

Syllabus – SOCI 350B 001

Sociological Theories : Classical and Contemporary Approaches

Fall 2015

Class: Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 9-10 AM

Buchanan B215

Instructor: Erica McCollum

erica.mccollum@ubc.ca

Office: ANSO 3126

Office hours: Monday 10:30-12:30

Teaching Assistant: Joe Munsterman

Course Description

This course provides students with a foundation of classical theorists in sociology, as well as a brief introduction to contemporary theoretical work that 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? 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 to provide both a foundation of key works in sociology and also provide critical discussion and dialogue around some of their core concepts and how they relate to our modern society. The course will be organized around three key themes that are raised in these classical works. These three themes will be: 1) Freedom, Community and the Public Good; 2) Power and Domination; 3) and the Individual and Society.

Textbook

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

Learning objectives

1. Students should be able to identify and explain the concepts related to key classical theorists in sociology and understand how these concepts still inform sociological thought and research today.
2. Students should be able to identify the perspectives of the classical theorists and the ways in which they relate and are distinct from one another.
3. Students should be able to use the tools and concepts from the theories we cover to engage with some of the key themes that the theorists were grappling with, such as how do we think about social order in relation to freedom and individuality or the ways in which power and domination might work in society.

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 Monday and Wednesday classes will be focused on a lecture component while the Friday class is focused on discussion and engagement in small groups with the material from the readings and lecture and questions provided by the instructor. Students will stay in the same groups over the course and will be expected to take notes and on occasion hand in brief overviews of their discussion. Part of your grade in this course will be based on your contribution to these group discussions.

Academic integrity: Plagiarism and cheating are serious matters in the university and can result in a failing grade or suspension. Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class and will be reported to the department. If you are unsure of what constitutes plagiarism please refer to the UBC website: <http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/resource-guides/avoiding-plagiarism/>

Evaluation:

Class and Group participation 15%

This mark will be based on evidence that you are contributing to discussions in your group and with the wider class. Your mark will be based on attendance in the discussion class, the extent to which you engage in discussions and the extent to which you contribute to your group by taking on some of the group roles, such as reporting back or taking notes.

Midterm 20%

In class on **October 16th**

Final Exam 40%

To be scheduled during the exam period.

Paper 25%

Due November 25th

For this paper you will be asked to focus on one of the first two themes we covered in the course: Freedom, Community and the Public Good; or Power and Domination. You will be asked to discuss this topic in relation to a modern day trend or issue using the theorists we have covered from the class. 6-8 page paper.

Papers are due in class in hardcopy form on the date indicated on the syllabus. Late assignments will be docked 2 marks (or 2% of your overall grade) per day and should be date stamped and handed into the sociology office. Students should retain a copy of all submitted assignments.

Absences and missed assignments: If you would like to request an extension, makeup exam or be excused from an absence please provide a note from a doctor or Arts Advising.

Course Schedule

Freedom, Community and the Public Good

Week 1 (September 7th-11th) Introduction/ Durkheim

The Rules of the Sociological Method - Text pp. 201-218

Week 2 (Sept 14th-18th) Durkheim

The Rules of the Sociological Method - Text pp. 201-218.

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

Week 3 (Sept 21st- 25th) Durkheim

The Division of Labor in Society - Text pp. 220-242.

Suicide - Text pp. 255-264

Week 4 (Sept 28th-Oct 2nd) De Tocqueville

Democracy in America – Text pp. 103-121

Week 5 (Oct 5th-9th) Modern applications

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.86-99; 163-171.

Bellah, et. al. 2008. Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life. Berkeley, California: University of California Press - Course reserve in Connect Preface to the 1996 edition. Pp. Xiii-xxii; 41-51.

Week 6 (October 12th-16th) Midterm Exam

October 12th No class – Thanksgiving

October 14th Review class

October 16th Midterm

Power and Domination

Week 7 (Oct 19th-23rd) Marx

The German Ideology – Text pp.142-145

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

Week 8 (26th-30th) Marx

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

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

Week 9 (November 2nd-6th) Weber

‘Objectivity’ in Social Science - Text pp. 273-279

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

Week 10 (November 9th-13th) Weber

November 11th No class –Remembrance day

Types of Legitimate Domination – Text pp. 320-327

Bureaucracy - Text pp. 328- 338

Week 11 (Nov 16th-20th)

Lukes, S. 2005. Power: A Radical View (2nd ed). New York: New York: Palgrave Macmillan. – Pp. 14-29 – Course reserve in Connect

The Culture Industry - Text pp. 465-477 (Horkheimer and Adorno)

Nov 20 - Paper peer-editing

The Individual and Society

Week 12 (Nov 23rd-27th) Mead; W.E.B. Du Bois

November 25th Papers due

The Self – Text pp. 347-360 (Mead)

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

Week 13 (Nov 30th-Dec 4th) Simmel

The Stranger – Text pp. 362-365

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

Simmel, G. 1971. *On Individuality and social forms; selected writings*. Chicago:

University of Chicago Press. The metropolis and mental life - 324-339- Course reserve in Connect