

Socy203: Sociological Theory

Spring 2009

Time: TTh 9:30 – 10:45am

Location: ASY 3203

Instructor: J. Michael Ryan

Office: Art/Socy 3147

Phone: (301) 405-6419

E-mail: mryan@socy.umd.edu

Office Hours: TTh 1:30-2:30

Course Description:

This course is intended to give students an introduction to sociological theory, both through an examination of general theories as well as particular theorists, and to help students understand the importance of theory for sociology. The course will cover classical theory, several strands of modern theory, and directions and applications beyond the modern.

Course Readings:

Ritzer, George. 2008. *Sociological Theory*, 7th edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Blaisdell, Robert (ed.). 2003. *The Communist Manifesto and Other Revolutionary Writings*. New York: Dover.

Course Packet – available at College Copy Center

Course Requirements:

Attendance and Participation

In order to get the most out of class, it is expected that you show up *on time* for every class and *participate* in discussion. It is expected that students will have completed the readings by the date assigned and be ready to discuss them in class. Since many of the discussions will build upon previous ones, it is imperative that students keep up with the readings.

Pop Quizzes (50 points)

There will be a number of unannounced pop quizzes given throughout the semester. These will serve as a check that students are keeping up with the reading and will also help prepare students for exams.

Theory Compendiums (60 points)

In order to help students prepare for exams, a series of theory compendiums will be required. These compendiums will also hopefully serve as review sheets that students can use after this class. A compendium should outline key elements of a theory and pertinent information about a theorist. A compendium should include biographical information for key theorists, major works and publication years, key concerns and suggested solutions, key concepts, and criticisms. Students are also encouraged to include whatever other information they find useful in helping

them to remember the theory or theorist. Students are advised to be extra careful to only use their own work when preparing their compendiums. It is not permissible to simply cut and paste course notes or to use the words of another student. This is not an exercise in cutting and pasting or a group assignment; it is an opportunity for the student to display that they have an understanding of the material rather than simply the ability to regurgitate it. A sample compendium will be handed out in class.

Each compendium should be typed, 2-3 single-spaced pages, 12" Times New Roman font, 1" margins, page numbers, and include all information stated above. Failure to prepare compendiums to these editorial specifications will result in a loss of points. A sample compendium will be handed out in class.

Three compendiums will be due, one for each of the three classical theorists – Durkheim, Marx, and Weber. All three are due on Tuesday, March 10th.

Application Essay (50 points)

Students will be expected to write an essay describing how one of the theories covered in the course is applicable to their own everyday life. These are NOT simply to be editorials. It is important to be able to connect theory – which is generally seen as an abstract system of ideas – to the lived experiences of an individual. A good essay will demonstrate strong knowledge of the theory being utilized and its applicability to the lived experiences of the student in their daily life. In what ways does the theory seem validated, or not, by lived experiences? In what ways is the theory a useful device for better understanding and/or reframing the experiential world? How does the theory (not) enrich our ability to comprehend and make meaning of lived experience?

Essays should be 3-4 pages in length, double spaced, typed, and use 12 point Times New Roman font, with 1" margins, and page numbers at the bottom of the page. Students will be expected to use a minimum of 3 *academic* references (this means wikipedia, newspaper articles, internet blogs, etc. are not acceptable). More explicit details will be handed out in class. The essay is due on Tuesday, May 12th.

Exam #1 – Classical (75 points)

An exam covering the first part of the course – classical sociological theory – will be given in class on Thursday, March 12th. The exam will consist of multiple choice, matching, and short essay questions.

Exam #2 – Modern (75 points)

An exam covering the second part of the course – modern sociological theory – will be given in class on Thursday, April 23rd. The exam will consist of multiple choice, matching, and short essay questions.

Final Exam (90 points)

A final exam covering all material presented in the course will be given in class during the week of December 14th – 20th. The date and time of the exam will be announced in class or can be found on the Testudo website. The final exam will consist of multiple choice, matching, and short essay questions.

