

**SOCIOLOGY 493H1S – Section L0101: PHILOSOPHY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE
WINTER 2016**

Lecture: Tuesdays 2-5pm, Location – Sidney Smith Hall rm1078

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Course Goal

This course critically examines major classical and contemporary theoretical approaches in order to investigate the nature of sociological knowledge. It provides an introduction to the major epistemological and ontological currents in the social sciences and addresses issues that are of particular concern for sociological knowledge: explanation and understanding, description and interpretation, objectivity and subjectivity, structure and agency, the relationships between social categories and sociological concepts, and the role of language and reflexivity.

Teaching Methods

My teaching philosophy is that we do not learn alone, we learn in conversation with others. We learn by listening, by asking questions, by explaining. It is the approach of this seminar to create a multiplicity of opportunities for students to have conversations with important authors, in the form of reading written texts, with each other, through low stake writing, discussion in class and through presentation, and with me throughout the semester with a staged assignment that will allow continual feedback and exchange on the development of students' ideas and projects. The course is organized in such a way that it privileges the development and deployment of various skills, namely critical reading, critical writing and effective and inquisitive discussion and their relationship with one another. Writing notes while reading, organizing and synthesizing the material and one's own thoughts, communicating this effectively to colleagues, and asking probing questions are all part of this course's teaching approach. The goal is to foster a community of learners who will help each other make their way through the material, topics and issues, in collaboration with one another.

Prerequisite

The prerequisite to take SOC493H1S is SOC201 or SOC203, and a 300+ level SOC course. Students without this requirement will be removed at any time discovered and without notice.

Communication

Since this is a small seminar, the main tool of communication will be e-mail. You can expect all e-mails to be answered within 48h. Feel free to get in touch with me whenever you have questions. This course will also make use of Portal (<https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>) to facilitate the work of the course. On the

Portal page you will find this syllabus, portfolios, announcements, and grades. It is a very good idea to check on the Portal page on a regular basis.

Required Course Material

Gerard Delanty and Piet Strydom. *Philosophies of Social Science: The Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 2010)

This reader can be purchased at the U of T Bookstore, 214 College Street.

*Other readings are available digitally through UofT library or as pdf through the Portal course page

Workload

The semester's focus is on getting each of you to consistently reflect on the course material and on your own learning. The workload has four components which promotes these two types of reflections: 1) Portfolio, 2) In-Class Participation, 3) Review Essay and Presentation, and 4) Comprehensive Exam.

Portfolio (30%)

Portfolios are reflections on weekly readings on the one hand, and reflections on classroom learning on the other. Portfolio entries are an opportunity to organize one's thought and raise questions about the readings, and to monitor your own learning following class.

Portfolio – Reflections on Readings

Students will write 40 entries (350 words each) on small excerpts they've signed up for, reflecting on what are one or two key ideas worth remembering and making note of, as well as raising one or two questions you have about the ideas presented.

Do not use quotes from the readings for this, but instead use entirely your own words. Every portfolio entry on weekly readings must be submitted on Portal (using a .doc, .docx, or .rtf file format) no later than midnight before class for which the reading was assigned (so Monday 11:59pm for readings covered on Tuesdays). The purpose of these portfolio entries is to have a base of knowledge on the course material before class starts so that we can build upon this foundation during seminar. Readings are signed up for by students the previous class. Note: Portfolio entries will never be accepted late. If you cannot submit it on time, then you can complete one(s) that is/are due the following date.

Portfolio – Reflections on Classes

Students will write 10 entries (700 words each) on their own individual learning following class participation and discussion. These are a chance for you to reflect on the theme of the week, the connections between different ideas, and what you've learned during the past week. These weekly portfolio entries must be submitted on Portal (using a .doc, .docx, or .rtf file format) no later than midnight Thursday after class on which these reflections are based. The purpose of these portfolio entries is to monitor your own learning throughout the semester, and potentially link this to your term project.

