

Syllabus – SOCI 350B 001

Sociological Theories : Classical and Contemporary Approaches

Fall 2013

Class: Tuesday, Thursday, 3:30-5 PM
Frederic Lasserre Building, Room 104 (Tuesday)
Mathematics, Room 202 (Thursday)

Instructor: Erica McCollum

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Office: ANSO 3126

Office hour: Thursday 10-11am

Course Description

This course provides students with a foundation of classical theorists in sociology, as well as a small introduction to contemporary theoretical work that integrates and engages with some of the key ideas and questions raised by the classical works. The classical sociological theorists try to understand the changing nature of social organization in a time marked by increased individualization and division of labor, as well as the advancement of capitalism and the increasing rationalization of society. In the midst of these social processes these theorists raise and try to answer questions such as: What holds society together? What is the relationship between individuals and the communities they are a part of? How does the physical and social world shape who we are? How do people and ideas shape society? What are the implications of increasing individualism and a division of labor on social relations, morality and governance? How does power shape social relations and action? These questions, and the theories offered by the classical sociological theorists, are still relevant today, influencing current social theory, research and popular culture. This class will engage with these theorists and ideas to both provide a foundation with some of the key sociological theorists and also provide critical discussion and dialogue around some of these ideas and how they relate to our modern society.

Textbook

Calhoun, Craig et al. Classical Sociological Theory (3rd ed.). 2012 Classical Sociological Theory. Wiley-Blackwell.

Course Policies and Evaluation

Students are expected to come to class, having read the assigned articles and prepared to participate in discussions. The class will be organized so that along with lectures, students are given ample opportunity to discuss the material with each other. The Tuesday class will be focused on a lecture component while the Thursday class is focused on discussion and engagement in small groups with the material from the readings and lecture. Students will stay in the same groups over the course and will on occasion be asked to hand in a write up or report back their discussion. These groups will also be asked to write a paper that discusses a current social issue, trend, or problem, and then applies two theorists to the analysis of the issue. The remainder of the course grade will be based on two exams, a mid term and final exam. The midterm will consist mainly of short answer questions and the final will consist of short answer with one essay style question. The proportion of each to the final grade is below.

Midterm 35%

Final Exam 45%

Participation and group discussion assignments (including paper) 20%

Readings

Week 1 (September 5th) Overview of course

Week 2 (Sept 10th and 12th) Intro to Social Theory; Democracy, Individualism and Civil Society- De Tocqueville and Putnam

Democracy in America – Text, pp. 104-121

Putnam, R., Leonardi, R. & Nanetti, R. 1993. Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press – Course reserve in Connect, Pp.83; 86-99

Week 2 (Sept 17th and 19th) Marx

The German Ideology – Text, pp.142-155

Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844 – Text pp. 146-155.

September 17th Groups formed – email instructor if you cannot attend class

Week 3 (Sept 24th and Sept 26th) Marx

Manifesto of the Communist Party – Text pp. 156-171

Wage-Labor and Capital - Text pp.182-189

Week 4 (Oct 1st and Oct 3rd) Durkheim

The Rules of the Sociological Method - Text pp. 182-189.

The Division of Labor in Society - Text pp. 201-218

Week 5 (Oct 8th and Oct 10th) Durkheim

Suicide - Text pp. 255-264

The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life- Text pp. 243-253

Week 6 (Oct 15th and Oct 17th)

October 15th Midterm

October 17th Group planning for theory papers; Weber

Week 7 (Oct 22nd and Oct 24th) Weber

The Methodology of the Social Sciences- Text pp. 273-279

The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism- Text pp. 291-309

Week 8 (Oct 29th and Oct 31st) Weber

The Distribution of Power – Text pp. 310-319

Types of Legitimate Domination – Text pp. 320-327

Week 9 (Nov 5th and Nov 7th) Simmel

Group Expansion and the Development of Individuality –Text pp. 366-381

Week 10 (Nov 12th and Nov 14th) Mead; W.E.B. Du Bois

The Self – Text pp. 347-360 - Mead

The Souls of Black Folks- Text pp. 404-409 Du Bois

Papers due Nov 14th

Week 11 (Nov 19th and Nov 21st) Horkheimer and Adorno; Lukes

The Culture Industry - Text. Pp 465-477

Lukes, S. 2005. Power: A Radical View (2nd ed). New York: New York: Palgrave Macmillan. – Pp. 16-18;20-29 – Course reserve in Connect

Week 13 (Nov 26th and Nov 28th) Bourdieu

Bourdieu Social Space and Symbolic Space – Bourdieu

Structures, Habitus, Practices- Bourdieu

In C. Calhoun, et al. (Eds.) 2002. Contemporary Sociological Theory. Massachusetts: Blackwell. – Pp. 259-276 - Course reserve in Connect.