

SOC 3701 – SOCIAL THEORY

Spring 2015

MW 10:10 – 11:50

Blegen Hall 150

Professor:	Penny Edgell	TA:	Monica Saralampi
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Office Hrs:	Mon. 1 – 2:30 or appt. Mon/Tues/Weds	Office Hrs:	Tues/Thurs 10-11:30 or appt.

Overview and Objectives

This course is designed to provide an over-view of the major theoretical traditions in the discipline of sociology. Sociological theory is like an evolving conversation about core questions regarding the nature of social organization and the integration of the individual into society. These questions tend to revolve around a limited set of themes:

- The relationship between the *individual* and *society*:
 - How are individuals shaped and constrained by the society in which they live?
 - Can individuals change society? What role do elite groups and social movements play in shaping our social world?
 - How does power work in a given social system?
- How *symbolic communication* and *relationships of exchange* create social order:
 - Are individuals rational calculators of costs and benefits, or communicators who create and inhabit symbolic universes?
 - Is society comprised of relationships of exchange between rational agents, or is it held together by rituals that create identity and solidarity?
 - Is the social order shaped mostly by the economic system and how it organizes resources (e.g. capitalism), or are technologies of communication and control what matter in contemporary mass society?
- The nature of historical epochs and the kinds of social organization prominent within each:
 - What makes “modern” society distinctive? The centralized, bureaucratic state? The market and its relations of production? The ongoing rational organization of knowledge and social relations?
 - How does increasing globalization foster new theories of how societies work?

Theory is shaped by the social location of the theorist, and over the 20th century, sociological theory has expanded to grapple in new ways with problems of power, difference, and inequality. In this class, we will learn how sociological theory has developed over time, and explore how and why it is useful in understanding the world we live in today.

Reading and Materials

One required reader is available for purchase at the Campus Store, and available on reserve at Wilson Library:

Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory, 2nd edition, eds. Appelrouth and Edles

Supplemental readings will be passed out in class or posted on the course website for download (fair use only, one copy per student).

Exams and Assignments

Exams. Four in-class exams, short-answer and short essay, **80% of grade total, 20% each.** Exams are designed to test comprehension of reading, main concepts presented in lecture, and ability to integrate materials to answer questions that show an understanding of major theoretical arguments.

In-class writing assignments. 10 assignments, **20% of grade total.** Short in-class writing assignments designed to assess reading comprehension and ability to apply materials to cases or examples.

0 points	Assignment demonstrates no knowledge or comprehension of reading
1 point	Assignment competently done and displays adequate basic knowledge of reading

A (100% credit)	9-10 points
B (90% credit)	7-8 points
C (80% credit)	5-6 points
F (no credit)	0-4 points

Grading

	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3	20%
Exam 4	20%
In-Class Writing Assignments	20%

Grade Scale for Final Course Grade

94 - 100	A	74 - 77	C
91 - 93	A -	71 - 73	C -
88 - 90	B +	68 - 70	D +
84 - 87	B	64 - 67	D
81 - 83	B -	61 - 63	D -
78 - 80	C +	60 & below	F

Course Policies

- * **Incompletes** will only be granted under extreme circumstances such as a serious illness, severe injury, or death in the immediate family. **Under no circumstances will an Incomplete be awarded simply to avoid a failing grade.** I will negotiate the terms of Incompletes with individual students.
- * Requests for reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities will be honored; requests must be made through Disability Services. Please let me know the first week of classes if you have need of accommodation.
- * **Courtesy in the classroom is required. Cellphones are to be turned off, newspapers put away, etc. Laptop computers are allowed unless students using them engage in distracting behavior (laughing and talking while surfing the web, etc.)**
- * Class discussions will be conducted with respect for fellow students and for diverse points of view. Behavior that disrupts the learning environment will not be tolerated.
- * **No make-ups** for in-class writing assignments.
- * **No make-up exams will be given unless you receive an exception from the professor, based on a documented medical emergency or family emergency, or service in the armed forces or reserves. Exceptions will be given rarely, and only after in-person consultation in the professor's office hours.**
- * This class will follow and enforce the University Student Conduct Code on scholastic dishonesty. Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will not be tolerated.

See the syllabus attachments for other relevant departmental, College, and university policies, and for a list of support services for students.

Note: The course outline assumes that all reading will be completed by the beginning of class on Monday. In-class writing assignments may occur on either Monday or Wednesday, and will draw upon the readings.

