

GENERAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY SYLLABUS

SOCIO 4301: General Sociological Theory

Instructor: Olga Ochoa

Office Hours: Monday, Friday @10:30-11:30am

Email: olochoa2@utep.edu

Course Description

In this course you will learn how to apply critical-thinking skills and strategies to sociological concepts. This course reviews social theory, covering important thinkers from the classical and contemporary eras. Theory in its most simple form is defined as an idea that guides observations of the world. In the portion of the course devoted to contemporary theory, we will take up questions of power, inequality, and identity. In addition to engaging directly with theory, a central component of this course will be to explore how sociologists apply and challenge theory as they analyze empirical evidence. It is important to understand the role of these theories in analyzing and understanding the complexities of societal dynamics. Understanding theory can be a challenging task for many students. It often involves repeatedly reading the same paragraph, referring to a dictionary for unfamiliar words, and taking pauses to reflect on the material before progressing to the next paragraph. To further analyze and comprehend the text, it is beneficial to take thorough notes while reading and ask yourself relevant questions about the content. This proactive approach facilitates a deeper understanding of the theory being studied.

This is an asynchronous course, 100% online. We will NOT meet. Assignments, discussions, and check-ins will be posted weekly. You will receive an email reminding you of what must be completed for the week. It is important to note that ALL assignments are due Saturday by midnight. I have a very strict NO LATE policy. Few exceptions are made, in which documentation must be provided in order to receive an extension. All feedback will be given through blackboard or emails if requested.

Required Text

Sociological Theory by George Ritzer & Jeffrey Stepnisky 11th edition

Writing Overview

This course focuses heavily on writing skills. Each assignment in this course will necessitate academic writing utilizing sociological theory. The objective is for you to apply the concepts and knowledge acquired in this course to various scenarios or contexts. In all of your assignments, including the incorporation of supporting evidence and appropriate citations, it is expected that you adhere to the guidelines of the APA citation style. Writing in this course aims to expand on the fundamental concepts of social theory. Therefore, it is crucial that you develop your thoughts and ideas, effectively organize your writing, and provide proper acknowledgment when necessary. Things to remember when writing:

- Your voice should be heard, even when using someone else’s work
- Giving credit when needed is important, do not plagiarize
- Writing takes time, never submit a first draft
- Keep in mind who your audience is
- Review the rubric for each writing assignment to earn full credit.
- Always use APA Citation style

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html

Course Requirements

1. Unit Discussions (25 points each)

Discussions are an important component of understanding and applying what you have read in social theory. They allow you to make connections between the theories and real-life situations, enhancing comprehension and critical thinking skills. By reflecting on the theories and considering their relevance in modern scenarios, you can further deepen your understanding and grasp the practical implications of social theory in today's world.

DISCUSSION’S RUBRIC		
Answer question	answer all questions in an acceptable level of quality.	5 points
Text-Evidence (In-text citations)	Include direct examples, quotes, or phrases from the text, book, or other articles used.	10 points
Respond to two Discussion:	Quality responses are required. Your responses must be more than “I agree” or “I feel the same way”	10 points
TOTAL		25 points

2. Unit Check-Ins (60 points each)

Unit check-ins are brief assessments designed to evaluate your understanding of the chapters that have been covered within a specific unit. These checks typically consist of 20 multiple-choice questions. By completing these quizzes, you can gauge your comprehension of the material and identify areas that may require further review or clarification.

3. Unit Assignments (100 points each)

In this course, there will be three unit assignments which serve as opportunities for you to apply the knowledge you have acquired. These assignments will require you to demonstrate your understanding and comprehension of the topics covered throughout the unit. It is important to note that these assignments must adhere to the guidelines APA format.

1. Unit Presentation: Select a social theorist and create a slideshow presentation of what you learned. You are allowed to use outside sources, but make sure to reference them. Presentation must be a minimum of 8 slides and no more than 12. Add a title slide and a

reference slide, which will not count towards the minimum requirement. Each slide must include: summarization of what you learned, image(s), reflection 1-2 sentences. If you don't have access to Powerpoint, create a google account and use google slides for free. Download your slideshow/powerpoint as a PDF and submit it as a PDF.

