

Education S801: Culture, Institutions, and Society Core Seminar

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This seminar will expose students to major strands of theory and research in culture, society, institutions and organizations as they connect to education. Students will also grapple with the role of theory in research, developing skills in embedding empirical questions within theoretical frameworks and debates. The seminar will be organized around four key questions: (1) What is the role of education in society? (2) What is the degree to which institutions shapes us as individuals or groups in society, and what is the degree to which our agency – individual or collective – shapes our actions and experiences? (3) Why do social cleavages and inequalities persist despite equal rights legislation and the welfare state? What role does education play in shaping or attenuating inequality, and what are the levers for change? (4) How does the nature of organizations shape the educational experiences of individuals and groups in society? The course will draw from key theoretical and empirical readings in education, anthropology, economics, history, organizational behavior, political science, and sociology.

This course is limited to, and required of, first year students in the HGSE Ph.D. in Culture, Institutions, and Society track.

Students with Disabilities

We encourage students needing accommodations in instruction or evaluation to notify us early in the semester. If you have a disability or health concern that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require adjustments or accommodations, please contact Eileen Berger bergerei@gse.harvard.edu, Access and Disability Services (ADS) administrator in Gutman 124. No accommodations can be given without authorization from ADS, or without advance notice. If you already have a Faculty Contact Form for this course from ADS, please provide us with that information privately in our offices so that we can make those adjustments in a timely manner. All inquiries and discussions about accommodations will remain confidential.

How to Find Me

I do not have regular office hours. On most days, I'm in my office in Gutman 412 with the door open; come by when it is convenient for you (and no one else is there). Sending me an [email](#) is also a good way to find me.

Course Goals:

I expect that through this course you will:

- Develop a basic understanding of major strands of theory and research related to Culture, Institutions, and Society;

- Understand the role of theory in research;
- Develop skill in embedding questions into theoretical frameworks and debates.

This class has, depending on who you talk to, five, sometimes contradictory, purposes:

1. Socialize you into a broad scholarly community of education researchers.
2. Socialize you into a narrower community of scholars in a sub-field of education centered around the study of “Cultures, Institutions, and Society.”
3. Introduce you to the faculty at HGSE who work on topics of “Cultures, Institutions, and Society.”
4. Prepare you for taking your comprehensive exams in the Cultures, Institutions, and Society concentration.
5. Help you begin thinking about potential dissertation ideas.

The readings and assignments try at several points to achieve these goals. As with any project that serves many masters, the class will meet some of these goals for some of you better than others. With that, an important part of graduate school is the common socialization that comes from learning and, yes, suffering, together with your peers.

Course Expectations and Assignments:

You will be expected to come to each seminar prepared to discuss the assigned readings and to participate in class discussions. The final assignment for this course is a research paper related to the course themes: culture, institutions, and society. Over the semester you will have six assignments designed to guide you through the process of writing a research paper.

Assignments and Evaluation

1. Class Participation: 20%
2. Human Subjects Training Certification and Draft Protocol: 5%
3. Field Mapping Exercise: 10%
4. Mock Comprehensive Exam: 25%
5. Potentially Potentially Publishable Paper: 25%
6. Peer Review Assignment: 15%

Class Participation: 20%

You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings in detail. The readings are often long and quite dense, so please allocate sufficient time to them — you may find yourself reading some parts of assigned readings more than once to fully understand the reading. As you read, put readings into conversation with one another, both within a week’s readings and across readings for different weeks. Although by no means required, you are encouraged to discuss the readings with your peers.

This class will be organized as a seminar, and its strength depends on the active listening and participation of students. Your participation grade will be based on your class attendance, preparation for seminars, and participation in discussions. Quality of participation is important—you will be assessed positively for contributions that move discussions forward and that offer insightful analyses.

The readings are organized in order of (what I consider) importance and should be read in that order. I know the realities of graduate school and life; if you do not have time in that particular week to finish all the readings, please begin from the beginning.