I. INTRODUCTION

Week 1 Getting Started

Jan. 19 **Martin Luther King Day -- No Class**

Jan. 21 First Class

Why (& What) Sociology? The Discipline in a Post-Disciplinary Age
 Why (& What) Theory? Theory as a Way to See
 Nuts and Bolts - Course Outline and Objectives, Grading and Policies, Q & A

Reading: Introductory Material

Classical and Contemporary Theory, Introduction, pp. 1-18

Week 2 The Canon and Classical Theory

Jan. 26 Modernity, Schmodernity -- or, Why Should We Care?

Jan. 28 Foundations - Classical Theories of Society
 Marx, Weber, Durkheim and the Problem of Modernity

Reading: Articles from *Contexts* (available on course website):

On Modernization:

“Bin Laden and Other Thoroughly Modern Muslims,” Charles Kurzman, Winter 2002

On Inequality:

“Sociology Finds Discrimination in the Law,” by Ellen Berry, Spring 2009 AND

“The Moynihan Report, a Retrospective,” by Kate Ledger, Fall 2009

On the Family, Tradition, and Individualism:

“The Changing Landscape of Love and Marriage,” By Kathleen E. Hull, Ann Meier, and Timothy Ortyl, Spring 2010.

II. FOUNDATIONAL WORKS AND CORE PROBLEMS

Week 3 Alienation - The Sociology of Karl Marx

Feb. 2 Lecture - Key Concepts and Arguments

Feb. 4 Discussion and Active Learning - Applying Theory to Modern Life

Reading: *Classical & Contemporary Theory*, pp. 20-76

Week 4 Max Weber - Rationality, Authority, and *Verstehen*

Feb. 9 Key Concepts and Arguments

Feb. 11 Discussion and Active Learning

Reading: *Classical & Contemporary Theory*, pp. 125- 184, *required*

Week 5 Emile Durkheim -- Division of Labor and Moral Order

Feb. 16 Key Concepts and Arguments

Feb. 18 Discussion and Active Learning

Reading: *Classical & Contemporary Theory*, pp. 77-124, *required*

Week 6 "The Canon" - Review and Exam 1

Feb. 23 Review Session for Exam 1

Feb. 25 **Test 1 -- Marx/Weber/Durkheim**

III. THE SELF, INTERACTION, AND EXCHANGE

Week 7 The Self and "Knowability"

March 2 The Modern Self - George Herbert Mead

March 4 Knowing Oneself, Knowing the Other - DuBois & Simmel

Reading *Classical and Contemporary Theory:*

- George Herbert Mead, "Self," pp. 307-321
- Georg Simmel, "The Stranger," "The Metropolis and Mental Life," pp. 241-254
- W.E.B. DuBois, "The Souls of Black Folk," PP. 268-283

Week 8 Interaction and Exchange

March 9 Symbolic Interaction - Goffman, Berger and Luckman

March 11 Social Exchange - Homans and Blau

Reading: *Classical and Contemporary Theory:*

- Goffman, "Presentation of Self in Everyday Life," pp. 479-491
- Berger and Luckman, "The Social Construction of Reality," pp. 539-549
- George Homans, "Social Behavior as Exchange," pp. 420-427
- Peter Blau, "Exchange and Power in Social Life," pp. 434-443

***** SPRING BREAK*****

Week 9 The Self & Interaction - Review and Exam 2

March 23 Lecture & Exam Review

March 25 Test 2 -- The Self, Interaction, and Exchange

IV. AGENCY AND SOCIETY RECONSIDERED

Week 10 Communicative Action and Reflexive Agency

March 30 Communicative Action and Civil Society - Habermas

April 1 Discussion and Active Learning

Reading: *Classical and Contemporary Theory*, pp. 685-716

Week 11 Dual Structures & Agency

April 6 Anthony Giddens, Structuration Theory

April 8 Discussion and Active Learning

Reading: *Classical and Contemporary Theory*, pp. 716-745

Week 12 Agency & Society Reconsidered - Review and Exam

April 13 Review Session

April 15 **Test 3 - Agency and Society Reconsidered**

V. DISCIPLINE AND DIFFERENCE - CONTEMPORARY PROBLEMS

Week 13 Foucault on Sexuality

April 20 Michel Foucault on Discourse and Power

April 22 Discussion and Active Learning

Reading: Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, pp. 53-114 (available on website)

Week 14 Silences and Standpoints

April 27 Feminisms 1

April 29 Feminisms 2

Reading: *Classical and Contemporary Theory:*
Smith, "Institutional Ethnography" and "The Everyday World as Problematic," pp. 566-573
Collins, "Black Feminist Thought," pp. 578-586
Kipnis, "(Male) Desire and (Female) Disgust: Reading *Hustler*," pp. 373 - 391
 in *Cultural Studies*, Routledge, eds. Grossberg *et al.*, Routledge, 1991.
 Available on Course Website. Also reprinted in Bound and Gagged, by
 Laura Kipnis, electronic resource, Univ. of Minn. library

