

Sociology Style Guidelines:

- Use *present tense*!
 - Especially when discussing an author's argument from an assigned book, (e.g., "Author X argues that...")
- Use *parenthetical citations* for in-text citations.
 - (Last name year: pg#), and provide the full reference in a "References" or "Works Cited" section at the end of the paper.
 - Footnotes are for ideas that don't fit into the main body of the paper and should be used sparingly.
- If you refer to someone else's idea, or say something contested or controversial, *provide a citation* and explain what you mean.
- Beware of *passive voice*.
 - This is especially true in sociology because it is important to identify the *actor*.
 - Using "society" as an actor is not usually wise – avoiding this will force you to be very precise with your argument
- Be precise with your argument
 - Introductions with broad, unsubstantiated claims do not help your argument – get right to the point.
- Use *concise, clear sentences*. No flowery language necessary.
 - Don't use a fancy word when a simple one will convey the same meaning
- Respect *word/page limits*.
 - It is easier for most of you to write more than less
 - This is a learned skill – you will get better at it over time.