

SOC 259-001

Fall 2020

Tu 6:00 - 7:15 pm (online)

Th 11:00 am - 12:15 pm (Biochem 1120)

Course website: <https://www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc/wiscidea/>Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/281253468910554/>

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Office hours: Tuesdays online by appt.

Course description and requisites

What is the role of the public university in a democratic society? When University of Wisconsin president Charles Van Hise declared in 1905 that he would “never be content until the beneficent influence of the University reaches every family in the state,” he gave early expression to what we now call the Wisconsin Idea. Van Hise thought that the state university, in partnership with the state government and citizenry, could illuminate Wisconsin’s social problems and contribute to effective solutions that advance the common good. While other state universities shared a similar commitment to public service, the architects of the Wisconsin Idea understood it to mean service to democracy. But what kind of research and education best fit this mission, how can professional expertise be reconciled with popular self-government, and who precisely are the people the university should serve? Bringing students and faculty into conversation with the general public, this course explores the Wisconsin Idea as it has developed since its beginnings, with a focus on what it means today and what it can mean in the future.

The course includes an online public lecture every Tuesday by a series of distinguished guest speakers. In addition, enrolled students will discuss each week’s lecture and accompanying readings in a small, discussion-oriented seminar that meets in person every Thursday, led by the course instructor.

This course is cross-listed as HISTORY 259, POLI SCI 259, and C&E SOC 259. Requisites: Junior or senior standing (or permission of instructor).

Course requirements

For one credit:

1) Attendance and participation

- Students are expected to attend on time and participate actively in each week’s public lecture. Participation includes reading; students are expected to complete each week’s required reading assignment before the Tuesday lecture. Participation also includes notetaking and potentially raising thoughtful questions after the lecture. If you cannot attend the lecture, please notify the instructor (cagoldberg@wisc.edu) and watch the video recording posted on the [course website](#).
- Students are welcome but not required to participate in Thursday seminar meetings. If you do, please arrive on time, bring the assigned readings with you, and come prepared to discuss the week’s lecture and readings in a thoughtful and informed way. You are encouraged to raise questions, which counts as participation.

2) Microthemes: A microtheme is a very brief essay (about 150 to 250 words) in response to a narrowly focused question. The question for this microtheme is: *What does the Wisconsin Idea mean to you?* To receive full credit, you must answer the question clearly, coherently, in a well organized fashion, and within the word limit. The first microtheme is due on September 3 via Canvas. At the end of the term, you will be asked to revisit this question and reflect on how your thinking changed as a result of your participation in the course. This microtheme is due December 10 via Canvas.

Your overall grade for the semester will be calculated on a 100-point scale as follows:	
Attendance/participation (no more than 2 unexcused absences)	80
Microthemes (10 points each, due September 3 and December 10)	20

For three credits:

- 1) Attendance and participation: The expectations are the same as above for one credit, except that participation in Thursday seminar meetings is required.
- 2) Blogging: Using the course's [blog website](#), please create your own personal blog for the course. If you need help doing so, please ask the instructor (cagoldberg@wisc.edu).
 - You are expected to post at least one entry per week for at least seven of the fourteen lectures in the semester. Each entry should be about 500 words. An entry should begin by briefly summarizing the key points of the week's lecture, as you understand them, but please limit your summary to no more than one-third of the post (about 165 words). Then use the remainder of the entry to raise questions (critical or otherwise) or to offer your own reflections, assessment, or response. Here are three ways that you might evaluate a lecture: (1) Disagree—and explain why. (2) Agree—but with a difference. Rather than simply echoing what a speaker has already said, add something new to his or her argument that makes you a participant in the conversation. For example, "I agree that ... because my experience confirms it," or "X is surely right because recent studies show that ..." (3) Agree and disagree simultaneously: "Yes, but..." or "I agree up to a point..." For a model blog post, see [here](#). Please post your entry for the week (or first entry if you write more than one) by Wednesday at 6:00 pm. This deadline allows me to read your entries before our discussion on Thursday.
 - One purpose of the blog is to engage you in a wider conversation with your fellow citizens outside the class. For this reason, your blogging will be public, though you may use a pseudonym if you wish. (Please do not reveal your classmates' pseudonyms outside of class.)
 - You must post a substantive response (comment) on at least six different blog entries by six different students during six different weeks. A substantive comment raises a question or makes a point. ("Great job!" or "You're crazy" is not a substantive comment.) Please leave your initial response/comment within one week of the date that the blog entry was posted. You may use your responses to raise questions about what your classmates have written. Critical responses and disagreements are welcome, but please be courteous and respectful. We want to debate ideas, not engage in personal attacks.
 - The blogs will not be graded on the content of your views but on how well you communicate and support them. Good writing is clear, well organized, well informed, and well supported by evidence and careful reasoning. Credit for a late blog entry or response will be reduced by one point for each day it is submitted late. Repeated lack of courtesy and respect will also result in a lower grade, but your grade will not be reduced for this reason unless you have first received a warning from the instructor.
- 3) Wikipedia project: For this assignment, students are asked to work together to update the [Wikipedia article on the Wisconsin Idea](#), including references and suggestions for further reading. In this way, you yourselves will become public educators, using what you learn in the course to teach others. This is a group project with multiple components. Points will be assigned to individual students in part based on peer assessment. Further instructions will be provided via Canvas.

