

Rubric for a class paper for the Classical Sociological Theory seminar

- Technical specifications of the paper
 - 15-20 pages, as described below
 - Double spaced
 - 1-inch margins all around
 - 10 or 12 font text
 - A separate title page, which does not count for the page count
 - Start a new page at the end for references. The reference section does not count for the page count
 - Page numbers at the bottom of the pages

- Paper topic
 - The syllabus has a list of suggested paper topics, any of which you may use without asking permission. These should give you an idea of the kind of scope of the paper.
 - If you want to write on another topic, ask me for permission, and I will work with you to develop the topic.
 - Links to earlier student papers are also posted on the class webpage. You can use these as examples or models.

- Content of the paper
 - The paper should be a close textual analysis of a theme discussed by the theorist (see suggested paper topics in the syllabus for examples).
 - A close textual analysis means you are analyzing and interpreting the theorist's argument about your chosen topic. You are looking for coverage and consistency of the argument: does it cover all contingencies, or only some; are there internal contradictions, or is it consistent. The lecture notes and the topics for discussion can give you ideas about the kinds of issues you could discuss.
 - Especially if you find what you think are shortcomings of coverage and consistency, this may give you insight into possible topics or arguments the theorist was trying to avoid, and why. This is often something that will give you great insight.
 - For instance, when Marx states that religion isn't important, was he trying to avoid talking about certain things? He wants to focus on social class; is he trying to avoid dealing with "identity" issues like religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, etc? What difficulties might discussion of those issues raise for his argument?
 - The paper is not a research paper. You can use secondary literature (like that contained in the syllabus), but you don't have to.
 - If you want to include material from your own research interests, you can do so in the last pages of the paper. Aim for 80% of the paper for the analysis of the theorist's argument on the topic, and 20% for the application of that argument to your research interest. (In a 20-page paper, this could be 16 pages of analysis of the

- theorist, and 4 pages discussing your own research topic.) For instance, the main body of the paper might be an analysis of Tocqueville's arguments about democracy, and the last few pages might be how his arguments might be applied to a certain country.
- In a last section about your own research topic, you have more flexibility. You can cite alternative theories or your own analysis of the topic. But you must tie that section back to the theorist you have been discussing, and indicate how adequate or inadequate the theory is to understanding your topic.
 - Citation style, quotes from the theorist, use of AI
 - If you are mainly citing from one or a few works by the theorist, you should abbreviate your in-text citations by using the initials of the work's title and the page number. The first time you cite the work, you should use a footnote to give the work's full citation and state that further citations will use that format going forward. Thus, for instance, if you cite Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, page 231, you would put (DIA 231)¹ in the text after your quote. Only use a footnote the first time you abbreviate each work.
 - Your quotes from the theorist should be fairly short and concise and serve to illustrate the point you yourself are making in your analysis of the theorist's argument. Your interpretation, analysis, and summary of the theorist's argument should be in your own words. Quotes should usually be a phrase or a sentence, and not more than 2-3 lines. You should not quote long blocks of text and you should not use an indented quotation block. The reader is reading *your* interpretation, analysis, and summary of the theorist's argument, not a pastiche of quotes from the theorist.
 - You can use secondary literature, but mainly only to illustrate other interpretations or, at most, to indicate where you got your interpretation from. The citation style should follow the guidelines outlined in the *American Sociological Review*, and you should have the references at the end of the paper, also following ASR style. The theorist's works you cite should also be listed in the reference section. Again, this is not a research paper. The focus should be on your own analysis and interpretation.
 - Generally, you should not quote from textbooks or Wikipedia.
 - If you use AI (e.g., ChatGPT) to help you develop your ideas, you must be transparent about it, and you must not quote from it as if it was your own writing. More specifically, list the prompts and answers you have used in a separate appendix at the end of the paper. This appendix does not count towards the page count. You do not need to list the use of AI for grammar corrections. Using AI without acknowledgment constitutes plagiarism, and plagiarism will be handled according to university policy.

¹ Tocqueville, Alexis de. 2000. *Democracy in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Further citations to *Democracy in America* will be abbreviated "DIA" in the text, together with the page number.