You will also be required to lead class discussion, with a partner, two or three times during the semester. You will present a short (10-15 minutes) critical response to that week's readings and pose 2-3 questions to guide the class discussion. Please email me by the end of the first full week of class (Friday, January 26, 2017) with four weeks, in order of preference, that you would like to lead. I cannot guarantee your first choice, but will try to accommodate most of your choices.

In the weeks you are leading class discussion, you should come to class having read all of the required readings. You will be partnered with at least one of your colleagues in the class, and you should try to meet with them before class to discuss how you will lead class. When leading class discussion, you should briefly summarize the week's readings, and pose three to four questions for class discussion.

If you know you will be absent, please inform me by the end of the first full week of class (Friday, January 26, 2017). Beyond that date, all absences will be considered unexcused except for those due to serious illness or death in the family. More than one unexcused absence will negatively affect your grade.

Human Subjects Training Certification and Mock Institutional Review Board (IRB) Protocol Submission: 5%

Some of you will eventually conduct research with human subjects, but *all* of you are entering a community of scholars where human subjects, and often vulnerable populations, are at the heart of our research questions and normative interests. For those of you that will conduct human subjects research, it will be useful to understand what the Harvard IRB is like, and for those of you that will not engage in human subjects research, it will be useful to know what your peers are up to.

At some point, if you conduct human subjects research, you will be required to receive human subjects certification. And if you engage with human subjects research, you will want to understand what it *actually* means to be certified. So go and get certified [here](#) and send me your completion certificate by **Friday, February 2nd at 5PM**.

Next, complete the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects Protocol Template and any other required forms for a proposed research project with human subjects. You do not have to *actually* submit this to the IRB, but I would like you to go through the mechanics of understanding what is involved in a submission. You can find the forms required [here](#). Send me your completed forms by **Friday, February 9 at 5PM**.

Any late submissions for these assignments together will automatically receive 0.

Field Mapping Exercise:¹ 10%

We will begin the course with this exercise. The goal is for you to get to know the field and see how your research interests are situated within the field. There are two sub-assignments within this larger assignment:

Conceptual Map of CIS: 5%

As a class, we will create a conceptual map of the field of CIS. As part of this map, we will identify broad areas and divisions within the landscape of CIS and their interrelationships. We will also ask how they relate to the other concentrations at HGSE: Education Policy and Program Evaluation (EPPE), and Human Development, Learning, and Teaching (HDLT).

¹This exercise was shamelessly cribbed from Jon *'s HDLT Concentration Seminar, S-802

We will do this assignment together as a class in class on Wednesday, January 24.

Conceptual Map of your Sub-Field: 5%

Present a conceptual map of the landscape of your fields/subfields (where the top level is one of the three CIS “themes”), zooming down into your area of interest. If your area of interest lies at the intersection of several subfields, make sure that this is evident in your map. As part of your conceptual map, identify for your subfield the following:

1. Key researchers in your field, in the historical past, the recent past, and in the present;
2. Key journals in your field, with descriptions as necessary of how the foci of these journals are similar or different;
3. Seminal research articles in the field, both in the recent past and in the present;
4. Identify major unanswered questions that the area is still working with;
5. Conferences where work in your subfield are presented (and differences between these conferences).

This is due at **5PM on Friday, January 26.**

Mock Comprehensive Exam: 25%

The structure to this assignment will be identical to Part B (“Concentration Specific Knowledge”) of the Ph.D. Written Comprehensive Exam you will sit at the end of your second year in the program. At the beginning of the week, I will email you two questions from previous year’s exams, and you will have to answer one.

I will release the exam at **9 AM on Monday March 26** and you will return the exam, anonymised, to Canvas by **5PM on Friday March 30.**

When you sit for the real exams, you will be expected to draw upon readings from this seminar and the concentration-specific supplementary reading list as well as appropriate readings from ProSem. Although we will not have covered half of the syllabus, you are welcome, although not expected, to draw upon readings we have yet to read.