- 4) **Opinion-editorial:** An opinion-editorial or “op-ed” is a short article published by a newspaper that expresses the opinion of a named author who is not affiliated with the newspaper’s editorial board.
- John Bascom, president of the University of Wisconsin from 1874 to 1887, believed that the university’s responsibility to serve the public and democracy extended to its graduates. Please write an opinion-editorial limited to 400 to 800 words that responds to Bascom. Do you agree? Why or why not? If yes, how can students best fulfill this obligation today? What kind of education would best prepare them to carry out this responsibility? What obstacles discourage or prevent students from fulfilling this responsibility? You don’t need to address all these questions, and you probably can’t within the word limit. What you can do is write thoughtfully, from your own perspective, about the role of students in renewing the Wisconsin Idea today.
 - Please submit your opinion-editorial via Canvas no later than December 10. Your opinion-editorial will be graded with the same criteria used for the blogs.
 - The instructor will ask a student newspaper to publish the opinion-editorials of all students in the course, with the exception of students who opt to submit their opinion-editorials elsewhere.

Your overall grade for the semester will be calculated on a 100-point scale as follows:	
Attendance/participation (no more than 2 unexcused absences)	20
Blogging	40
- Seven blog entries (4 points each = 28 points)	
- Six responses/comments (2 points each = 12 points)	
Collaborative Wikipedia project	25
Opinion-editorial	15

There is no final exam during exam week.

The grading scale for the course is as follows: A = 93-100, AB = 88-92, B = 83-87, BC = 78-82, C = 70-77, D = 60-69, F = 59 or below.

Reading assignments

All required reading assignments will be available at <https://canvas.wisc.edu/>. If you experience a problem accessing any of the readings, please inform the instructor as soon as possible.

Week 1: Introduction to the course

Sep. 3 Seminar discussion: introduction and welcome to the course (no reading)

Week 2: Introduction to the Wisconsin Idea

Sep. 8 Lecture: [Chad Alan Goldberg](#) (Department of Sociology, UW–Madison), “The University’s Service to Democracy”

Sep. 10 Seminar discussion

Gwen Drury, “[The Wisconsin Idea: The Vision That Made Wisconsin Famous](#),” July 22, 2011, pp. 1-12 (the rest is recommended).

Chad Alan Goldberg, “The University’s Service to Democracy,” in *Education for Democracy: Renewing the Wisconsin Idea* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2020), 3–35.

Recommended: John O. (Jack) Stark, *The Wisconsin Idea: The University's Service to the State* (Madison: Legislative Reference Bureau, 1995), 1–72.

Week 3: The Wisconsin Idea and Public Health

Sep. 15 Lecture: [Tessa Conroy](#) (Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, UW–Madison), “What Does the 1918 Flu Pandemic Teach Us about the Economic Impacts of COVID-19? The Likeness to and Differences from a Century Ago”

Sep.17 Seminar discussion

Constanza S. Liborio, “Fiscal and Monetary Policy in Times of Crisis,” *Economic Information Newsletter*, Research Library of the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, March 2011.

Renee Courtois, “What We Do and Don’t Know about Discretionary Fiscal Policy,” *Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond*, April 2009, pp. 1–5.

Daniel Nelson, “The Origins of Unemployment Insurance in Wisconsin,” *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 51, no. 2 (Winter, 1967–1968): 109–21.

Week 4: The Wisconsin Idea and Public Health

Sep. 22 Lecture: [Sarah Marshall](#) (Waisman Center, UW–Madison), “Improving Communication Access in Healthcare during COVID-19 and Beyond”

Sep. 24 Seminar discussion

Disability Policy Framework for Hospital Visitors, 1-8.

Ilaria M. Simeone et al., “Training Chaplains to Provide Communication-Board-Guided Spiritual Care for Intensive Care Unit Patients,” *Journal of Palliative Medicine* 20, no. 20 (2020): 1–8.