Grading:

Grades will be based on the following:

Pop Quizzes	50 points
Theory Compendiums	60 points
Application Essay	50 points
Exam #1 (Classical)	75 points
Exam #2 (Modern)	75 points
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>90 points</u>
Total	400 points

Final letter grades will be assigned as follows:

392 to 400 = A+	308 to 319 = C+
376 to 391 = A	292 to 307 = C
360 to 475 = A-	280 to 291 = C-
348 to 359 = B+	268 to 279 = D+
332 to 347 = B	252 to 267 = D
320 to 331 = B-	240 to 251 = D-
	239 and below = F

Course Guidelines:

Absolutely no cell phone use is permitted during class time – this includes texting.

Laptops are permitted ONLY for purposes of taking notes. Use of the internet is not permitted during class time for any reason. If a student is caught using the internet during class time they will no longer be permitted to use their laptop during class.

If you anticipate having problems being able to live up to the standards of this course because of outside circumstances, see me sooner rather than later. Life is full of all sorts of unexpected events and college can be a very trying (and rewarding) time in the lives of many college students. I, too, was once a college student. However, coming to me for the first time during the last week of classes to ask what you can do to perform better in this class, or waiting until after the final exam to inform me of some outside circumstance that impeded your ability to successfully demonstrate your knowledge of course material, are very unlikely to meet with a positive response. If you feel that there are ANY circumstances that might impede your ability to live up to your fullest potential in this course, inform me immediately and we will work together to ensure that you have every opportunity to succeed.

Absences:

Campus Senate policy requires students who are absent due to illness/injury to furnish documentary support to the instructor. I require students to contact me by email or by phone prior to class time to indicate that you have an illness or an injury and will be missing class. You must provide written documentation verifying your illness/injury on the day that you return to class. You will not be allowed to turn in missed assignments or make up exams if you have not provided this documentation.

Students must provide me, in writing, a request for a make up exam by February 5, 2009 if I have indicated a date on this syllabus that you are unable to make due to a specific religious observance (specify) on a specific date. Please refer to the Undergraduate Catalog Policy on Religious Observance.

Special Needs:

Please let me know right away if you have a documented disability and need accommodations with test taking or any other aspect of the course. I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation Form which was updated for the Spring 2008 semester. This form must be presented to me no later than February 17th, 2009.

Academic Integrity:

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.shc.umd.edu>.

“...Essential to the fundamental process of the University is the commitment to the principles of truth and academic honesty.” The following constitutes violations of the UMCP Code of Academic Integrity:

- (a) Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise
- (b) Fabrication: Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise.
- (c) Facilitating Academic Dishonesty: Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this Code.
- (d) Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly representing the works or ideas of another as one's own in any academic exercise.

Reading Schedule:

*unless otherwise indicated, all page numbers refer to *Sociological Theory*, 7th edition

An Introduction to Theory

Tues. Jan 27 – Introduction; What is Sociological Theory?

Thurs. Jan 29 -- Thinking Theoretically: An Introduction
pp. 1-19

Miner, Horace. 1956. "Body Ritual Among the Nacirema," *American Anthropologist* 58 (3), 503-507.

Lemert, Charles. 1999. "Social Theory: Its Uses and Pleasures," In *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings*, Charles Lemert (ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press; Pp. 1-9, 17-20.

Part I: Classical Sociological Theory

Tues. Feb 3 – Early French Sociology; Durkheim
pp. 19-21, 74-82, 84-85

Thurs. Feb 5 – Durkheim
pp. 82-95 (skip 84-85)

Durkheim, Emile. 1893/2008. "On Mechanical and Organic Solidarity," in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, Peter Kivisto (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press; Pp. 46-50.

Tues. Feb. 10 – Durkheim
pp. 95-111

Durkheim, Emile. 1912/2008. "The Human Meaning of Religion," in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, Peter Kivisto (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press; Pp. 68-75.

Thurs. Feb 12 – Early German Sociology, Marx
pp. 21-26, 43-53

Marx, Karl. 1884/2008. "Alienated Labor," in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, Peter Kivisto (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press; Pp. 12-19.

