesting* edits mode, drawing on what you have learned from Silvia and others in this class. *Insert a comment* in which you write what you see as a strength of the paper and how the author can further build on that strength. You may also make one additional suggestion for improving the paper.

Week 9: Navigating the Journal Review Process **November 29, 2018**

Reading:

- Paul J. Silvia. 2007. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. American Psychology Association. Second part of Chapter 6 (pp. 90-107).
- ASR rejection of early draft of Mark Granovetter's classic "Strength of Weak Ties." (AJS) and commentary on scatterplot: <http://bit.ly/1FTn4HD>
- LSR reviews of early drafts of Saguy, 2018. (you may skim!)

Homework

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel's in the Google Drive, noting down what changes – if any – you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.

- Write a cover letter for your target journal. Save it to Google Drive (subfolder “Letters”) as “firstname_letter.”
- You have been assigned a partner for this next editing homework. *Read your partner’s entire paper* but only *edit the introduction*, using the *suggesting* edits mode, drawing on what you have learned from Silvia and others in this class. Insert a comment in which you write what you see as a strength of the paper and how the author can further build on that strength. You may also make one additional suggestion for improving the paper.

Week 10: Conclusion: Developing a Lifelong Writing Practice

December 6, 2018

Reading:

- Paul J. Silvia. 2007. *How to Write a Lot: A Practical Guide to Productive Academic Writing*. American Psychology Association. Chapter 4, “Starting your own agraphia group.”
- Howard Becker. 2007. *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article*. Second Edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 7, “Getting it Out the Door.” Pp. 121-134.
- Orgtheory.net. “Editors Speak: What Makes a Good Review.” <http://bit.ly/1yVWJTA>
- Khanam, Shazia. 2013. “Dos and Don’ts for Responding to Peer Reviewers’ Comments.” October 17. EditageInsights. <http://bit.ly/1F268vz>
- Karen Kelsky. 2015. “When Reviewers Disagree.” *Vitae*. March 30. <http://bit.ly/1CK7MT5>
- Memos #1, #2, and #3 in response to LSR reviews for Saguy 2018 (skim)
- Recommended: Wiley’s Peer Reviewing Guidelines @ <https://bit.ly/2zMWRPf>

Homework

- Update your effectiveness table like Zerubavel’s in the Google Drive, noting down what changes – if any – you plan to make to your writing schedule for the coming week.
- If you have had to good fortune to have already received professional journal reviews –in the context of either a rejection or an invitation to revise and resubmit – on the article you’re working on this quarter, write a memo detailing the changes you have made in response to the reviews. If you have not yet received any professional reviews, treat the six rounds of edits and comments you have received from classmates as reviews and write a memo detailing the changes you have made in response to their suggestions. Save to Google Drive (subfolder “Memos”) as “yourfirstname_memo.”
- *Edit the findings of your own paper*, using the *suggesting* edits mode, drawing on what you have learned from Silvia and others in this class.

Finals Week

Homework (you can take until Friday at noon of Final’s week to complete)

- Complete your quarter goal. For most of you, this will mean submitting your MA (or other) paper for publication. Post to the discussion board, at the designated place, telling us what you have accomplished and what you intend to do (or have done) to celebrate!

Beyond

Homework

- Create your own agraphia group
- Stick to a regular writing practice
- Write and publish a lot!