Potentially Potentially Publishable Paper: 25%

At the end of your second year or beginning of your third year in the program, you will be expected to produce a potentially publishable paper (PPP) or “Original Research Paper.” With that end in mind, there are two goals of this assignment:

1. Force you, in a systematic way, to begin thinking about this;
2. Help you practice and hone your writing skills.

By no means do I expect that whatever you produce will be your final PPP, Original Research Paper, or chapter in a book-length manuscript dissertation (nor will I monitor if it is), but it should certainly be related to your research interests as they stand. There are four assignments designed to guide you through this process. **I strongly urge all students to consult with their advisors on this assignment.**

Research Question: 3%

Write a brief (no longer than 2 double spaced pages) description of the research proposal you plan to write, emphasizing the research question you plan to address. The purpose of this assignment is for you to share your topic of investigation and make sure you are working with a strong research question.

This is due at **5PM Wednesday, March 7**

Annotated Bibliography: 3%

Begin your Annotated Bibliography with your research question as the title. Then, identify and submit 12–15 sources most relevant to your current research interests related to course themes: culture, institutions, and society. For each source write 1–2 sentences summarizing the main ideas of the source and 1–2 sentences explaining the relevance of the source to your research interests. The purpose of this assignment is to help you get a sense of the available information, identify unanswered questions and consider relevant methodologies. **In preparation for this assignment, all students who have not met with a research librarian are required to do so.** To schedule an appointment with a research librarian, please call (617-495-3421) or stop by the Main Desk on the 2nd floor Monday–Friday, 9am–5pm.

This is due at **5PM Friday, March 23**

Research Proposal 3%

The research proposal should follow the general structure: introduction, literature review, research design, and implications. Your proposals should be no more than 2,500 words. Be sure to include an abstract of up to 250 words (not counted toward the word count).

This is due at **5PM Monday, April 9**

At our class meeting on Wednesday, April 11, we will spend time work-shopping research proposal drafts. In advance of this class you will need to read the proposal drafts of two classmates and come to class prepared to discuss the strengths and areas of growth of those proposals.

Potentially Potentially Publishable Paper 15%

The final paper will be due on the final day of class on **Wednesday, April 25**

Peer Review Assignment: 15%

After your final papers are in, you will peer review one of your peers's papers. Once you submit your paper, I will assign one of your peers to read and comment on your paper.

Put together a two to four page review comprised of three things:

1. What you liked about the paper
2. What you disliked about the paper
3. How your peer can make the paper stronger

Aim for brevity (the two-to-four page limit is a suggestion that two pages is better than four). The best reviews do not leave the author burned out, and give them actionable items.

The best peer reviews are *constructive* as well as critical. A good starting point for what this looks like is to follow the [#BeReviewer1](#) started by [Thomas Leeper](#) on twitter. [This](#) is evergreen advice and [here's the original mission statement](#).

Your reviews are due at **5PM Wednesday, May 9**.

Submission Guidelines

1. All assignments should be uploaded to the appropriate folder on the course Canvas as a .pdf file. *Do not upload .doc or .docx files.* This is probably the quickest way to drive me insane.
2. Late assignments will receive an automatic half-letter grade reduction per day (i.e. an “A” quality paper that is submitted a day late will receive an A-).

Required Books

- Duncan-Andrade, Jeffrey M., and Ernest Morrell. 2008. *The Art of Critical Pedagogy: Possibilities for Moving from Theory to Practice in Urban Schools*. New Edition. New York: Peter Lang Publishing.
- Jeffrey, Craig, Patricia Jeffery, and Roger Jeffery. 2007. *Degrees Without Freedom? Education, Masculinities, and Unemployment in North India*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Marshall, T. H. 1964. *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- North, Douglass C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Willis, Paul. 2017. *Learning to Labor: How Working-Class Kids Get Working-Class Jobs*. Columbia University Press.
- Wilson, William J. 1978. *The Declining Significance of Race*. University of Chicago Press.

