

Course Syllabus



SYA4010: Sociological Theories

Instructor Information Table

Prof. Katherine Lineberger, Ph.D
(she/her)

- **Email: Please message me using Canvas Inbox.**
 - I check my course related email in Canvas every business day throughout the semester and usually reply within 48 hours (business days) of receipt.
- **Phone: (305) 348-0352**
 - I check my course voicemail every business day throughout the semester and usually reply within 48 hours (business days) of receipt.
- **Office Hours: On Zoom or by phone, by appointment.**
- **Teaching Assistant: TBD**
- **Teaching Assistant Email: Message through Canvas**

Course Time Zone | Eastern Time (ET). Course due dates are according to this time zone.

Please note:

Due to a high volume of voicemails/emails, my general policy for email is to respond only to emails which relate to the course content (e.g. questions/comments related to sociology of gender) and questions which cannot be answered by any other available course-related resource (e.g. FIU Tech Support, the Course Syllabus, In-class announcements, emails, etc.). **If I experience an overload of emails, it may take many days before I can respond, if at all.** I will notify the class if this happens.

General Information

Course Description And Purpose

This course examines the emergence of sociology as the study of social relations. Compares and contrasts the work of selected theorists, with respect to their methodologies, treatment of the emergence and consequences of modern society, political sociology, conception of social class, and analysis of the role of religion in society. The student is expected to gain in-depth knowledge of opposing theories, as well as an appreciation of the contingent nature of sociological theories.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will:

1. Identify and define a variety of theories and theoretical concepts.
2. Summarize the main propositions of a variety of sociological theories and their limitations.
3. Explain ways in which sociological theory applies to their lived experiences.
4. Discuss relationships between theory, method, and research findings.
5. Compare and contrast a variety of sociological theories.

Important Information

Policies

Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

- [Policies](#)
- [Netiquette](#)

- [Links to an external site.](#)
- [Technical Requirements and Skills](#)
- [Accessibility and Accommodation](#)
- [Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Academic Misconduct Statement](#)
- [Copyright Statement](#)
- [Inclusivity Statement](#)

Course Prerequisites

There are no course prerequisites.

Proctored Exam Policy

This course does not require an on-campus or proctored exam.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place *via the Canvas Inbox, Zoom meetings, and Announcements*. Check out the [Canvas Guide](#)

[Links to an external site.](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

This class requires participation in discussion to meet course-learning outcomes. We are a class comprised of individuals. As such, there will be multiple opinions expressed throughout the semester that you may not personally agree with or even understand – as may be expected. My role as an instructor is to facilitate freedom of expression that is relevant to the course, credible, open and respectful without the promotion or endorsement of a single viewpoint.

Conversations informed by diverse viewpoints contribute to critical thinking and higher-level learning. Even if you don't agree, listening to different points of view may give you further insight into your own perspectives. No lesson is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint, or belief in a concept. Concepts as presented are not endorsed by the instructor but are presented as part of the larger course of instruction. If you feel uncomfortable with how content in the course is presented or discussed, please contact me for further conversation or, if you feel comfortable doing so, you may say so in class in a manner that aligns with our class expectations (see Class Expectations section of the syllabus).

Textbook

Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots: The Basics

Ritzer, George and Jeffrey Stepnisky

SAGE, 6th Edition, 2018

ISBN: 1506339417

ISBN-13: 978-1506339412

Additional required readings and films can be linked through the course website in each lesson.

The text above is required for the course and we will use them immediately.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students. Please be confident of your abilities before you commit to this course. Always contact tech support if you run into technical problems or questions.

Students are expected to:

- **Review the how to get started information** located in the course content
- **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting an introduction (and a picture, please!) in the appropriate discussion forum
- **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with Canvas
- **Interact** online with instructor, teaching assistant(s), and peers
- **Review** and follow the course calendar
- Log in to the course **at least 3 times per week**
- Respond to **emails/messages/announcements** within **2 business days, unless otherwise requested.**
- **Maintain professional communications as outlined in the Student Handbook.**
- Submit assignments by the corresponding deadline

The instructor will:

- Log in to the course **daily on business days.**
- Respond to **emails/messages** within **2 days, when possible (please see above).**
- Grade assignments and provide feedback within **7** of the assignment deadline.

