

University of Toronto | Department of Sociology
Winter 2021
SOC201H1 S LEC5101/6101
Classical Sociological Theory

Wednesdays 6:10 p.m. – 9:00pm
Location: Quercus & Zoom

Instructor: Cinthya Guzman

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Online Office Hours: Fridays 10:00 a.m.-11:00a.m via Zoom

Teaching Assistant: Jame Braun

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Online Office Hours: TBD via Zoom

Course Description

This course provides students with a foundation of classical theories in sociology. There are three objectives. The first is to demonstrate what theory is, and how it is important to sociology. The second is to help you read, make sense of, and use theory. The third is to explore ways in which modern sociology is shaped by the theoretical assumptions and preoccupations of its founders, and how historical circumstances set sociological agendas.

As you will come to learn, the classical sociological theorists tried to understand the impact of two great crises of modernity, the Industrial Revolution and the Democratic Revolution. In doing so, the theorists we will cover aimed to answer diverse questions like: what holds society together? What is the relationship between individuals and the communities? How does the physical and social world shape who we are? How do people and ideas shape society? What are the implications of increasing individualism and a division of labor on social relations, morality and governance? How does power shape social relations and action? These questions, and the theories offered by the classical sociological theorists to answer them, are still of great relevance today.

The course will be organized around three key themes that are raised in the classical works covered. The three themes will be: 1) Freedom, Community and the Public Good; 2) Power and Domination; 3) the Self and Society.

Course Objectives

The course is organized in a way that encourages students to build and develop skills focused around collaborative learning, critical reading, writing, and the formation of arguments. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate and discuss a number of approaches central to classical sociological theory.
- Identify and assess key classical theoretical concepts and arguments.

- Write analytically and critically about classical sociological theory.
- Make and support an academic argument through use of evidence.

Prerequisite:

The prerequisite for this course SOC101Y1, or a combination of SOC102H1+ SOC103H1, SOC102H1+ SOC150H1, SOC103H1+ SOC150H1, or SOC100H1+ SOC150H1. Students without one of these combinations will be removed from the class at any time discovered and without notice.

Accessibility needs:

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit:

<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

Description of Evaluation Components		
Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
In 100 words	10%	Ongoing
Test 1	20%	Feb 10
Position Paper	20%	Mar 3
Applying Theory	25%	Mar 31
Test 2	25%	Apr 7

Grading Descriptions and Late and Missed Test Policies

In 100 words (5 x through the term)

Worth 10% (2% each)

Students have to write a short piece (max. 100 words) on a key concept of their choice using their own words. The pieces need to be posted on the Discussion Board for 5 designated theorists on any date before the specific due date. Students have 6 dates to choose from, which means you can skip one week.

Jan 27 (Durkheim), Feb 3 (Tocqueville), Mar 3 (Marx), Mar 10 (Weber), Mar 24 (Mead, Simmel or DuBois), Mar 31 (Any Women Sociologists Listed in the Reading)

The discussion board posts are meant to favor collaborative learning. In writing them, we will form a bank of key concepts that can help you better understand the material and extract key ideas. Please note, however, that copying another student's post and submitting it as your own will result in a 0 for this evaluative component.

Take home Tests 1 & 2

Test 1 Worth 20% & Test 2 Worth 25%

Students will be given the test prompt in advance (of 48 hours) of the due date.

Position Paper

Worth 20%

2-3 pages, (excluding references) in 12-point font, double-spaced.

Your task is to make an argument -- not to summarize. Your paper should focus on providing evidence to persuade the reader of the validity of a distinctive interpretation advanced by you.

Applying Theory

Worth 25%

4-5 pages, (excluding references) in 12-point font, double-spaced.

Students will write a position paper but, this time, they will be asked to advance an argument in relation to a contemporary issue.

Handing in assignments: All assignments must be handed to the instructor electronically via Quercus. *The instructor and TA will NOT accept electronic copies of assignments via email.*

Deadlines: The assignments are due by class time (6:10 p.m.). Please refer to the Due Date stated on page 2 of the Syllabus. Late work will not be accepted without proper documentation (the Declaration of Absence on ACORN).

Breadth rule: a student whose two papers fail to examine in reasonable detail a total of at least two thinkers will receive a penalty of 50% on their second position paper. If in doubt, check first with your TA.