Overview of Syllabus

1. Defining the Scope of Our Field
 - (a) Wednesday, January 24: Power
 - (b) Wednesday, January 31: Culture
 - (c) Wednesday, February 7: Institutions
 - (d) Wednesday, February 14: Organizations
2. Defining the Purpose of Our Field
 - (a) Wednesday, February 21: Social Reproduction
 - (b) Wednesday, February 28: Social Change & Mobility
 - (c) Wednesday, March 7: Credentialing
 - (d) Wednesday, March 21: Citizenship, Civic Capacity, & Engagement
3. Social Cleavages in Education
 - (a) Wednesday, March 28: What is Identity?
 - (b) Wednesday, April 4: Race & Gender
 - (c) Wednesday, April 11: Class, Religion, & Nationalism
 - (d) Wednesday, April 18: Transnational Identities
4. Wednesday, April 25: Education Systems in the United States and Comparatively

Defining the Scope of Our Field

Wednesday, January 24: Power

- **For Class:**

- Weber, Max. 2009. Politics as a vocation. In H. H. Gerth & C. W. Mills (Eds.), *Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*. New York: Routledge. read only pp. 77-83. iPa©
- Bachrach, Peter, and Morton S. Baratz. 1962. “The Two Faces of Power.” *American Political Science Review* 56(4): 947-52.
- Labaree, David F. 1997. “Public Goods, Private Goods: The American Struggle over Educational Goals.” *American Educational Research Journal* 34 (1):39–81.

- **In Class:**

- Conceptual Map of CIS

- **After Class:**

- Conceptual Map of your Sub-Field, due at **5PM on Friday, January 26**
- Four preferences for class discussion, due on **Friday, January 26**

Wednesday, January 31: Culture

- **For Class:**

- Stevens, Mitchell L. 2008. “Culture and Education”. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 619, 97-113.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1986. The Forms of Capital. In J. G. Richardson (Ed.), *Handbook of theory and research for the sociology of education*. New York: Greenwood Press, pgs. 241-258. iPa©
- Wedeen, Lisa. 2002. “Conceptualizing Culture: Possibilities for Political Science.” *American Political Science Review* 96(04): 713–28.
- Alesina, Alberto, and Paola Giuliano. 2015. “Culture and Institutions.” *Journal of Economic Literature* 53(4): 898-944.
- Small, Mario L., Harding, D. J., & Lamont, Michelle L. 2010. “Reconsidering Culture and Poverty”. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 629(1), 6-27.

- **After Class:**

- IRB Certification, due on **Friday, February 2 at 5PM**

Wednesday, February 7: Institutions

- **For Class:**

- Hall, Peter A., and Rosemary C. Taylor. 1996. “Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms.” *Political Studies* XLIV: 936-57.
- North, Douglass C. 1990. *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press. Chs. 1, 3, 5, 9-11.
- Meyer, John W., and Rowan, Brian. 1977. “Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremonies.” *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2), 340-62.

- **After Class:**

- Mock IRB Protocol **Friday, February 9 at 5PM**

Wednesday, February 14: Organizations

- **For Class:**

- Weick, Karl E. 1976. “Educational Organizations as Loosely Coupled Systems.” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 21(1): 1-19.
- Elmore, Richard. 1996. Getting to scale with good educational practice. *Harvard Educational Review*, 66(10), pp. 1-27.
- Bridwell-Mitchell, Ebony N. 2015. “Theorizing Teacher Agency and Reform: How Institutionalized Instructional Practices Change and Persist.” *Sociology of Education* 88 (2):140-59.
- Higgins, Monica C., Jennie Weiner, and Lissa Young. 2012. “Implementation Teams: A new lever for organization change.” *Journal of Organizational Behavior* 33, 366-388.
- Hallett, Timothy. 2010. “The Myth Incarnate: Recoupling Processes, Turmoil, and Inhabited Institutions in an Urban Elementary School.” *American Sociological Review* 75(1): 52-74.

