Thinking about how I might incorporate these past lectures and discussions into my final project has by extension led me to consider how they will be useful in the real world. I am increasingly grateful for the opportunity to be in this class and have the perspective of a systems thinker. Not only has it substantially increased my awareness of the relationships and systems around me in my every day life, but also I genuinely believe that I will be more successful in both my relationships and professional life as a result of this class. I think what has been most salient for me are not the larger concepts, but the smaller realizations. Things like the fact that there is not usually one "cure all" answer, and that understanding something comes from examining the relationships instead of the parts. It is curious to me that it has taken being in this class to come to these simple realizations, as they seem so commonsensical. Why is that in our society and education system we are taught to see things are being one dimensional and linear, when in fact they are more complex than we could even fathom. Why are we not taught to recognize alternate perspectives and bias earlier on? If we were, it would avoid a lot of our larger societal problems – both social and political. A world of systems thinkers would result in more empathetic, understanding, and aware individuals. Maybe this is the step we should take in attempting to transform our society in order to address larger problems such as global warming. If everyone understood the relationships and larger impacts of systems and was able to broaden their thinking, who knows what kind of results we might see.

On the same topic of teaching systems thinking in education systems, we have always been taught that presentations are important, but personally I have never been instructed on the mechanics of public speaking and presentations, and the dramatic difference it makes in how your message is received. This was a weird realization to come to, as I view communication as the quality that defines us as a species. Should we be taught to be more aware of the tone and way that we communicate when presenting topics and arguments? Or should this be left to be more inherently human and not formally instructed? I think we should be further instructed on how tone and atmosphere dictate how the message is received, maybe even introducing this from an earlier age. It makes such a large difference, and I believe that it is an extremely crucial skill and factor to be aware of. However, instruction on communication in more informal settings might take away from our natural flows of communication and result in more calculated interactions. It is just interesting to ponder why these topics are not taught or really even discussed in our education and societal systems when they are such a crucial part of what defines our species.

One of the things that I found most helpful from this weeks discussion was the concept of the triangle between satellite, ground level, and lab from Ostrom's reading on commons management. This concept is an easy formula and checklist when doing systems thinking to ensure that you are properly identifying different perspectives and approaching the problem from all angles. These alternate levels of examination will be a helpful reference for my final project in trying to provide a more complete description of my system, and ensuring that I am not missing any crucial parts of relationships. Another concept I took from this reading and class discussion is the lack of one cure all or solution. It is possible to suggest

interventions, and have some be more successful than others, but at the end of the day it is important to remember that systems are dynamic and ever changing. Because of this and the possibility for different perspectives, there is very rarely one "solution." This is hard for us to wrap our heads around because we are trained in academic settings and society to have one answer and search for this ultimate "solution" to problems. Instead, systems thinking has allowed me to be more comfortable with not having a concrete solution, and instead focus on recognizing the parts, relationships, and problems with the system. This feels like a more productive and mature way of seeing things, and now that I have this as a mindset I plan on implementing it into my final project when explaining possible interventions, as well as keeping it in mind more broadly in my life. I will be describing the systems and suggesting places for intervention, but I am now aware of the inherent difference between these two terms.

Similar to the concept of boundaries is the idea of multiple perspectives. This class has instilled the idea of the possibility for multiple perspectives since the beginning, but this past weeks readings and discussions have hammered home the point that there are undeniably multiple viewpoints. Our biases and different backgrounds make it impossible to have only one perspective of a system. This will be helpful to keep in mind while I describe my designated boundaries for the final project. I realize that I have to be careful to avoid portraying *my* vision of the system as the *universal* description of the system. In her introduction to warm research, Nora discussed the idea of being a part of the group of Caucasian females, but the importance of recognizing that she does not represent this entire group. This is something that stood out to me that I will keep in mind for both my final project and life more broadly.