FINAL TIPS for the THESIS IN SOCIOLOGY

DEADLINE: TUESDAY BEFORE SPRING BREAK, 1pm

Please send two pdfs of your completed thesis to lthomas@wjh.harvard.edu on the due date. One pdf should contain no acknowledgments for grading purposes, the other may contain acknowledgments, for archiving purposes (more on acknowledgements below). You may have to send in two separate emails. Please name the thesis with your last name and then “no acknowledgments” and “acknowledgments.”

Because we are not collecting hard copies of your thesis, you may wish to borrow a spring back binder from our office for a photo (Widener steps seems to be the most popular spot!) or you may wish to purchase a binder so that you have a bound copy. The binders typically used for theses are similar to this one: https://www.amazon.com/ROARING-SPRING-Springback-Leatherette-96377/dp/B002HIGJU8?th=1. (The 1” binder is sufficient for most theses. If you have a longer thesis (over 140 pages), you may wish to purchase a 2” binder.) Binders should also be available at Bob Slate, 30 Brattle Street in Cambridge, or this site (which is the least expensive binder I found at $27.95! https://www.leuchtturm1917.us/springback-binder-peka-a4-capacity-150-pages-maximum-size-220x305x25-mm.html#text=The%20springback%20binder%20is%20of%20to%20150%20sheets%20of%20paper)

If you would like to borrow one from the department for photo ops, please let me know and I will arrange for a binder to be available for you.

You may want to send a pdf of the completed thesis with acknowledgments to your advisor. They will have worked at length with you on it, and will want copies for their libraries, to consult later and share with future students.

Please note: On occasion we have had students email in the afternoon of the day the thesis is due to say that their computer is down, etc. and that they will not be able to turn in the thesis on time. We are unable to accommodate these reasons for late theses. Please allow time for mechanical and human failures. Do not leave the writing and typing of your thesis to the last minute and thereby leave yourself vulnerable to the cruelties of chance. A late thesis will be marked down (e.g., from Magna to Cum+, from Cum to Cum-) for each day it is overdue, weekends included.

FORMAT OF THE COMPLETED THESIS

Theses in sociology vary widely, from statistical analyses to interview based research to ethnographies. In fact, one year we had an autobiography! Therefore, we have no particular requirements about how to organize your thesis. However, all theses should follow a few basic rules.

Length: There is no minimum or maximum length to a sociology thesis. They tend to run between 60 and 100 pages. Some have been considerably longer, some are shorter. Yours should be long enough to do justice to your topic, and no longer.
Format: The font should be Times New Roman, 12 point font, double-spaced. Page numbers should be centered at the bottom of each page, starting with the first page of the introduction. There is no one way to put your thesis together, however students often ask and so a suggestion would be: title page, abstract, acknowledgments (excluded in the file intended for graders), table of contents. Page numbering should begin with the body of the thesis.

Abstract: A one-page abstract summarizing the thesis, including a brief statement of the topic, the method of research, and the findings should be included in the thesis.

Acknowledgment Page: An acknowledgment page (or pages) is optional. If you do include an acknowledgment page, please submit two copies separately as noted above. Most people do include acknowledgments. If you received any financial support for your research, such as a Ford grant or another fellowship, you should acknowledge that support.

Bibliography: The bibliography should include only the references you cited in your thesis.

The department has no specific rules regarding style (e.g. formatting for tables and charts, chapter headings). The American Sociological Review publishes its citation rules twice a year as the first couple pages of the journal and you are encouraged to use those, but you are welcome to use any standard format as long as you give due acknowledgment to the work of others that you have used. Discuss these issues with your advisor. Be sure to use whatever style you chose consistently throughout the thesis.

PRIZES: There are a number of prizes at Harvard for senior thesis research. The Hoopes prize and the Bowdoin prize are both college wide competitions that are appropriate for Sociology concentrators. For information on other senior thesis prizes, please visit the Harvard University FAS Prize Office page (http://prizes.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do?keyword=k78478). Information on deadlines and application procedures are also available.

The Sociology department awards the Albert M. Fulton Prize each year. It is awarded to the student who submits the best thesis "judged by its contents, research methods and literary expression, in the field of Sociology." Your advisor can nominate you for the Fulton Prize. Submissions for the Fulton Prize are reviewed by the Committee on Undergraduate Degrees. The winner is announced at the end of the year party we hold for graduating seniors.

Best wishes, Writers. Don’t forget to eat and sleep!!!