SYA 4010: Sociological Theory
Florida State University
Fall 2017
T/TH, 2–3:15pm, HCB 214

Professor Miranda R. Waggoner
Office Hours: Thursday, 11:30am–1:30pm, Bellamy 621
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Overview
This course offers an overview of key ideas in sociological theory, focusing on the “classics” as well as on more contemporary approaches. We will address schools of thought both foundational and emergent, from primarily American and European contributions. The course begins with “the big three” classical theorists in sociology (Marx, Durkheim, Weber) before moving beyond the canon to discuss other founders of the discipline, additional core concepts, and present concerns. Throughout the course, we will tackle fundamental themes, enduring questions, and ongoing debates about the organization of social life. Theory is often grand and abstract, but it can provide a foundation for understanding our everyday life and the empirical word around us. After this course, you should be able to assess and discuss the extent to which certain theoretical perspectives offer insightful interpretations of society.

Required Books
• All readings listed on the syllabus will be available via the course Canvas site.

Requirements
Participation
In order to actively participate in class discussions, you should complete all readings before the start of each class and bring your notes to class, with discussion points in mind. To receive an “A” participation grade, a student will be attentive in class, partake in small-group work during class when applicable, and consistently show respect to other students when discussing the course material. For every one of these aspects not met, the participation grade may be reduced by one letter grade. If repeated absences are noticed, your participation grade will be negatively impacted. Participation is worth 10% of your final grade.

Exams
There will be two in-class exams. Dates are noted on the syllabus. Details about the exams will be provided in class. Each exam will be worth 20% of your final grade.

Short Paper
There will be a short paper (3–5 pages) due Thursday, November 16. Details will be provided in class. This paper will be worth 20% of your final grade.
Take-Home Final Paper

The final assignment in this course is a take-home paper (approx. 5 pages in length). You will have at least one week to answer one or two essay prompts. Details will be provided in class. This paper will be worth 30% of your final grade.

Assessment

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following:

Participation: 10%
Exam I: 20%
Exam II: 20%
Short Paper: 20%
Take-Home Final Paper: 30%

Grading will adhere to a standard scale, and plus/minus grading will be used for final grades. FSU does not allow a final grade of “A+”. The specific ranges are as follows:

93-100=A  90-92=A-  87-89=B+  83-86=B  80-82=B-  77-79=C+
70-76=C  70-72=C-  67-69=D+  63-66=D  60-62=D-  0-59=F

Laptop Policy

Laptops are allowed for note-taking purposes only. Use of technology in the classroom (phone/laptop, etc.) for anything other than note-taking will negatively affect your participation grade. Recording or taking pictures during class is prohibited.

Correspondence Note

The best way to contact me is via email. I will respond within a reasonable time frame, but please do not expect an immediate response. Please note that I typically do not respond to emails after work hours or on the weekends/holidays. Please use the email address provided at the top of the syllabus when sending me a message. Office hours are also listed at the top of the syllabus. If these hours conflict with other obligations in your schedule, you are welcome to email me to set up an appointment.

University Policies

University Attendance Policy

Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children or close family members experience serious illness.
**Academic Honor Policy**

In the academic setting it is critical that the work you present is original and that you cite outside sources rigorously and appropriately. Please see me if you have a question about plagiarism. The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to “…be honest and truthful and … [to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University.” (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at [http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy](http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy).)

**Disabilities Policy**

Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center as well as bring me a letter indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This should be done during the first week of class. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

Student Disability Resource Center  
874 Traditions Way  
108 Student Services Building  
Florida State University  
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167  
(850) 644-9566 (voice)  
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)  
sdrc@admin.fsu.edu  
[http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/](http://www.disabilitycenter.fsu.edu/)

**Syllabus Change Policy**

Except for changes that substantially affect implementation of the evaluation of your performance in this course, this syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.
COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

THE CANON

Tuesday, August 29: Introduction to Class
- Syllabus

Thursday, August 31: Background and Overview
- No readings

Tuesday, September 5: Community and Society

Thursday, September 7: Emile Durkheim

Tuesday, September 12: Emile Durkheim (continued)
- Emile Durkheim. 1897. Suicide: A Study in Sociology. Selections.

Thursday, September 14: Emile Durkheim (continued) and Karl Marx
- No reading

Tuesday, September 19: Karl Marx

Thursday, September 21: Karl Marx (continued)

Tuesday, September 26: Max Weber
Thursday, September 28: Max Weber (continued)


Tuesday, October 3: Max Weber (continued) and Review Session

- No reading

Thursday, October 5

- Exam I

MOVING BEYOND THE CANON

Tuesday, October 10: Women Founders


Thursday, October 12: W.E.B. Du Bois


SELF AND SOCIETY

Tuesday, October 17: George Herbert Mead


Thursday, October 19: Georg Simmel

Tuesday, October 24: Anthony Giddens

Thursday, October 26: Anthony Giddens (continued)

Tuesday, October 31: Review Session
- No reading

Thursday, November 2: Exam II

CRITICAL THEORY, STRUCTURE, AND POWER

Tuesday, November 7: The Frankfurt School

Thursday, November 9: The Frankfurt School (continued)

Tuesday, November 14: Pierre Bourdieu

Thursday, November 16: Pierre Bourdieu (continued)
- No reading
- NOTE: your short paper is due by the beginning of class (hard copy)

Tuesday, November 21: No Class (Happy Thanksgiving!)
- No class and no readings this week

Tuesday, November 28: Michel Foucault
Thursday, November 30: Michel Foucault (continued)
  • No readings

December 5: Future Directions
  • No readings

December 7: Final Paper Workshop
  • No readings

***Your Take-Home Final Paper is due Friday, December 8, by 5pm***
  Turn in on Canvas