

PERFORMANCE TASK 2 – CBR BRIEFS

Developed by Carey Sargent, Lecturer, Department of Sociology, University of Virginia

SOC4559 I Public Sociology

Rather than a final seminar paper, writing this second writing requirement course is broken into CBR Briefs that document the process of your research and/or service. CBR Briefs should be typed and submitted on paper in class. Assessment is based on completeness, clarity, and thoughtfulness. They will be assessed by a check-plus (excellent; A range); check (very good complete and accurate but not developed analytically to the level of excellent; B range); check-minus (adequate but not fully accurate or complete or developed to the level of very good; C range); zero (inadequate or very incomplete). Late work will be penalized 10 points per day on a scale of 100, beginning at 5pm on Monday.

The topics, approximate lengths, and due dates are as follows:

CBR Brief 1: Project Proposal (500-700 words)

Due 1.31

In the project proposal, students will use the guidelines from the CBR Project document to choose a potential partner organization. The proposal should include reflection on the following questions:

- What is the mission of the organization? Who carries out what roles within it? Where can I contribute the greatest benefit at the least cost (in terms of the organization's time and resources)?
- Would I need additional training or special permission to work directly with the organization? How long would it take to obtain it?
- If I work directly with the organization, will my experiences offer me the sort of experiences that can be integrated with my sociological knowledge and skills?
- If I work indirectly with the organization, how long will it take to understand what kind of research would be useful to the organization?
- If I work indirectly with the organization will someone within it be willing and able to collaborate with me? (Collaboration includes meeting to discuss the research, assess its progress, and reflect on the results).
- If I work indirectly with the organization, would they prefer that I also have direct presence (including volunteering, helping out with grunt work)?

In addition to this reflection, be sure to specifically include the name of the organization and your contact person within it, its mission in your own words, the type of project you will carry out (direct or indirect) and as many details as possible about the work you envision doing over the course of the semester.

CBR Brief 2: Collaboration Agreement

Draft Due 2.7 (500-750 words), Final Due 2.14 (250 words)

Early in the semester, students will work with their contact within the partner organization to construct a collaboration agreement. These agreements will not only foster clear communication between the student and partner organization, but will offer students an opportunity to develop skills of project planning and management.

For the first draft of the collaboration agreement, answer the questions below and be sure to discuss the issues in bold with the contact in your partner organization.

The draft agreement should include the following sections with headings:

I. Overview of organizational needs

- a. What is the mission of the organization?
- b. What research or service needs do they have at this time?
- c. Where can I contribute the greatest benefit at the least cost?

II. Skills and experiences (of the student)

- a. How will you bring sociological knowledge or tools to bear on these needs?
- b. What experiences do you have with this or similar organizations?

III. The proposed final research product (or terms of direct service)

- a. What will you have accomplished with the organization by the end of the semester? (a particular research task, a particular number of hours in direct service, etc.)
- b. What format will this product take (a report to the organization, a presentation, a portfolio, a reflection upon your direct service, etc.)

IV. Timeline

- a. What are the pieces of the project?
- b. What is the most logical order for their completion?
- c. Be sure that this timeline lines up more or less adequately with the following and comment on how you'll address potential conflicts:
 - i. The needs and schedule of the organization
 - ii. The assignment deadlines of this course
 - iii. Your other personal and academic obligations outside of this course

V. Resources

- a. What resources are necessary to the work? Consider everything from Internet access to photocopies to transportation to and from the site.

b. Who will provide those resources? In some cases, the student may provide them (i.e. their home internet connection or their own car) in others the organization may provide them • be sure to ask rather than assume access to organizational resources.

VI. Communication

- a. When, how and in what circumstances will the student contact the organization?
- b. How can the student be reached and in what circumstances may the student be unavailable?

The final version will be a revised and condensed version of the draft—one that can be read and understood by the organization within a few minutes.

CBR Brief 3: Collaboration Agreement Addendum (100-200 words)

Due 2.21

After reviewing the final version of the collaboration agreement with your contact person in the organization, add a brief paragraph that includes 1) the organization's questions and/or concerns and 2) any modifications made.

CBR Brief 4: Sociological Knowledge (750-1000 words)

Due 3.14

Use academic databases to find out what sociological research has been done on the social issue addressed by your partner organization. Find and read three to five relevant sources. Summarize the main findings of these sources and discuss 1) how these findings inform your work with your partner organization 2) how your experiences so far contradict, expand, or raise new questions in this literature.

CBR Brief 5: Sociological Tools (250-500 words)

Due 3.28

Based on our in-class review of research methods, discuss which methods will be of use to you in developing your final product. (If you are engaged in direct service, you will likely be engaged in participant observation.) Include a description of the method in general and how you will use it specifically in your CBR.

CBR Brief 6: Preliminary Findings (500-750 words)

Due 4.11

Review your collaboration agreement, sociological knowledge and sociological tools briefs. Synthesize them into a narrative that describes your work thus far and how 1) you draw on your training in sociology to accomplish this work 2) how your CBR has generated new sociological insights into the workings of the partner organization.

CBR Brief 7: Final Sociological Reflection (1000-1200 words)

Due 5.2

This brief is similar to a final essay. It should focus on a particular sociological concept and make an argument about how your CBR contributes sociological knowledge. It should include an introduction to your argument, a brief summary of existing literature, the methods you have used, evidence for your argument from your CBR, and a conclusion that addresses how this experience informs your future career goals.

CBR Brief 8: Product Assessment (approx. 500 words + forms)

Due Final Exam Date 5.7 by 5pm

The product assessment should include:

1. A copy of the feedback form you constructed for the partner organization (developed from class template)
2. The organization's responses to your feedback form
3. A self-reflection on your process and product that includes:
 - a. In what ways did you meet the goals outlined in the collaboration agreement?
 - b. How did you address obstacles in meeting those goals?
 - c. How did you respond to peer and instructor feedback?
 - d. What practical or intellectual skills did you learn that you hadn't anticipated?
 - e. What mistakes did you make along the way and what would you do differently next time?