Overview
This course offers an intensive overview of key ideas in sociological theory, focusing on the “classics” as well as on more contemporary approaches. Throughout the course, we will tackle enduring questions and debates about what establishes, maintains, or subverts social order. We will address schools of thought both foundational and emergent, from primarily American and European contributions. In covering quite a bit of ground in such little time, we will read only a sample of major theorists and theories. I invite you to seek out additional or supplementary material that facilitates connections between your research interests and social theory – a task that will comprise a major component of your final paper as well.

Required Books
- All other readings listed on the syllabus will be available via the course Blackboard site.

Requirements
Attendance and participation
This class is organized as a seminar, not a lecture. Thus, your consistent attendance and active participation is crucial to doing well. Furthermore, as a theory course, this class is reading-heavy. I expect you to complete all readings prior to class and to come to class with thoughts and questions about the readings in hand. Please note that, at times, we may discuss topics in class that are controversial. I expect students to engage in thoughtful and respectful discussions. If you must miss class, try to let me know in advance, and you should write a memo about the day’s material to receive credit for the class. Missing more than 2 classes in the semester will result in a significant grade reduction.

Leading One Class Discussion
For one class period, you will be responsible for leading a presentation on the major concepts and arguments from the readings of the day, and you will facilitate the
class discussion on the material. You should use the discussion question(s) that other students send ahead of time as well as develop a few of your own.

**Drafting Discussion Questions**

For **two class meetings** that are NOT your designated day to lead discussion, you are expected to email the discussion leader (and cc me) **two discussion questions** based on the day’s readings. These questions should be emailed no later than noon on the Monday prior to the pertinent class.

**Short Paper I**

In a 3-5 page paper (double-spaced), you will examine the use of classical theory in a relatively recent journal article (from the last two decades). You should find an article in a well-respected general or area sociology journal (see me if you have questions about this) that uses or develops theory in an in-depth way. The article should explicitly incorporate and/or advance concepts or ideas from one of the major classical scholars we cover: Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, Mead, or DuBois. In your paper, you will attend to the following questions: What are the author’s research questions? What is the theoretical framework used by the author? Is the theoretical framework appropriate for the research questions and methods? How so? What conclusions does the author reach? In your opinion, does the author use theory effectively? What, if anything, would you do differently if you were to write this article? The due date for this paper is Friday, October 7.

**Short Paper II**

In a 3-5 page paper (double-spaced), you will examine an article in a sociological theory journal (e.g., *Theory & Society, Sociological Theory*) that intersects with your area of interest. Further guidelines and advice will be distributed in class, but, in general, your task with this paper will be to reverse outline the article, analyze/critique its use of theory, and discuss how, if at all, the article may inform your own research endeavors. The due date for this paper is Friday, November 18.

**Final Paper**

This assignment allows you to go into greater depth about a theoretical topic, concept, or theorist that interests you or that intersects with your own research interests. The paper should be 12-15pp in length, double-spaced. You will have the option of designing your paper as a research paper (in which you apply one or more of the theoretical frameworks discussed in class to a contemporary social phenomenon) or as an extended literature review (in which you expand beyond the syllabus to explore debates or concepts within a particular theoretical vein). More details will be provided as the course progresses, and I am happy to talk about paper ideas/topics at any point in the semester. You should turn in a **proposal** (no longer than 1 single-spaced page) describing your plans for your final paper by Friday, October 28. We will talk more about this in class. The final version of your paper is due on Wednesday, December 14.
Late Assignments
Unless I have given you prior permission to turn in an assignment after the designated due date, late papers will be downgraded.

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

- Attendance and Participation: 10%
- Leading One Class Discussion: 10%
- Drafting Discussion Questions: 10%
- Short Paper I: 20%
- Short Paper II: 20%
- Final Paper Proposal: 5%
- Final Paper: 25%

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.)

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
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

Week 1: Introduction to the Course
August 30
No readings

Week 2: The Meaning of Theory and its Evidence
September 6

Half of the class will read:

Half of the class will read:

Everyone will read:
Week 3: Marx  
September 13

- Classical Theory Text Part III

Week 4: Weber  
September 20

- Classical Theory Text Part V

Week 5: Durkheim  
September 27

- Classical Theory Text Part IV

Week 6: Self and Society at the Turn of the 20th Century  
October 4

- Classical Theory Text Part VI

*Paper I Due by 5pm Friday*

Week 7: Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas  
October 11

- Classical Theory Text Part VII
**Week 8: Functionalism**  
October 18

- Classical Theory Text Part VIII  

**Week 9: Micro-Sociological Analysis: Phenomenology, Ethnomethodology, Symbolic Interactionism**  
October 25


*Research Proposal Due by 5pm Friday*

**Week 10: Habitus and Practice**  
November 1


**Week 11: Culture and Cultural Analysis**  
November 8


Week 12: Reflexive Modernity, Risk, and Uncertainty
November 15


*Paper II Due by 5pm Friday

Week 13: NO CLASS (Happy Thanksgiving!)
November 22

Please use this extra time to work on your final papers.

Week 14: Governmentality and Power
November 29

• Foucault, Michel. Discipline & Punish. Selection.

Week 15: Situating Knowledge and Course Recap
December 6


• Hartsock, Nancy. "The Feminist Standpoint: Developing the Ground for a Specifically Historical Materialism."


*Final Paper Due via Blackboard by 5pm on Wednesday, December 14.*