Richard R. Hurtig et al., “The Cost of Not Addressing the Communication Barriers Faced by Hospitalized Patients,” *Perspectives of the ASHA Special Interest Groups* 3, no. 12 (2018): 99–109.

Week 5: The Wisconsin Idea and Public Health

Sep. 29 Lecture: [William Hartman](#) (School of Medicine and Public Health, UW–Madison), “Staying Cool in the Middle of a Fire: Hope and Trust the Community”

Oct. 1 Seminar discussion

Reading assignments TBA.

Week 6: The Wisconsin Idea and Public Health

Oct. 6 Lecture: [Norman Fost](#) (School of Medicine and Public Health, UW–Madison), “Rationing Ventilators during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Benefits and Limits of Bioethics”

Oct. 8 Seminar discussion

Norman Fost, “[Who Should Get the Last Ventilator?](#)” *Slate*, April 3, 2020.

Ezekiel J. Emanuel et al., “Fair Allocation of Scarce Medical Resources in the Time of Covid-19,” *New England Journal of Medicine* 382 (May 21, 2020): 2049–55.

Douglas B. White and Bernard Lo, “A Framework for Rationing Ventilators and Critical Care Beds during the COVID-19 Pandemic,” *Journal of the American Medical Association* (March 27, 2020), E1–E2.

Govind Persad et al., “Principles for Allocation of Scarce Medical Interventions,” *Lancet* 373 (2009): 423–31.

Week 7: The Wisconsin Idea and Public Health

- Oct. 13** Lecture: [Dominique Brossard](#) (Department of Life Sciences Communication, UW–Madison), “Communicating about COVID-19: The Wisconsin Idea in Action”
- Oct. 15** Seminar discussion

Nicole M. Krause, Isabelle Freiling, Becca Beets, and Dominique Brossard, “Fact-Checking as Risk Communication: The Multi-Layered Risk of Misinformation in Times of COVID-19,” *Journal of Risk Research* (2020): 3-8, DOI: 10.1080/13669877.2020.1756385.

Dietram A. Scheufele, Nicole M. Krause, Isabelle Freiling, and Dominique Brossard, “[How Not to Lose the COVID-19 Communication War](#),” *Issues in Science and Technology*, April 17, 2020.

Week 8: The Wisconsin Idea and Public Health

- Oct. 20** Lecture: [Aaron Fai](#) (Center for the Humanities, UW–Madison) with Orion Risk, “‘Humanities Responders’ to COVID-19”
- Oct. 22** Seminar discussion

Orion Risk, “‘Gendertalks’: A One-Act Play for Zoom,” 1–33.

Week 9: The Wisconsin Idea and the Economy

- Oct. 27** Lecture: [Neil Kraus](#) (Department of Politics, Geography and International Studies, UW–River Falls), “Reality or Fantasy? The Economy, Inequality, and Education Reform”
- Oct. 29** Seminar discussion

US National Commission on Excellence in Education, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (Washington, DC: The Commission, 1983), 1–36. Available [online](#).

Michael S. Teitelbaum, “[The Myth of the Science and Engineering Shortage](#),” *The Atlantic*, March 19, 2014.

Recommended: Anand Giridharadas, “But How Is the World Changed,” in *Winners Take All: The Elite Charade of Changing the World* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2018), 13–34.

Week 10: The Wisconsin Idea and the Economy

- Nov. 3** Lecture: [Steven C. Deller](#) (Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics, UW–Madison), “Extension and the Wisconsin Idea”
- Nov. 5** Seminar discussion

Reading assignments TBA.

Week 11: The Wisconsin Idea, Expertise, and Public Policy

- Nov. 10** Lecture: [Fred Clark](#) (Wisconsin’s Green Fire), “Conservation in Practice: Science, Policy, and the Wisconsin Idea”
- Nov. 12** Seminar discussion

Reading assignments TBA.

Week 12: The Wisconsin Idea, Expertise, and Public Policy

- Nov. 17** Lecture: [Jennifer Gaddis](#) (School of Human Ecology, UW–Madison), “The Past and Future of School Lunch as a Form of Public Care”
- Nov. 19** Seminar discussion

Jennifer E. Gaddis, “The Radical Roots of School Lunch,” in *The Labor of Lunch: Why We Need Real Food and Real Jobs in American Public Schools* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2019), 16–51. Available [online](#).

Caroline L. Hunt, “More Conscience for the Consumer,” in *Home Problems from a New Standpoint* (Boston: Whitcomb & Barrows, 1913), 121–34. Available [online](#).