Course Detail

Course Requirements

There are several activities within each lesson to assist you in building knowledge of Sociological Theories. Eight lessons are organized on a bi-weekly basis. Most students can expect to spend 8-10 hours per week on the course.

Individual Assignment: Syllabus Quiz

Required for everyone! Students who fail to pass the syllabus quiz with 100% accuracy by the due date listed on the quiz will be administratively dropped from the course.

You will take a quiz based on the course requirements and the use of course technology. *The purpose is to ensure that you clearly understand the course requirements and how to use the course online tools.*

Individual Assignment: Bi-Weekly Zoom Sessions

For each Lesson, I will conduct a 1 one-hour online discussion/activity related to one of the current theories. The objective of these meetings is to *provide opportunities for us to more fully unpack the concepts, issues, and research covered in the course, as well as to maintain a "Course Housekeeping" dialogue throughout the semester.* The meetings also provide you with *the opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge you've gained and to ask questions related to the*

course material. Online discussions provide time during each lesson for you and me to have direct, live interaction. Each discussion is recorded and the recordings are posted on the course website within about 24 hours after each meeting.

You have **2 options** in this assignment:

1. You may **attend and participate** in the meetings, or
2. You may watch the meeting recordings and **take a short quiz** related to the information shared and discussed. The quiz will be posted within 2 business days of the meeting and you will receive your score immediately upon submission.

Please review the Zoom Session Attendance/Participation Rubric below.

Zoom Session Schedule

Table of Scheduled Zoom Sessions

Session	Date	Time
1	8/27	6:45 PM
2	9/10	6:45 PM
3	9/24	6:45 PM
4	10/8	6:45 PM
5	10/22	6:45 PM
6	11/5	6:45 PM
7	11/19	6:45 PM
8	12/3	6:45 PM

Zoom Session Attendance/Participation Rubric

Zoom Session Rubric

Category	0%	80%	12-14%	14-16%	16-18%	18-20%
			1 or fewer objectives met, poor quality	2-3 objectives met, average quality	3-4 objectives met, good quality	All 4 objectives met at the highest level
Attendance	Does not attend	Attends	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Questions and comments reveal engagement with the material under study. 2. Discusses outside material which relates to the topic under study. 3. Answers questions that are asked by instructor. 4. Is professional in interactions with others. 			
5.						
Participation						
Total						

Grading: This assignment is worth 20% of your total grade. The lowest 8 Zoom grades will be dropped.

Individual Assignment: Quiz Yourself/Study for Exams

Multiple choice questions for each lesson are pooled and offered for practice. “Quiz Yourself” can be found within each Lesson’s module.

The quizzes are graded automatically. You will be able to see your score immediately after completing the quizz.

Individual Assignments: Exams

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the *Practice Quiz from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams*. It is your responsibility to make sure your computer meets the minimum [hardware requirements](#).

All assessments will auto-submit when (1) the timer runs out OR (2) the closing date/time is reached, **whichever happens first**. For example, if a quiz has a closing time of 5:00 pm but the student begins the exam at 4:55 pm, the student will only have 5 minutes to complete the quiz.

Within each lesson is an exam which covers the material in that lesson. *Exams provide the opportunity for you to gauge your growing knowledge about Sociological Theories, including vocabulary, summarizing major areas of research, and application of theoretical perspectives/concepts.* Exams are structured within the following parameters:

- Thirty minutes is allotted for twenty-five randomly assigned questions (taken from the quiz pool). *Exams exceeding their deadline will be considered **late** and not accepted.*
- You are required to download and utilize **Respondus Lockdown Browser** for taking exams online. The browser and instructions for using it are provided here:
 - Review the [Respondus Lockdown Browser Download and Information](#) on how to install, access your assessments and view your grades.
 - After installing the browser, please take the **Practice Quiz** to familiarize yourself with the testing environment and to ensure that you have downloaded the Respondus Lockdown Browser correctly.
- Exams will **only** be reset with an emailed report from FIU Online technical support.
- There are no make-up exams.

Exams are graded automatically. You will be able to see your score immediately after completing the exam. The lowest exam grade will be dropped.