Week 15 Wrapping Up

May 4 Summing Up and Exam Review
 Class Evaluations

May 6 **Test 4 - Contemporary Problems - Feminisms & Foucault**

Support Services

The *Mental Health Clinic at Boynton Health Service* is available to those who have paid the Student Services Fee, providing phone and walk-in assessment on an urgent basis, as well as scheduled medication evaluations and management, chemical health assessment and counseling, and individual, couples, and group therapy. Additional resources for the management of stress are available through the Health Promotion Department at Boynton Health Service. (<http://www.bhs.umn.edu/services/mentalhealth.htm>).

University Counseling & Consulting Services provides confidential counseling programs with professional counselors who can help students address academic stresses, personal and relationship concerns, or feelings of anxiety or depression. Walk in counseling is available as is consultation for faculty and staff who are concerned about a student. (<http://www.uccs.umn.edu/>).

Disability Services provides assistance with academic accommodations for students with diagnosed, severe, and persistent mental health conditions. (<http://ds.umn.edu>)

The *Writing Center* provides free writing instruction for all University of Minnesota students – graduate and undergraduate – at all stages of the writing process, through one-on-one sessions with trained writing teachers. Contact information: 306B Lind Hall, 625-1893 (<http://writing.umn.edu/>).

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS POLICY

GRADES: University academic achievement is graded under two systems: A-F (with pluses and minuses) and S-N. Choice of grading system and course level (1xxx/3xxx/4xxx) is indicated on the registration website; changes in grade scale may not be made after the second week of the semester. Some courses may be taken under only one system; limitations are identified in the course listings. The Department of Sociology requires A-F registration in courses required for the major/minor. University regulations prescribe the grades that will be reported on your transcript.

- A Represents achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements (4.00 grade points)
- A- 3.67 grade points
- B+ 3.33 grade points
- B Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements (3.00 grade points)
- B- 2.67 grade points
- C+ 2.33 grade points
- C Achievement that meets the basic course requirements in every respect (2.00 grade points)
- C- 1.67 grade points
- D+ 1.33 grade points
- D Achievement worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements (1.00 grade point)
- F Performance that fails to meet the basic course requirements (0 grade points)
- S Represents achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better.
- N No credit. Its use is now restricted to students not earning an S on the S-N grade base
- I Incomplete, a temporary symbol assigned when the instructor has a "reasonable expectation" that you 1) can successfully complete unfinished work on your own no later than one year from the last day of classes and 2) believes that legitimate reasons exist to justify extending the deadline for course completion. The instructor may set date conditions for make-up work. If a course is not completed as prescribed or not made up as agreed within the year, the I will lapse to an F if registered on the A-F grade base or an N if registered on the S-N grade base.
- W Official withdrawal from a course after the end of the second week of the semester. You must file a course cancellation request before the end of the sixth week of the semester to ensure that the W, rather than the F, will be formerly entered on your record.

FINAL EXAMINATIONS (see schedule on the Calendar web site at <http://onestop.umn.edu/onestop/Calendars/FinalExams.html>): You are required to take final examinations at the scheduled times. Under certain circumstances, however, you may request final examination schedule adjustment in your college office. Instructors are obligated to schedule make-up examinations within the final examination period for students who have three final examinations within a 16-hour period. Instructors also are encouraged to reschedule examinations for students with religious objections to taking an examination on a given day. You must submit your request for an adjustment in your schedule at least two weeks before the examination period begins. For assistance in resolving conflicts, call the CLA Student Information Office at 625-2020. If you miss a final, an F or N is recorded. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make up the examination. Final examinations may be rescheduled by the instructor only through the official procedure for that purpose (as noted on the above web page). Final examinations may not be scheduled for the last day of class or earlier or for Study Day. If an examination is rescheduled at the instructor's request, and you have an examination conflict because of it, you are entitled to be given the final examination at an alternative time within the regularly scheduled examination period for that semester.

CLASS ATTENDANCE: As a CLA student, you are responsible for attending class and for ascertaining the particular attendance requirements for each class or department. You should also learn each instructor's policies concerning make-up of work for absences. Instructors and students may consult the CLA Classroom, Grading, and Examination Procedures Handbook for more information on these policies (<http://advisingtools.class.umn.edu/cgep/>).