Week 13: Revisiting Charles McCarthy’s Wisconsin Idea

- Nov. 24** Lecture: [Jeff Snowbarger](#) and [Ross Tangedal](#) (Department of English, UW–Stevens Point), “Charles McCarthy’s *The Wisconsin Idea*: Past, Present, and Future”
- Nov. 26** Thanksgiving recess (no class)

Charles McCarthy, *The Wisconsin Idea*, ed. Ross K. Tangedal and Jeff Snowbarger (Stevens Point, WI: Cornerstone Press, [1912] 2019), xi–xxviii, 1–14. Recommended: 27–67, 99–122.

Week 14: Inclusion and the Wisconsin Idea

- Dec. 1** Lecture: Torsheika Maddox (Office of Strategic Diversity Planning and Research, UW–Madison), “DEI @ UW–Madison: Past, Present, and Future”
- Dec. 3** Seminar discussion

Tamia Fowlkes, “[Redefining Legacy: A Historic Boulder’s Controversial History at UW-Madison](#),” *Wisconsin State Journal*, August 22, 2020.

Week 15: The Making of the Wisconsin Idea

- Dec. 8** Lecture: [Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen](#) (Department of History, UW–Madison), “The Ideas That Made the Wisconsin Idea”
- Dec. 10** Final wrap-up meeting

Jennifer Ratner-Rosenhagen, “Modernist Revolts: 1890–1920,” in *The Ideas That Made America: A Brief History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019), 97–115.

Precautions for COVID-19

Individuals are expected to wear a face covering while inside any university building. Face coverings must be worn correctly (i.e., covering both your mouth and nose) in the building if you are attending class in person.

If any student is unable to wear a face-covering, an accommodation may be provided due to disability, medical condition, or other legitimate reason. Students with disabilities or medical conditions who are unable to wear a face covering should contact the [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#) or their Access Consultant if they are already affiliated. Students requesting an accommodation unrelated to disability or medical condition should contact the [Dean of Students Office](#).

Students who choose not to wear a face covering may not attend in-person classes, unless they are approved for an accommodation or exemption. All other students not wearing a face covering will be asked to put one on or leave the classroom. Students who refuse to wear face coverings appropriately or adhere to other stated requirements will be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards](#) and will not be allowed to return to the classroom until they agree to comply with the face covering policy. The instructor may cancel or suspend a course in-person meeting if a person is in the classroom without an approved face covering in position over their nose and mouth and refuses to immediately comply.

Student should continually monitor themselves for COVID-19 symptoms and get tested for the virus if they have symptoms or have been in close contact with someone with COVID-19. ***Students must inform the instructor as soon as possible if they become ill or need to isolate or quarantine*** in order to may make alternate plans for how to proceed with the course. Students must keep the instructor informed concerning their illness and the anticipated extent of their absence from the course (either in-person or remote). The instructor will work with the student to provide alternative ways to complete the course work.

Note on disability and religious accommodations

Please inform the instructor as soon as possible if you are eligible for special accommodations for testing, assignments, or other aspects of the course. Accommodations are provided for students who qualify for disability services through the [McBurney Center](#).

If you wish to request a scheduling accommodation for religious observances, please send an email by the end of the second week of the course stating the date(s) for which you need accommodation. Campus policy requires that religious observances be accommodated if you make a timely request early in the term. See [here](#) for details.

Academic honesty

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin–Madison. Academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. For a complete description of the university's standards, the penalties for violating them, and the disciplinary process, please see the Dean of Students [website](#). Please also consult the UW Writing Center's handout on "[Acknowledging, Paraphrasing, and Quoting Sources](#)" before submitting written work. If you have questions about the standards for any assignment, please ask the instructor. You are expected to be familiar with the university's rules and regulations pertaining to academic honesty and integrity before you submit any written work. Lack of familiarity with these rules does not constitute an excuse for acts of misconduct.

Departmental notice of grievance and appeal rights

The Department of Sociology regularly conducts student evaluations of all instructors. Students who have more immediate concerns about this course should report them to the instructor or the department chair, Prof. Christine Schwartz (cschwart@ssc.wisc.edu).

Department learning objectives

Beyond the specific content covered in this course, it is designed to achieve the following instructional objectives designated as priorities by the Department of Sociology:

- *Critically Evaluate Published Research.* Sociology graduates will be able to read and evaluate published research as it appears in academic journals and popular or policy publications.
- *Communicate Skillfully:* Sociology majors write papers and make oral presentations that build arguments and assess evidence in a clear and effective manner.
- *Critical Thinking about Society and Social Processes:* Sociology graduates can look beyond the surface of issues to discover the "why" and "how" of social order and structure and consider the underlying social mechanisms that may be creating a situation, identify evidence that may adjudicate between alternate explanations for phenomena, and develop proposed policies or action plans in light of theory and data.