

Instructor: Matt Patterson
Teaching Assistant: TBA
Session: Summer 2012
Time: Mondays and Wednesdays from 6-8pm
Location: SS 2118 (Sidney Smith Hall), 100 St. George Street
Course Website: <http://portal.utoronto.ca>

Course Description

Sociologists agree on almost nothing, including what exactly we do for a living. However one thing we do happen to agree on is that no one should be able to call themselves a sociology graduate without some basic familiarity with the intellectual origins and founders of the discipline. In this course we will explore these origins through the work of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and other classical social theorists. Many of the questions these theorists were grappling with are still at the forefront of sociology today. Among the issues they addressed in their theories, we will focus specifically on those relating to community and religion.

Please note that in order to take this course you need to have completed SOC101Y or both SOC102H and SOC103H. Students who have not completed this prerequisite will be removed from the course.

Evaluation

Evaluations are made up of two position papers and a final exam.

	<u>Due Date/Exam Date</u>	<u>% of Final Grade</u>
Position Paper #1	Monday, June 4 th	30%
Position Paper #2	Wednesday, June 20 th	30%
Final Exam	Wednesday, June 27 th	40%

Required Text

In this class you will be expected to read passages from the original (although in most cases translated) writing of the classical theorists. Reading these texts is like eating your vegetables: difficult at first, but ultimately good for you. And just as undergraduates eventually develop a new appreciation of healthy food when they're living away from home, you will soon be reading *The Communist Manifesto* or *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* as easily as if they had been written by Stephenie Meyer. To help you out, I have tried to keep the length of these readings down to about 10 pages each. I'd recommend reading them at least once before each lecture, and at least one more time after the lecture to fully grasp their significance.

A course package with all of the required readings is available at the University of Toronto Bookstore. One advantage of reading passages from dusty old books is that their dusty old copyrights have long expired. As a result, the reader is quite affordably priced at \$15.50 and many of the readings can actually be found for free online. As well, a copy of *Classical Sociological Theory* (edited by Calhoun, Gerteis, Moody, Pfaff, Schmidt, and Virk) has been put on course reserve at Robarts Library. It includes several of the readings in the course reader.

E-Mail and Office Hours

The instructor (that is, me) and teaching assistant are available for contact through e-mail and office hours. **Office hours are held in room 225 in the sociology department (725 Spadina Ave.).** We aim to respond to e-mails within 24 hours during the working week. To ensure a quick response, it is best to keep e-mails simple and straight to the point. More complicated questions should be asked in person during office hours. I also encourage you to ask questions during or right after lectures.

	<u>E-mail</u>	<u>Office Hours</u>
Matt Patterson	matt.patterson@utoronto.ca	Mondays 3:30-5:30pm
TA	TBA	TBA

Final Exam

The final exam is designed to test your overall grasp of all of the theories discussed throughout the course. It will cover all of the lecture and reading material and will involve a combination of multiple choice and true and false questions. The final lecture will serve partially as a review session to help students prepare for the exam.

Position Papers

Position papers are an opportunity for you to become the theorist. Writing these papers involves posing an interesting question that relates to course material and then answering it in the form of a thesis statement that is backed up with reason and evidence. In doing so, you will be expected to engage with at least one of the course readings. Drawing on outside sources is also highly recommended, but not required. Keep in mind that taking a position is different from simply summarizing course material. Your paper should go beyond the arguments made in class and present an original take on the issues.

Position papers should be no more than three pages, double-spaced (not including the bibliography). Don't let the length fool you. This shouldn't be something you whip off the night before. The best papers will probably start out about ten pages long, but get edited down to three pages of pure gold in the final draft. You will be writing two position papers; one for each unit of the course. We will aim to have the first paper graded and returned in time for you to use the TA comments to help you write the second paper. Below, I've provided a list of possible questions that your papers can address. However, you are not bound to these questions. Feel free to write about anything that sparks your interest as long as you run it by me or your TA beforehand.

Possible Position Paper Topics

Position Paper #1 Topics:

1. Has modernity provided us with more or less freedom?
2. Has the rise of mass and interactive communication reversed or exacerbated the effect of modernity on community?
3. In what ways does the community we belong to determine the kind of person we become?