Defining the Purpose of Our Field

Wednesday, February 21: Social Reproduction

- **For Class:**

- Bowles, Samuel, and Herbert Gintis. 1976. *Schooling In Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York: Basic Books. pgs 3-17, 125-148. [iPa©](#)
- Bourdieu, Pierre, & Passeron, Jean-Claude. 1977. *Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture*. Beverly Hills, California: Sage Publications. pgs. 3-68. [iPa©](#)
- Willis, Paul. 2017. *Learning to Labor: How Working-Class Kids Get Working-Class Jobs*. Columbia University Press. Chapters 1-3, 7.
- Warikoo, Natasha K. 2016. *The Diversity Bargain, and Other Dilemmas of Race, Admissions, and Meritocracy At Elite Universities*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapters 1 & 4. [iPa©](#)

Wednesday, February 28: Social Change & Mobility

- **For Class:**

- Jeffrey, Craig, Patricia Jeffery, and Roger Jeffery. 2007. *Degrees Without Freedom? Education, Masculinities, and Unemployment in North India*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press. Chapters 1, 3, 4, 6-8.
- Duncan, Greg J. & Murnane, Richard J. 2014. *Restoring Opportunity: The Crisis of Inequality and the Challenge for American Education*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press, pgs. 53-108. [iPa©](#)
- Duncan-Andrade, Jeffrey M., and Ernest Morrell. 2008. *The Art of Critical Pedagogy: Possibilities for Moving from Theory to Practice in Urban Schools*. New Edition. New York: Peter Lang Publishing. Chapters 1 & 2.
- Reardon, Sean F., and Ximena A. Portilla. 2016. “Recent Trends in Income, Racial, and Ethnic School Readiness Gaps at Kindergarten Entry.” *AERA Open* 2(3): 1-18.
- Jensen, Robert. 2010. “The (Perceived) Returns to Education and the Demand for Schooling.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 125, no. 2: 515-548.

Wednesday, March 7: Credentialing

- **For Class:**

- Bell, Daniel. 1999[1979]. *The Coming of Post-industrial Society: A Venture In Social Forecasting*. New York, NY: Basic Books, pgs. 12-33. iPa©
- Collins, Randall. 1979. *The Credential Society: An Historical Sociology of Education and Stratification*. New York, NY: Academic Press, pgs. 90-130. iPa©
- Goldin, Claudia D., & Katz, Lawrence. F. 2009. *The Race Between Education and Technology*. Harvard University Press. Chapter 8. iPa©
- Deming, David J. 2017. “The Growing Importance of Social Skills in the Labor Market.” *The Quarterly Journal of Economics*. 132(4): 1593-1640.

- **After Class:**

- Research Question due at **5PM on Wednesday, March 7**

Wednesday, March 21: Citizenship, Civic Capacity, & Engagement

- **For Class:**

- Marshall, T. H. 1964. *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*. New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc. Pgs. 65-122.
- Freire, Paulo. 2000. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 30th Anniversary Edition*. 30th Anniversary edition. New York: Bloomsbury Academic. Chapter 3.
- Mettler, Suzanne. 2005. *Soldiers to Citizens: The G.I. Bill and the Making of the Greatest Generation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Pgs. 1-15 & 106-136. iPa©
- Levinson, Meira. 2012. *No Citizen Left Behind*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Pgs. 1-99 & 210-250.
- Marshall, John. 2016. “Education and Voting Conservative: Evidence from a Major Schooling Reform in Great Britain.” *Journal of Politics*. 78(2): 382-395.
- Bruch, Sarah K., and Joe Soss. 2018. “Schooling as a Formative Political Experience: Authority Relations and the Education of Citizens.” *Perspectives on Politics*. 16(1): 36-57.

- **After Class:**

- Annotated Bibliography due at **5 PM Friday, March 23**
- Mock Comprehensive Exam released at **9 AM on Monday, March 26**

Social Cleavages in Education

Wednesday, March 28: What is Identity?

- **For Class:**

- Brubaker, Rogers. 2004. *Ethnicity without Groups*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. Chapters Introduction & 2. iPa©
- Anderson, Benedict. 1983. *Imagined Communities*. London: Verso. Chs. 1-3.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 2015. “Intersectionality’s Definitional Dilemmas.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 41:1-20.

- Reed, Adolph L., and Merlin Chowkwanyun. 2012. “Race, Class, Crisis: The Discourse of Racial Disparity and Its Analytical Discontents.” *Socialist Register* 48: 149-175.