Group Contract (group assignment) & Self/Peer Review Surveys (individual Assignments)

The working world requires the skills and abilities related to group/teamwork. Group/Teamwork is never as perfect as we imagine we could do by ourselves. This will always be the case. Most employment requires a certain level of skill working in teams. Please treat group assignments as an opportunity to build group working skills.

Groups will fill in a contract, identifying each member's strengths and commitment to tasks. Issues such as timing and scheduling will be outlined and signed by all group members. Also, to help group members to identify their strengths and weaknesses, and hopefully so they improve in future assignments, an anonymous survey will be filled out by each member of the group, two times during the semester. The survey asks each group member to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses in both their own work and for each other group member in accomplishing the assigned tasks.

If troubles arise in the group, students must address these through the group contract and self/peer review assignments.

Sociological Theories Term Paper

Please Note: All written assignments will be submitted to Turnitin. Please see [How to Submit a Turnitin Assignment](#) for more information.

The term paper assignments lend themselves to becoming more deeply engaged with sociological theories and to explore the relationships between theory and research. The assignments also provide opportunities to read, summarize, and understand peer-reviewed scholarly literature in sociology. Finally, the assignments will allow you to delve more deeply into a sub-field within Sociology.

The Term Paper is comprised of five (5) assignments that will culminate in a finished product at the end of term. There are many resources to help you to complete the assignments.

- First and foremost, please remember that the Social Sciences Reference Librarian is your best friend. Please visit the Library Resources and Connections for SYA 4010 website: [Here](#)
- [Links to an external site.](#)
- Please also read "[Summarizing a Scholarly Research Article](#)" and the "[Journal Article Summary Guide.](#)"
Optionally, you may read the [Group Writing Article by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill](#)
- [Links to an external site.](#) for some great tips on group writing.
- Please cite your sources from both inside and outside class, using the [Chicago Style of Writing Guide](#)
- [Links to an external site.](#). You will need to log in to the library using your FIU OneCard to access this resource.

Term Paper Assignment 1: Introduction to Your Topic

Work with your group to choose one of the following major topics in the study of sociology:

1. Culture
2. Socialization
3. Social Structure and Social Interaction
4. How Sociologists Do Research
5. Societies to Social Networks
6. Bureaucracy and Formal Organizations
7. Deviance and Social Control
8. Global Stratification
9. Social Class in the United States
10. Sex and Gender
11. Race and Ethnicity
12. Aging and the Elderly
13. The Economy
14. Politics

- 15. Marriage and Family
- 16. Education
- 17. Religion
- 18. Medicine and Health
- 19. Population and Urbanization
- 20. Collective Behavior and Social Movements
- 21. Social Change and the Environment

This is the topic you will be examining through the lenses of 3 sociological theories throughout the semester. Discuss with your group what you already know about the topic. Read about the topic (e.g., you may find an introductory text that could summarize for you). Describe the topic in a thorough and organized manner (**about 3 pages, 1.5 spaced**). Please include and define any field-specific language you encounter and, especially, any theoretical perspectives you find. Please use personal examples (e.g. things you learned in another course, an anecdote from your life) to illustrate the most pertinent information.

Term Paper Assignment 1 Rubric

Qualities being Assessed	Points Possible				
	90 - 100%	80 - 90%	70 - 80%	60 - 70%	0 - 60%
	Superior	Very Good	Good	Needs Work	Poor Quality

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Paper adequately describes the topic from the sociological perspective 2. Paper identifies, defines, and provides relevant examples of key concepts and theoretical perspectives as related to the topic. 3. Paper is well organized, professional in tone, and clearly reflects what they've learned. 4. Paper is well-written, with accurate spelling, punctuation, and grammar. 	<p>Essay meets all of the criteria; is excellent in every way.</p>	<p>3-4 of criteria met.</p>	<p>2-3 of criteria met.</p>	<p>1-2 of criteria met.</p>	<p>Few, if any criteria met or no submission</p>
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Term Paper Assignments 2-4: Article Summaries (1 Summary for each of 3 articles = 3 papers, total)