Position Paper #2 Topics:

1. Is religion something that humanity will grow out of, or will it always remain a fundamental part of social life?
2. Why is studying ideas and culture important (or not important) to understanding capitalism?
3. To what extent should sociologists be guided by values in their work? Does this stop them from being objective?

Handing in Papers

Please bring a hardcopy of your paper to lecture on the due date. As well, you should submit your paper electronically to www.turnitin.com. More information on turnitin.com will be provided at a later time.

Re-grading Policy

So you've just received a grade on your position paper and you're not happy with it? Here's what you need to do:

- 1) Take 24 hours to think it over. Read over the comments and think of any reasons why the grade doesn't reflect the quality of the work. "I got an A in my other class" doesn't count as a reason. Everyone knows classical theory is harder than your other class.
- 2) After 24 hours, contact your TA to arrange a meeting. When you meet, ask your TA for further explanation of your grade and how you could improve on the next paper. If you're still not satisfied with your grade, explain this to your TA. If, on second thought, the TA feels that the grade is unfair, she has the option of changing it right there.
- 3) However, if you are still not satisfied with your grade after meeting with your TA, you have the option of requesting a full re-grade. To do this, bring a fresh copy of your paper into lecture and I will re-grade it without looking at the original grade. The new grade you receive will be final (whether it is higher or lower than your original grade).

Missed Exam/Late Papers

Any student who misses the exam or fails to hand in a paper on time must contact their TA **within three days**. Students must also have either a U of T student medical certificate (available on your college registrar's website), or a note directly from your college registrar. The make-up exam will be written roughly a week after the missed exam. **Late papers without documentation will not be accepted after the due date.**

Plagiarism

What syllabus would be complete without the obligatory warning about plagiarism? Cheating and misrepresentation will, of course, not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices accepted by teachers in high school may prove unacceptable at university. Know where you stand by reading the "Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters" in the Calendar of the Faculty of Arts and Science (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

LECTURE SCHEDULE & READING LIST

UNIT 1: COMMUNITY

Monday, May 14th Introduction

Lecture Topics:

- Outline of course material and expectations.
- A brief overview of the theorists covered in the course
- Introduction to classical social theory and its unifying issues: (1) establishing methods for studying society, and (2) coming to terms with the massive changes that brought about modern society.
- An introduction to the issue of community and why it was important to the classical theorists.

Wednesday, May 16th What is Community? / Karl Marx on Alienation

Reading: Karl Marx. "Alienated Labour"

Lecture Topics:

- What is human nature and on what basis do humans form larger groups?
- Social Contract Theory (Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau)
- Karl Marx' on human nature and alienation under capitalism

Monday, May 21st VICTORIA DAY – NO CLASS

Wednesday, May 23rd Emile Durkheim on Solidarity

Reading: Emile Durkheim. "Egoistic Suicide" and "Anomic Suicide"

Lecture Topics:

- The shift from mechanical to organic solidarity
- Pathological divisions of labour
- Durkheim's study of suicide
- Durkheim's methodology: Social facts and realism

Monday, May 28th

Max Weber on Rationality and Bureaucracy

Reading: Max Weber. "Basic Sociological Terms"

Lecture Topics:

- Weber's methodology: *Verstehende soziologie* and objectivity
- The basic types of social action
- Modernity as a process of rationalization and disenchantment
- The rise of bureaucracy as a form of social organization.

Wednesday, May 30th

Georg Simmel on Modernity and the City

Reading: Georg Simmel. "The Metropolis and Mental Life"

Lecture Topics:

- Modernity and the city
- Simmel's theory of group life in modern society
- Simmel's methodology: "formal" sociology

Monday, June 4th

George Herbert Mead on the Self

POSITION PAPER #1 DUE

Reading: George Herbert Mead. "The Self"

Lecture Topics:

- The American Pragmatists: Peirce, James, Dewey, and Mead
- Mead's theory of the "Self", the "I", and the "Me"

Wednesday, June 20th

Review Class

POSITION PAPER #2 DUE

Reading: None.

Lecture Topics:

- Course reviews
- Catch up on any overflow from past weeks.
- Return to the major themes in the course
- Review session for final exam.

Wednesday, June 27th

FINAL EXAM

Room: TBA.