In-Class Participation (20%)

Every student will participate in weekly in-class participation, both through interactive discussion, and through small collaborative write-up based on discussion questions.

Review Essay and Presentation (25%)

Each student will write a 10 pages review essay based in one book focused on a topic relevant to the course. The review essay details will be discussed in the early part of the semester, but it will involve five stages: proposing a topic (February 2nd), writing a short outline (February 23rd), completing a draft (March 22nd or March 29th), presenting your work (March 29th or April 5th), and submitting a final write-up (April 8th). At each stage, you will get feedback from me to help you bring your project to completion. I invite you to schedule time with me to discuss any aspect of your project as often as you feel the need to. Finally, note that I am more interested in the quality of the arguments that you advance in your review essay than in the comprehensive coverage of a body of scholarship.

Comprehensive Exam (25%) – to be announced

A 2h exam on the content from the whole course held during the April exam period

Weekly Lecture Topics and Readings

Jan 12th – Philosophy of Social Science - 55 pages of reading

Delanty, Gerard and Piet Strydom – *Philosophies of Social Science*, p1-12

Mannheim, Karl (1929/1949) – *An Ideology and Utopia: An Introduction to the Sociology of Knowledge*, p237-280

Jan 19th – The Positivist Tradition - 42 pages of reading

Delanty, Gerard and Piet Strydom - *Philosophies of Social Science*, p13-25

Durkheim, Emile (1895) *What is a Social Fact*

Neurath, Otto (1929) *The Scientific World Conception*

Hempel, Carl G. (1952) *Concept and Theory in Social Science*

Nagel, Ernst (1961) *Methodological Problems of the Social Sciences*

Popper, Karl (1934) *The Problem of Induction*

Carnap, Rudolf (1936) *Confirmation, Testing and Meaning*

Parsons, Talcott (1937) *Theory and Empirical Fact*

Jan 26th – The Positivist Tradition II - 30 pages of reading

Ayer, A.J. (1940) *The Characterization of Sense-data*

Quine, W.V.O. (1951) *Two Dogmas of Empiricism*

Wittgenstein, Ludwig (1953) *Language Games and Meaning*

Toulmin, Stephen (1961) *The Evolution of Scientific Ideas*

Kuhn, Thomas (1962) A Role for History

Lakatos, Imre (1970) Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes

Feyerabend, Paul (1975) Against Method

Feb 2nd – The Interpretive Tradition - 62 pages of reading

Delanty, Gerard and Piet Strydom - Philosophies of Social Science, p85-98

Dilthey, Wilhelm (1900) The Development of Hermeneutics

Simmel, Georg (1918) On the Nature of Historical Understanding

Simmel, Georg (1908) How Is Society Possible?

Weber, Max (1904) 'Objectivity' in Social Science

Freud, Sigmund (1900) The Dream-Work

Freud, Sigmund (1932) A Philosophy of Life

Cassirer, Ernst (1910) From a Critique of Abstraction to Relationism

Mannheim, Karl (1929) Competition as Cultural Phenomenon

Schutz, Alfred (1934) Concept and Theory Formation in the Social Science

Merleau-Ponty (1960) The Philosopher and Sociology

Feb 9th – The Interpretive Tradition II - 52 pages of reading

Heidegger, Martin (1938) The Age of the World Picture

Winch, Peter (1958) Philosophy and Science

Gadamer, Hans-Georg (1960) The Hermeneutic Claim to Universality

Ricoeur, Paul (1973) Towards a Critical Hermeneutic : Hermeneutics and the Critique of Ideology

Taylor, Charles (1971) Interpretation and the Sciences of Man

Geertz, Clifford (1973) The Thick Description of Culture

Cicourel, Aaron (1964) Method and Measurement

Garfinkel, Harold (1960) Rational Properties of Scientific and Common-sense Activities

Goffman, Erving (1974) Primary Frameworks

Feb 16th – Reading week

Feb 23rd – The Critical Tradition - 76 pages of reading

Delanty, Gerard and Piet Strydom - *Philosophies of Social Science*, p207-217

Marx, Karl (1976) *These on Feuerbach Karl Marx-Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Volume 5* (New York: International Publishers, 1976) p.3-5