2. **Infographic:** Create an infographic. The purpose is to create a visual image used to represent information or data. Search infographics online for examples. Include the following information: Attention grabber, Summary of the theory selected, images that summarize major facts, and other information/content that educates the reader on the theory selected
3. **Reflection:** Write a two-page reflection about the chapter using APA Citation.

Assignments Points	Expectation
40	Completes assignment requested (Slideshow, infographic, reflection)
40	Text-Evidence: Student provides text-evidence to support writing. Use APA Format, include a reference page at the end.
20	Organizational Structure : Student demonstrates organization in their writing: Introduction, body, and conclusion. APA format of 12 size font, title page, reference page, 1-inch margins, cover page. The infographic will have a different structure.
100 points	TOTAL

4. Final Assignment (100 points)

Students will write an essay applying sociological theories to the study of a specific social issue. When it comes to the formatting requirements, ensure that the font size is set to 12, specifically using Times New Roman font. Furthermore, your document should be double-spaced, providing appropriate spacing between lines. APA citations are a crucial component of academic writing. In order to receive full credit for your assignment, it is essential to include in-text citations to support and acknowledge any information, ideas, or quotes that you have obtained from external sources. Neglecting to provide proper in-text citations may result in a deduction of 40 points automatically, so it is important to be diligent and accurate in your referencing.

Assignments Points	Expectation
40	Applies sociological theory to a specific social issue and demonstrates an understanding of the theory.
40	Text-Evidence: Student provides text-evidence to support writing. Use APA Format, include a reference page at the end.
20	Organizational Structure : Student demonstrates organization in their writing: Introduction, body, and conclusion. APA format of 12 size font, title page, reference page, 1-inch margins, cover page.
100 points	TOTAL

Grading

The overall grade of this course is based on a point system. The more points you earn the higher your grade will be. This is done to give you an advantage. The more points you earn in the assignments you find less difficult will benefit you in assignments you find difficult. Using text-evidence is highly important in this course. If you look at the rubrics text-evidence is worth a lot of points!

Letter Grade	Percentages	Points
A	100-90	1515-1363
B	89-79	1362-1196
C	78-69	1195-1045
D	68-59	1044-894
F	58-below	893-below

ALTERNATIVE MEANS OF SUBMITTING WORK IN CASE OF TECHNICAL ISSUES

I strongly suggest that you submit your work with plenty of time to spare in the event that you have a technical issue with the course website, network, and/or your computer. I also suggest you save all your work (answers to discussion points, quizzes, exams, and essays) in a separate Word document as a back-up. This way, you will have evidence that you completed the work and will not lose credit. If you are experiencing difficulties submitting your work through the course website, please contact the UTEP Help Desk. You can email me your back-up document as a last resort before the due date!

Academic Integrity

To excel in this class and achieve a high grade, it is important to dedicate time and effort to this course.. Keeping up with the assigned readings and materials is crucial for success. It will enhance your understanding of the subject matter and allow you to actively participate in class discussions and assignments. Plagiarism, or using someone else's work without proper acknowledgment, will not be tolerated. It is important to respect your own work and the work of others by properly referencing any sources used.

Additionally, following all guidelines for writing assignments and other tasks is crucial. Not meeting the required length for papers or failing to adhere to the specified formatting and citation style may result in a lower grade. Therefore, pay close attention to the instructions provided for each assignment and ensure that you fulfill all requirements. Respecting your peers is essential in creating a positive and conducive learning environment.

Grades in this class are based on a point system, meaning that the more points you accumulate, the higher your grade will be. By adhering to these guidelines and committing to your studies, you can expect to succeed in this class and achieve a high grade.

Late work

NO LATE WORK ACCEPTABLE in this course. Meeting deadlines for assignments is a strict requirement for this course. While there may be exceptional circumstances that could warrant an extension, they will be infrequent and granted only in rare cases in which you must provide documentation.

