

SOCIAL THEORY
COURSE SYLLABUS
Spring 2020

Course Number: SOCI 5328 (21763)

Time: Monday's 6:00 - 8:50 p.m.

Location: Old Main Conference Room

Instructor: Angela Frederick

Office: Old Main 315

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Office Hours: T/Th 10:00 – 11:30 and by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW AND REQUIREMENTS

Course Overview. This graduate seminar will provide students with a survey of social theory, covering important thinkers from the classical and contemporary eras. The bulk of the classical approaches we will discuss concern efforts to come to grips with rapid social change in Western Europe and North America. Many of the theories, particularly from European thinkers, have been variously critical of the forms and paths of capitalist modernity as it transformed social practices and social landscapes across the 'West.' In the portion of the course devoted to contemporary theory, we will take up questions of power, inequality, and identity.

Learning Objectives. Students who complete this course should achieve the following objectives:

- Be able to name and describe the major theories that have shaped the discipline of sociology.
- Cultivate an understanding of how sociologists employ social theory in their research.
- Be able to effectively apply both classical and contemporary social theory to enhance your own research.

Required Readings. The following book is required for the course. All additional assigned readings are available on the course Blackboard page.

- Applerouth, Scott and Laura Desfor Edles. 2012. *Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory*. Third Edition. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.

Requirements. Grades for this course are distributed as follows:

- **Discussion Question Sets – 25%.** Throughout the semester, you will submit weekly discussion question sets, based on Bloom’s Taxonomy. Discussion questions are due on Mondays via email by noon. Students can submit discussion sets after this deadline, up until the start of that week’s class, for a penalty of one letter grade. Discussion sets will not be accepted after class has begun that day. Your lowest discussion set grade will be dropped, and the remainder of your discussion set grades will be averaged to comprise 25% of your final grade.
- **Mid-Term Exam – 15%.** Your midterm exam will be a take-home exam consisting of multiple essays.
- **Final Exam – 15%.** Your final exam will be a take-home exam consisting of multiple essays.
- **Final Paper -- 30%.** Your final paper will be 10 pages in length. You will select the topic with my guidance and approval.
- **Class Participation – 10%.** This portion of your grade will be determined by the frequency and quality of your participation in class discussions. To earn high marks for this portion of your grade, you should prepare to be a prominent voice in every class discussion and demonstrate that you are engaging thoroughly with course readings and concepts. Quality participation involves a high level of engagement with course material, not just how many personal stories you share during class. Quality participation also requires active listening to others and efforts to illuminate what others are saying.
- **Discussion Leader – 5%.** Once during the semester, you will serve as discussion leader. Discussion leaders are responsible for writing the major concepts we should address for the week on the blackboard before class begins. As our discussion advances, discussion leaders will mark on the blackboard that we’ve addressed each concept. Toward the end of each day’s discussion, these leaders will ensure that we shift our conversation to cover concepts not yet addressed.

Grading Scale. The grading scale in this course is as follows:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 0%-59%

Attendance Policy. Attendance will be taken during every class session. Because this class meets just once a week, missing a class equates to missing an entire week of class time. Attendance during every meeting is therefore mandatory. After your first absence, your final grade will drop by five points for every additional class you miss. Exceptions will only be made for family emergencies, illness, religious holidays, or school-sanctioned events, for which documentation will be required. Please note that discussion sets and reflection papers will not be accepted on days students acquire an unexcused absence.

Grading Policy. All assignments should be submitted before their deadlines. Five points will be deducted from your papers and exams should you submit them after the deadline for the day. Ten points will be deducted from your papers and exams for each day submitted after the deadlines. Late discussion question sets will not be accepted after class has begun for that day.

Honor Code. As in all courses at UTEP, students are expected to act honorably in accordance with our mutual educational objectives. If you use someone else's idea, opinion, concept, or fact, you must cite your source. If you use more than three consecutive words from someone else, you must put the phrase in quotation marks and cite your source. This includes notes from class. Failure to do so is plagiarism and will result in a penalty.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (Jan 27): Introductions

- Course overview and introductions.

WEEK 2 (Feb 3): Karl Marx & Antonio Gramsci

- Chap#2 "Marx"
- Crehan, Preface and Chap 1 in *Gramsci's Common Sense*.

- Crehan, “The Common Sense of Donald J. Trump”

WEEK 3 (Feb 10): Emile Durkheim

- Chap#3 “Durkheim”
- Mueller & Abrutyn, “Are Suicidal Behaviors Contagious?”

WEEK 4 (Feb 17): Max Weber

- Chap#4 “Weber”
- Jackson Lears, “From Salvation to Self-Realization”
- Ritzer, Chap#16 in “McDonaldization of Society” (most important section is on the four components of McDonaldization)

WEEK 5 (Feb 24): W. E. B. Du Bois

- Chap#7 titled “W. E. B. Du Bois”
- Morris, “Preface and Chap 7 in “The Scholar Denied”

WEEK 6 (March 2): Erving Goffman

- Chap#12 “Erving Goffman” (skim the sections discussing other theorists)
- Goffman, Chap I in “Stigma”
- Frederick, “Visibility, Respectability, and Disengagement”

WEEK 7 (March 9): Open Day

- **Mid-Term Exam Due at the start of class**

WEEK 8 (March 16): Spring Break

WEEK 9 (March 23): Daniel Bell & Arlie Russell Hochschild

- Chap#12 “Russell Hochschild”
- Bell, “The Coming of Postindustrial Society”

WEEK 10 (March 30): Michel Foucault

- Chap#14 “Foucault”
- Browne, chaps from “Dark Matters”

WEEK 11 (April 6): Pierre Bourdieu, Part I

- Chap#14 “Bourdieu”
- Khan, Chaps 1 & 3 in “Privilege”

WEEK 12 (April 13): Pierre Bourdieu Part II

- Bourdieu, “Forms of Capital”
- Lareau, Chaps 6, 7, 10, and 12 in “Unequal Childhoods”

WEEK 13 (April 20): Theorizing Gender

- Ridgeway & Correll, “Unpacking the Gender System”
- Bridges, “A Very Gay Straight?”

WEEK 14 (April 27): Theorizing Intersectionality

- Chap#10 “Patricia Hill Collins”
- Frederick & Shifrer, “Race and Disability: From Analogy to Intersectionality”
- Terriquez, “Intersectional Mobilization, Social Movement Spillover, and Queer Youth Leadership in the Immigrant Rights Movement”

WEEK 15 (May 4): Borderlands Theory

- Anzaldúa, chapters from “Borderlands”
- Additional reading to be announced

WEEK 16 (May 11): Open Day

- **Final exam due before class begins**