Tues. Feb 17 – Marx
pp. 53-65

Marx, Karl. 1867/2008. "The General Formula for Capital," in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, Peter Kivisto (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press; Pp. 41-45.

Thurs. Feb. 19 – Marx
pp. 65-73

Tues. Feb 24 - Marx

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. 1848/2003. "The Manifesto of the Communist Party," In *The Communist Manifesto and Other Revolutionary Writings*, Robert Blaisdell (ed.). New York: Dover; Pp. 123-150.

Thurs. Feb 26 - Weber

pp. 26-31, 112-128

Tues. Mar 3 – Weber

pp. 129-147

Thurs. Mar 5 – Weber

pp. 147-157

Weber, Max. 1905. "The Spirit of Capitalism and the Iron Cage," In *Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings*, Charles Lemert (ed.). Boulder, CO: Westview Press; Pp. 100-104.

Tues. Mar 10 -- Review / Comparing classical theorists

DUE: Compendiums

Thurs, Mar 12 – EXAM #1

Part II: Modern Sociological Theory

Tues. Mar 17 & Thurs. Mar 19 – NO CLASS (Spring Break)

Tues. Mar 24 – Structural Functionalism

pp. 235-259

Thur. Mar 26 – Conflict Theory, Neo-Marxian Theories

pp. 264-267; 280-285, 295-308

Tues. Mar 31 – Symbolic Interactionism, Mead

pp. 347-364

Thur. Apr 2 – Symbolic Interactionism, Goffman

pp. 365-381, 384-376, 380-381

Tues. Apr 7 – Contemporary Feminist Theory

pp. 450-458, 478-480

Thur. Apr 9 – Gender and Sexuality

pp. 633-640

West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender," *Gender & Society* 1, No. 2 (June 1987); Pp. 125-140.

Kinsey, Alfred C., Wardell B. Pomeroy, and Clyde E. Martin. 1948. "Sexual Behavior in the Human Male," In *American Queer: Now and Then*, David Shneer and Caryn Aviv (ed.). Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers; Pp. 10-12.

Tues. Apr 14 – The Juggernaut of Modernity (Giddens); Risk Society (Beck)
pp. 547-559

Beck, Ulrich. 1992/2008. "Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity," in *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, Peter Kivisto (ed.). Oxford: Oxford University Press; 428-434.

Thur. Apr 16 – Modernity and the Holocaust (Bauman); The Civilizing Process (Elias)
pp. 559-563, 510-520

Tues. Apr 21 – McDonaldization

Ritzer, George. 2004. *The McDonaldization of Society*: Revised New Century Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge; Pp. 1-42.

Thur. Apr 23 – EXAM #2

Part III: Beyond the Modern: Directions and Applications

Tues. Apr 28 – Structuralism, Poststructuralism
pp. 600-616

Strinati, Dominic. 2004. "Structuralism and Semiology," In *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture, 2nd edition*. New York: Routledge; Pp. 88-94

Thur. Apr 30 – Postmodern Social Theory
pp. 616-632

Ryan, J. Michael. 2007. "Postmodern Social Theory," In *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, George Ritzer (ed.), London: Blackwell; Pp. 3569-3572.

Tues. May 5 – Globalization Theory
pp. 573-575, 579-589

Ritzer George, and J. Michael Ryan. 2004. "Americanisation, McDonaldisation and Globalisation," in *Issues in Americanisation and Culture*, Neil Campbell, Jude Davies & George McKay (eds.). Edinburgh, Scotland: Edinburgh University Press; Pp. 41-60.

Thur. May 7 – Fear

Glassner, Barry. 1999. *The Culture of Fear: Why Americans are Afraid of the Wrong Things*. New York: Basic Books.
Selections: Pp. xi-xxviii, 72-80, 195-202, 205-210

Tues. May 12 – Re-examining Theory in Light of Theory
DUE: Application Essay

Week of May 14-20: FINAL EXAM – Date and time TBA