Technical Problems

I recommend NOT using Internet explorer or Safari when using blackboard for better internet connection use Google chrome or Firefox. Call the HELP DESK if you have any technical problems.

Drop Rule

If you make the decision to drop the course, it is your responsibility to do so. I will not drop the course for you. Failure to do so may result in a grade of “F” on the student’s academic record. Students are limited to a six course drop during their academic career. There are a few exceptions that may allow a student to drop a course without having it counted toward the six-drop limit. For more information on that check the UTEP’s academic website.

Note: If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS’ Staff are the only individuals who can validate and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities.

Guidance on Artificial Intelligence

AI prohibited

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), is *not allowed* for assignments in this class. Each student is expected to use critical and creative thinking skills to complete tasks and not rely on computer-generated ideas. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

AI allowed with proper acknowledgement

Use of AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), is *only allowed with proper attribution given for its use*.

Students must properly cite and give full credit to the program used upon submission of every relevant assignment. For example, text generated using ChatGPT must be cited:

Chat-GPT(version). Date of query (year/month/day). “Text of your query.”
Generated using OpenAI. <https://chat.openai.com/>

Using AI for brainstorming

Some AI technologies or automated tools, particularly generative AI such as [ChatGPT](#) or [DALL-E](#), can be beneficial during the early brainstorming stages of an activity, and you are welcome to explore them for that purpose. However, keep in mind that AI-generated ideas are not your own and may hinder your ability to think critically and creatively about a problem. It is also important to remember that these technologies often “hallucinate” or produce materials and information that are inaccurate or incomplete—even providing false citations for use. That said, you are not allowed to submit any AI-generated work in this course as your own. If you use any information or materials created by AI technology, you are required to cite it like you would any other source. Consider how this will affect your credibility as a writer and scholar before doing so. Any direct use of AI-generated materials submitted as your own work will be treated as plagiarism and reported to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

Campus Resources

Where you can go for assistance

UTEP provides a variety of student services and support. Please refer to the QR code below for a listing of campus resources.



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Course Schedule

WEEKS	READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS	DUE DATES
WEEK 1	Read the Syllabus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion #1: Introductions • Check-In #1: Syllabus 	January 20, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 2	Chapter 1: Historical Sketch of Sociological Theory: The Early Years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In #2 • Discussion #2 	January 27, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 3	Chapter 3: Emile Durkheim Chapter 2: Karl Marx <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check In #3 • Unit Assignment #1: Select a chapter and create a slideshow that presents what you learned about that social theorist. 	February 3, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 4	Chapter 4: Max Weber <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check In #4 • Discussion #3 	February 10, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 5	Chapter 5: George Simmel <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check In #5 • Discussion #4 	February 17, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 6	Chapter 6: Historical Sketch of Sociological Theory: The Later Years <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-in #6 • Discussion #5 	February 24, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 7	Chapter 7: Structural Functionalism, Systems Theory, and Conflict Theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In#7 • Unit Assignment #2: Create an infographic of one theory. 	March 2, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 8	Chapter 9: Symbolic Interactionism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In #8 • Discussion #6 	March 9, 2024 By midnight

SPRING BREAK		
WEEK 9	Chapter 10: Ethnomethodology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-In #9 ● Discussion #7 	March 23, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 10	Chapter 11: Exchange, Network, and Rational Choice Theories <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-In #10 ● Discussion #8 	March 30, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 11	Chapter 12: Contemporary Feminist Theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-In #11 ● Unit Assignment #3: Write a two Page Reflection 	April 6, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 12	Chapter 13: Micro-Macro and Agency Structure Integration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-In #12 ● Discussion #9 	April 13, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 13	Chapter 14: Contemporary Theories Modernity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-In #13 ● Discussion #10 	April 20, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 14	Chapter 17: Globalization Theory <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Check-In #14 ● Discussion #11 	April 27, 2024 By midnight
WEEK 15	* * FINAL ASSIGNMENT * *	May 8, 2024 By midnight