

**SYA 4010 Sociological Theories
Spring 2018**

Instructor: Dr. Vrushali Patil
Office: SIPA 303
Office Phone: 7-4418
Office Hours: Tuesday 12:45-1:45

Meeting Time: TTh 2-3:15
Meeting Place: Ocean Bank Con Ctr 121
Email: Vrushali.Patil@Fiu.edu

Course Description

What is society or ‘the social’? How does it shape identity, human interaction, and relationships? What is the role of power relations? Of social structures and institutions? These are some of the very basic questions that sociological theorizing seeks to explain. This course will examine major theoretical approaches within the sociological tradition as well as contemporary approaches. We will explore major figures in the canon, as well as writers who were excluded in their time but whose significance has been reassessed in the contemporary period. We will also examine how the concerns, approaches and parameters of the classical writers have shifted in contemporary theorizing. We will situate various approaches within their historical and geographical context, and compare and contrast how time, space and social location matter for how they understand the basic questions of society.

Course Goals

Students will understand the key ideas/arguments advanced by different sociological theorists.

Students will understand the historical, geographical, and social contexts which shape the work of each sociological theorist.

Students will be able to compare and contrast different sociological theorists.

Students will be able to understand the developments in sociological theorizing over time.

Students will be able to understand the contemporary relevance of sociological theories.

Requirements and Assignments

1. **Attendance and Participation (25%)**: This class requires that you read the material before coming to class, attend regularly, and actively participate in the discussions in class. Unexcused absences will count against your final grade.

2. **Student Journals (20%)**: You are required to keep a Student Journal for the course, starting in week 2. For each assigned reading, by 11 am the day it is due, you must submit a two-page entry on Blackboard. On page 1, discuss the following questions:

How does this author envision society or ‘the social’? What are the dominant components or processes of society for this author? For the author, what do these

components or processes affect/what is their significance?

On page 2, draw a picture or map of the most important concept/theory the author offers. Your picture should show your understanding of how the author's concept/theory operates.

Finally, please indicate **at least one question, issue or comment** on the readings. I will attempt to incorporate questions/issues that students come up with—as many as possible—into the class discussion for that reading (I will not identify who came up with a particular question, though—unless you want me to). The written part of your journal will be graded on a 5 point scale, as

- 1-3 points: demonstrate little to some understanding of central components of theory
- 4-5 points: demonstrate good to excellent understanding of central components of theory

You may miss up to two journals with no grade penalty.

3. Student Presentations (10% each) Three times during the semester, you will do a student presentation on a theorist that we are reading for a particular week. In this presentation, you will take one of the theorist's key concepts and apply it to a "real world situation" or "current event". Your presentation will inform the rest of the class about key facts about this situation/event and how your chosen theoretical concept helps us to understand that situation/event better. Your presentation should be 10 minutes long. After your presentation, you will hand in the 'notes' that you put together as you were working on your presentation.

4. Class Paper (25 %) Details to be discussed in class.

Required Materials

Appelrouth, Scott and Laura Desfor Edles. 2015. *Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory*. Sage Publications. 3rd Edition.

Additional Items:

1. Expectations for Class Behavior: Disruptive, rude and/or disrespectful behavior in the classroom—whether toward myself or toward your classmates—will not be tolerated. If you engage in such behavior, you will be asked to leave the class.

2. A note on missing classes: If you miss a class, it is *your responsibility* to get any missed material from someone else.

3. Make-up Policy: All assignments should be submitted on the dates they are due. The only exceptions are dire emergency, grave illness, and religious holidays. In the case of the first, whether or not a situation qualifies as a dire emergency will be determined by me. Since I *do not* see most reasons for failing to turn in assignments as dire emergencies, not attempting to make these excuses is your best bet. In the case of the second, I require a doctor's note. In the case of the third, if you have religious holiday obligations that conflict with the course schedule, you must notify me by Jan 18th, 2018. If inclement weather causes you to miss a class, you must let me know as soon as possible. In most cases, such an absence will not count against you.

4. Accommodations for Disabilities: Any student who, because of disability, may require accommodations in order to meet course requirements should contact me as soon as possible to make the necessary arrangements. It is the responsibility of the student to request accommodations for individual learning needs. FIU and I will make every attempt to accommodate all students with disabilities. For further information on resources available at FIU, contact the Disability Resource Center at GC 190, University Park Campus (Phone: 7-3532; Email: drcupgl@fiu.edu).

5. Academic Integrity: I expect all students to follow the university Code of Academic Integrity, which is designed to uphold academic honesty and integrity. Please see University guidelines at: <http://www.fiu.edu/~oabp/misconductweb/2codeofacainteg.htm> for more information. Violations of the code will be addressed through all available channels at FIU.

6. Electronic Devices Policy: There will be no electronic devices used during class time (no cell phones, no computers, etc). Notes can be taken the old fashioned way: with pen and paper.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction to Class, Sociological Theory
Jan 9: Intro, Sign up for Student Presentations Jan 11: Read pages 1-22
Week 2: Classical Theory I: Karl Marx
Jan 16: Read pages 24-56 Jan 18: Student Presentations
Week 3: Classical Theory II: Max Weber
Jan 23: Read pages 139-152, 175-98 Jan 25: Student Presentations
Week 4: Classical Theory III: W. E. B. Du Bois
Jan 30: Read pages 277-311 Feb 1: Student Presentations
Week 5: Critical Theory I: Horkheimer/Adorno/Marcuse
Feb 6: Read pages 396-435 Feb 8: Student Presentations
Week 6: Critical Theory II: P. H. Collins
Feb 13: Read pages 469-480 Feb 15: Student Presentations
Week 7: Symbolic Interaction: Erving Goffman
Feb 20: Read pages 533-571 Feb 22: Student Presentations
Week 8: Phenomenology: Berger/Luckmann and D. Smith
Feb 27: Read pages 590, 604-637 Mar 1: Student Presentations
Week 9: Poststructuralism I: Michel Foucault
Mar 6: Read pages 640-663 Mar 8: Student Presentations

Week 10: SPRING BREAK
Week 11: Poststructuralism II: Pierre Bourdieu
Mar 20: Read Pages 664-695 Mar 22: Student Presentations
Week 12: Poststructuralism III: Edward Said
Mar 27: Read pages 696-717 Mar 29: Student Presentations
Week 13: Postmodernism I: Jean Baudrillard
Apr 3: Read pages 719-737 Apr 5: Student Presentations
Week 14: Postmodernism II: J. Lyotard and Judith Butler
Apr 10: Read pages 738-758 Apr 12: Student Presentations
Week 15: Global Society: Immanuel Wallerstein
Apr 17: Read pages 760-787 Apr 19: Student Presentations
Finals Week: Class Papers Due Tues, Apr 24th in my office by noon