COURSE PERFORMANCE AND GRADING: Instructors establish ground rules for their courses in conformity with their department policies and are expected to explain them at the first course meeting. This includes announcement of office hours and location, the kind of help to be expected from the instructor and teaching assistants, and tutorial services, if available. The instructor also describes the general nature of the course, the work expected, dates for examinations and paper submissions, and expectations for classroom participation and attendance. Instructors determine the standards for grading in their classes and will describe expectations, methods of evaluation, and factors that enter into grade determination. The special conditions under which an incomplete (I) might be awarded also should be established. The college does not permit you to submit extra work to raise your grade unless all students in the class are afforded the same opportunity.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: You are entitled to a good learning environment in the classroom. Students whose behavior is disruptive either to the instructor or to other students will be asked to leave (the policies regarding student conduct are outlined in the CLA Classroom, Grading, and Examination Procedures online at <http://advisingtools.class.umn.edu/cgep/>).

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: University instructors may restrict or prohibit the use of personal electronic devices in his or her classroom, lab, or any other instructional setting. For the complete policy, visit: <http://www.policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html>

SCHOLASTIC CONDUCT: The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. Students cannot evade (intentionally or unintentionally) a grade sanction by withdrawing from a course before or after the misconduct charge is reported. This also applies to late withdrawals, including discretionary late cancellation (also known as the "one-time-only drop"). For the complete policy, visit: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/default/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS MANAGEMENT: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student's ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu/>.

A REMINDER OF RELEVANT POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
*** SOCIOLOGY DEPARTMENT POLICIES ***

GRADE INFORMATION: Grades are due in the Office the Registrar within 3 business days after the final examination. No information regarding grades will be released by the department office staff to anyone except designated personnel in Records and college offices. Students may access their own grades through their computer account. They may do this by following the directions on the One Stop web site at <http://onestop.umn.edu/>.

INCOMPLETES: It is the instructor's responsibility to specify conditions under which an Incomplete (I) grade is assigned. Students should refer to the course syllabus and talk with the instructor as early as possible if they anticipate not completing the course work. Coursework submitted after the final examination will generally be evaluated down unless prior arrangements are made in writing by the instructor. University policy states that if completion of the work requires the student to attend class in substantial part a second time, assigning an "I" grade is NOT appropriate. Incompletes are appropriate only if the student can make up the coursework independently with the same professor.

MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS: Arrangements for special examinations must be made directly with the instructor who taught the course and who is responsible for approving and supervising the examination or making individual arrangements. Circumstances for missing an exam include, but are not necessarily limited to: verified illness, participation in athletic events or other group activities sponsored by the University, serious family emergencies, subpoenas, jury duty, military service, and religious observances. It is the responsibility of the student to notify faculty members of such circumstances as far in advance as possible.

GRADE CHANGES: Grades properly arrived at are not subject to renegotiation unless all students in the class have similar opportunities. Students have the right to check for possible clerical errors in the assignment of grades by checking with the instructor and/or teaching assistant.

Students with justifiable complaints about grades or classroom procedures have recourse through well-established grievance procedures. You are expected to confer first with the course instructor. If no satisfactory solution is reached, the complaint should be presented in writing to the department Director of Undergraduate Studies or the Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising (909 Soc Sci). If these informal processes fail to reach a satisfactory resolution, other formal procedures for hearing and appeal can be invoked. See the departmental advisor in 923 Social Sciences to explore options.

DISABILITY SERVICES: Students with disabilities that affect their ability to participate fully in class or to meet all course requirements are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor so that appropriate accommodations can be arranged. For more info contact Disabilities Services in 230 McNamara.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT: University policy prohibits sexual harassment as defined in the December 1998 policy statement, available at the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action. Questions or concerns about sexual harassment should be directed to this office in 419 Morrill Hall.

SOCIOLOGY PROGRAMS INFORMATION: The Sociology Department offers two options for the Bachelor of Arts degree and a Bachelor of Science degree. We also have an Honors Program. Students interested in majoring in Sociology should view the online-information session about the major. Further information can be obtained from the following persons and offices or online at <http://www.soc.umn.edu/undergrad/>
General information, Sociology Department, 909 Social Sciences - 624-4300
Coordinator of Undergraduate Advising, Bobby Bryant, 923 Social Sciences – 624-4300
Director of Undergraduate Studies, Professor Teresa Swartz, 933 Social Sciences – 626-1862
Sociology Honors Advisor, Professor Kathleen Hull, 1131 Social Sciences - 624-4339
Director of Graduate Studies, Professor Ann Meier, 1074 Social Sciences – 624-9828 and/or
Graduate Program Associate, Becky Drasin, 927 Social Sciences - 624-2093

Undergraduate jobs, internships, volunteer and research opportunities, scholarships, and much more can be found in the Undergraduate Resources site - <http://z.umn.edu/socugrad>