

SOCI 375, Sociological Theory

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Fall 2016

Prerequisites: No

GE: upper-division GE D1 (Individual and Society)

Course Description

A critical examination of the writings of major classical and contemporary sociological theorists, including Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. This course will involve students in critical analysis of central sociological theories and offer them tools for understanding the development of sociological theory and its unique role in sociology.

This course will expose students to classical and contemporary sociological thought. We will exam classic works by Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. We will build on these classical works in the contemporary setting of globalization. Students will learn much about the world around us that we take for granted: what we often refer to in the abstract as *modernity*. What are the significant features of capitalism, democracy, science, religion, and civil society, and how do they shape the social world? These important sociologists and thinkers lived long ago, but they can teach us how modern society differs from other societies in different times and places. In this course, we will discuss important concepts like alienation, rationalization, and the collective consciousness and why they matter. Students will also learn the ways in which sociologists conduct research, make arguments, and construct theories.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate comprehension of the major sociological theorist's ideas and concepts as measured through exams and class discussions.
- Describe the role of theory in building sociological knowledge, and identify major theoretical orientations recognized by sociologists.
- Identify and contrast underlying assumptions in particular theoretical orientations.
- Discuss how theories reflect the historical and social contexts of the times and cultures in which they are developed.
- Demonstrate the ability to apply sociological concepts and theories to the social world through written exams and/or papers.
- Apply theoretical orientations to some of the substantive areas addressed by sociologists as measured in class discussions, exams and papers.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

There are four required books for the course.

Durkheim, Emile. *On Morality and Society*. ed. Robert T. Bellah. 1973. University of Chicago Press. ISBN -13: 978-0-226-17336-8

Lecher, Frank J. and John Boli (eds). *The Globalization Reader*, 4th edition. 2012. Wiley-Blackwell. ISBN 978-0-470-65563-4

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, ed. Robert C. Tucker. 1978. W.W. Norton & Co. ISBN 0-393-09040-X

Weber, Max. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. (translated by Stephen Kalberg) 2011. Oxford University Press. ISBN 978-0-19-974725-2

Other Readings

Additional assigned readings will be provided with access through Moodle or on Reserve at the library.

Grading

Four exams – 45% (lowest exams score is dropped)

Lead a class discussion – 15%

Participation and attendance – 15%

Final paper – 25%

Above is subject to change.