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

If you miss a test or a paper deadline, contact the instructor (within 24 hours) and followed the steps described here.

In case of illness, you must supply a completed the Declaration of Absence on ACORN and provide the instructor with a reference number.

If you are registered with Accessibility Services, your counselor will need to send an email message on your behalf (a one-week extension being the norm).

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

This class is completely online. All lectures will be provided to students via Quercus' BB Collaborate function synchronously. Office hours for the TA and myself will also be held online, also using BB collaborate.

Participation: Students are expected to participate actively by 1) completing assigned readings, 2) writing the assigned discussion posts, and 3) keeping up to date on course information posted on Quercus. In all activities, students are to be respectful of fellow classmates and teaching staff.

Email Policy: I will respond to your email within two business days (48 hours, except weekends and holidays). Emails that do not follow these guidelines will not receive a response: Your use of an official U of T address is required. Please include the course code (e.g. SOC201) in the subject line and your full name and student number in your message. Please do not send a repeat email (e.g., "did you get my email?").

In general, please treat emails as you would any other professional communication. You should be respectful in the way you address the instructor and the TA. Email is most suitable for questions that are clear, concise, and easily answerable; if you are confused about the course material or need to discuss a concept, I strongly encourage you to instead attend office hours or make an appointment. Please read the syllabus carefully before asking a general question about the course.

HELP from your T.A.: Your T.A. will hold scheduled online office hours and respond to your emails within 48 hours. Please be judicious in your use of email. Use it only for questions that are brief and specific. Before sending a question by email, be sure to check the course outline to see if an answer is already available. Emails should not be seen as an alternative to doing the assigned reading or attending lectures.

Turnitin Policy: Students agree that, by taking this course, all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of those papers. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Assignments not submitted through Turnitin will receive a grade of zero (0 %) unless students instead provide, along with their exams, sufficient secondary material (e.g., reading notes, outlines of the paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the exam they submit is truly their own. The alternative (not submitting via Turnitin) is in place because, strictly speaking, using Turnitin is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto.

Required Readings & Course Schedule

Required readings: All course readings are accessible electronically. Unless otherwise stated, course readings will be uploaded on Quercus under the Modules tab.

Course Schedule: Students are expected to complete all required readings prior to each online lecture.

Note: every attempt will be made to follow this schedule, but it is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Introduction to Sociological Theory

Jan 13. Introduction to Classical Sociological Thought: What, Why, Who, and How?

- Readings: Sica, A. (2020). Classical Sociological Theory. In *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Sociology* (eds G. Ritzer and W.W. Murphy)

i) Freedom, Community and the Public Good

Jan 20. Durkheim I

Excerpt Readings:

- The Rules of the Sociological Method
- The Division of Labor in Society

Jan 27. Durkheim II

Excerpt Readings:

- Suicide
- The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life

*Discussion Post (on Durkheim) Due

Feb 3. Tocqueville

Discussion Board Post 2 due

Excerpt Readings:

- Democracy and America

*Discussion Post (on Tocqueville) Due

Feb 10. Test 1

ii) Power and Domination

Feb 17. Marx I

Excerpt Readings:

- The German Ideology
- Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844

Feb 24. Reading Week

Mar 3. Marx + Weber

Excerpt Readings:

- Wage-Labor and Capital
- The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

*Discussion Post (on Marx) Due

*Position Paper Due

Mar 10. Weber I

Excerpt Readings:

- Types of Legitimate Domination
- Bureaucracy

*Discussion Post (on Weber) Due

- **iii) The Self and Society**

Mar 17. Mead; W.E.B. Du Bois

Excerpt Readings:

- The Self (Mead)
- The Souls of Black Folks (Du Bois)

Mar 24. Simmel

Excerpt Readings:

- The Stranger
- Group Expansion and the Development of Individuality

*Discussion Post (on Mead, DuBois, or Simmel)

Mar 31. Early Women Sociologists

Excerpt Readings:

- “Early Women Sociologists and Classical Sociological Theory: 1830–1930”

*Discussion Post (on any women sociologists listed in the reading) Due

*Applying Theory Assignment Due

Apr 7. Test 2