Marx, Karl (1969) Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy *Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, Collected Works, Volume 1* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1969) p.502-506

Horkheimer, Max (1937) Traditional and Critical Theory

Marcuse, Herbert (1937) Philosophy and Critical Theory

Adorno, Theodor W. (1969) Sociology and Empirical Research

Habermas, Jurgen (1965) Knowledge and Human Interests

Habermas, Jurgen (1981) The Tasks of a Critical Theory

Appel, Karl-Otto (1977) Types of Social Science in Light of Human Cognitive Interests

Wellmer, Albrecht (1969) Critical Theory of Society

Unger, Roberto Mangabeira (1975) The Critical Argument

Gouldner, Alvin (1970) Towards a Reflexive Sociology

March 1st – The Pragmatist Tradition - 28 pages of reading

Delanty, Gerard and Piet Strydom – *Philosophies of Social Science*, p277-287

Peirce, Charles S. (1902) A Definition of Pragmatic and Pragmatism

Dewey, John (1938) Social Inquiry

Mills, C. Wright (1940) Situated Actions and Vocabularies of Motive

March 8th – Post-Structuralism - 44 pages of reading

Delanty, Gerard and Piet Strydom – *Philosophies of Social Science*, p321-329

Levi-Strauss, Claude (1958) *Structural Analysis in Linguistics and in Anthropology*

Levi-Strauss, Claude (1951) *Language and the Analysis of Social Laws*

Goldmann, Lucien (1966) *The Human Sciences and Philosophy*

Foucault, Michel (1966) *The Order of Things*

Foucault, Michel (1976) *Power/Knowledge*

Derrida, Jacques (1966) *Structure, Sign and Play in the Discourses of the Human Sciences*

Bourdieu, Pierre (1980) *The Logic of Practice*

March 15th – The Feminist Tradition - 65 pages of reading

Smith, Dorothy (1987) *The Standpoint of Women in the Everyday World*

Harding, Sandra (1993) *Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology: What is 'Strong Objectivity'?* *Feminist Epistemologies* Ed. Alcoff, Linda and Elizabeth Porter. New York: Routledge, p.49-82

Hill Collins, Patricia (1986) *The Sociological Significance of Black Feminist Thought*

Haraway, Donna (1988) *Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective* *Feminist Studies* 14-3: 575-599.

March 22nd – Sociology of Knowledge - 63 pages of reading

Bernstein, Richard (1991) 'Anti-foundationalism'

Bourdieu, Pierre (1992) *Radical Doubt*

Bourdieu, Pierre (1999) *On Science and Politics*

Giddens, Anthony (1984) *Social Science as a Double Hermeneutic*

Luhmann, Niklas (2002) *Theories of Distinction: Redescribing the Descriptions of Modernity* Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.1-30

Hekman, Susan (1986) *Hermeneutics and the Sociology of Knowledge* Cambridge: Polity Press, p.1-12

March 29th – Future Avenues I

Readings to be announced

April 5th – Future Avenues II & Conclusion

Readings to be announced

Make-Up Tests and Deadline Extension

If you miss a test or a paper deadline, **do not** contact the instructor unless you have followed the steps described here. Telling the professor why you missed a deadline or a test will not be considered enough.

- In case of **illness**, you must supply a duly completed **Verification of Student Illness** or Injury form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor's note is not acceptable. **The form must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted with your work** no later than the following class.
- If a **personal or family crisis** prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar (it is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies). **The letter must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted with your work** no later than the following class.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids.
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test.
- Misrepresenting your identity.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If you have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, you are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from your instructor or from other institutional resources (see www.utoronto.ca/academicintegrity/resourcesforstudents.html).

You are also expected to have read and understood the on-line document “How Not to Plagiarize” (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>)

Accessibility Services

The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University's courses and programs.

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.