- **After Class:**

- Mock Comprehensive exam due at **5PM on Friday March 30**

Wednesday, April 4: Race & Gender

- **For Class:**

- Wilson, William J. 1978. *The Declining Significance of Race*. University of Chicago Press, preface and Chapters 1-7.
- hooks, bell. 1990. *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics*. South End Press. Chapter 8. iPa©
- Ladson-Billings, Gloria, and William F. Tate. 1995. “Toward a Critical Race Theory of Education.” *Teachers College Record* 97 (1):47–68.
- Frye, Margaret. 2017. “Cultural Meanings and the Aggregation of Actions: The Case of Sex and Schooling in Malawi.” *American Sociological Review*. 82 (5): 945-976.
- Buchmann, Claudia, Thomas A. DiPrete, and Anne McDaniel. 2008. “Gender Inequalities in Education.” *Annual Review of Sociology* 34 (3):19-37.

- **After Class:**

- Research Proposal due at **5PM on Monday, April 9**
- Read two research proposals by **classtime on Wednesday, April 18**

Wednesday, April 18: Class, Religion, & Nationalism

- **For Class:**

- Weber, Eugene. 1976. *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France*. Stanford: Stanford University Press. Chs. 18 & 29.
- Srivastava, Sanjay. 1998. *Constructing “post-colonial” India: National Character and the Doon School*. London; New York: Routledge. Introduction & Chapter 4. iPa©
- Khan, Shamus Rahman. 2011. *Privilege: The Making of an Adolescent Elite at St. Paul’s School*. Princeton University Press. Introduction & Chapter 3.

- **In Class:**

- Workshop research proposals

Wednesday, April 25: Transnational Identities

- **For Class:**

- Fong, Vanessa L. 2011. *Paradise Redefined: Transnational Chinese Students and the Quest for Flexible Citizenship in the Developed World*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press. Chapter 4.
- Gonzales, Roberto G. 2011. “Learning to Be Illegal: Undocumented Youth and Shifting Legal Contexts in the Transition to Adulthood.” *American Sociological Review* 76(4): 602–619.

- Dryden-Peterson, Sarah. 2011. "Refugee Children Aspiring toward the Future: Linking Education and Livelihoods." In *Educating Children in Conflict Zones: Research, Policy, and Practice for Systemic Change*, 85–99. Teachers College Press. [iPa©](#)
- Duncan, Brian, Jeffrey Grogger, Ana Sofia Leon, and Stephen J. Trejo. 2017. "New Evidence of Generational Progress for Mexican Americans." Working Paper 24067. *NBER Working Paper Series*. Cambridge, MA: National Bureau of Economic Research.

- **After Class:**

- Final paper due by **classtime on TBD**

TBD: Education Systems in the United States and Comparatively

- **For Class:**

- Chubb, John E., and Terry M. Moe. 1990. *Politics, Markets, and America's Schools*. Brookings Institution Press. Chapters 1 & 2. [iPa©](#)
- Ramirez, Francisco O., and John W. Meyer. 1980. "Comparative Education: The Social Construction of the Modern World System." *Annual Review of Sociology* 6 (1):369–397.
- Mehta, Jal. 2015. *The Allure of Order: High Hopes, Dashed Expectations, and the Troubled Quest to Remake American Schooling*. Oxford University Press. Chapters 1, 3, & 6. [iPa©](#)
- Busemeyer, Marius R. 2014. *Skills and Inequality: Partisan Politics and the Political Economy of Education Reforms in Western Welfare States*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1. [iPa©](#)
- Dobbins, Michael, and Marius R. Busemeyer. 2015. "Socio-Economic Institutions, Organized Interests and Partisan Politics: The Development of Vocational Education in Denmark and Sweden." *Socio-Economic Review* 13(2): 259-84.
- Loss, Christopher. 2012. *Between Citizens and the State: The Politics of American Higher Education in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 3, & 5.

- **After Class:**

- Peer Review Assignment due by **5PM Wednesday, May 16**