(Note: This part of the assignment will be repeated for Assignments 2, 3, & 4) Use library resources to identify a peer-reviewed, scholarly journal article *applying a sociological theory to your chosen topic*. Please be sure to use a different theory for each article summary. Any of the theories we cover in class will suffice. I recommend that you choose theories that interest the group. Summarize the article by addressing and summarizing the following:

1. What is the *research question*?
2. What *literature* is reviewed to address and formulate the question?
3. What *theoretical perspective* is used to inform the research? Please be thorough, provide a summary of the theoretical perspective and its major themes (you may need to do additional research for this part). Indicate terms associated with the theory, especially those that are germane to the research. Describe how the theory is used in the research. Please be detailed.
4. What *research methods* are used in the study? What is the sample type and size? What are the strengths and limitations of the study? How does theory inform the research methodology(ies)?
5. What are the results of the study? How does theory inform the results?
6. What conclusions or recommendations are made based upon the results?
7. **(Assignments 3 & 4 only)** Compare and contrast specific ways this research differs from the previous research you studied (2-3 specific examples). This could be in the research questions, the conclusions, recommendations, methods, etc. What's is the impact of theory on these?

About 3 pages, 1.5 spacing.

Term Paper Assignment 2-4 Rubric

Qualities being Assessed	Points Possible				
	90 - 100%	80 - 90%	70 - 80%	60 - 70%	0 - 60%
	Superior	Very Good	Good	Needs Work	Poor Quality

<p>1. Summary addresses all parts of the assignment thoroughly and accurately.</p> <p>2. Summary identifies, defines, and provides relevant examples of key concepts and theoretical perspectives. Compares and contrasts when applicable</p> <p>3. Summary is well organized, professional in tone, and reflects the group's knowledge of sociological theories.</p> <p>4. Summary is well-written and organized, with accurate spelling, punctuation, and grammar.</p>	<p>Essay meets all of the criteria; is excellent in every way.</p>	<p>3-4 of criteria met.</p>	<p>2-3 of criteria met.</p>	<p>1-2 of criteria met.</p>	<p>Few, if any criteria met or no submission</p>
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Term Paper Assignment 5: Discussion and Conclusions

For the final assignment, you will collect each of the prior assignments, edit, make adjustments and/or improvements, smooth them out, add discussion and conclusions, and transform them into one, overall term paper.

Please discuss how each resource (article) helps you to understand the relationship between theory and your group topic. Compare and contrast the ways the different theories you examined (in papers 2-4) address a research question. How does theory inform method? What did you learn that you did not know before? What conclusions can you make from this exercise? **About 3 additional pages, 1.5 spacing—for a total term paper length of 10-15 pages + references.** Please use the rubric below to help you with this part of the overall assignment.

SYA4010: Term Paper Assignment 5 & Final Term Paper Rubrics

Written Communication Rubric Table (10 points)

Category	10 pts. (demonstrates all indicators)	8 pts. (demonstrates 4 indicators)	6 pts. (demonstrates 2-3 indicators)	5 or fewer pts. (demonstrates 1 or no indicators)
Written Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates written ability to communicate effectively about topics, issues, concepts and/or perspectives used in Sociology. 	Indicators of Competent Writing Skill: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Writes without making a large number of grammatical, spelling or punctuation mistakes. Organizes written work coherently within and across paragraphs and across different sections of document. Expresses ideas, concepts, arguments, summaries using appropriate word choice and variety of sentence structures (e.g., not all passive voice). Develops and explains/Defines and discusses- does not merely state or define— key ideas, concepts, arguments, summaries. Cites scholarly literature/documentary evidence correctly and appropriately (Chicago Style) 			

Content Knowledge Rubric Table (70 points)

Category	70 pts. (demonstrates 7-8 indicators)	52 pts. (demonstrates 5-6 indicators)	34 pts. (demonstrates 3-4 indicators)	16 or fewer pts. (demonstrates 1, 2, or no indicators)
Content Knowledge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates awareness of the theories, perspectives, concepts, topics, issues, and 	Indicators of Content Knowledge: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recognizes/identifies sociological theories, concepts, issues and/or problems. Summarizes main ideas of sociological research and related theoretical concepts. 			

<p>perspectives examined by Sociology.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates awareness of the relationship between theory and method. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Describes social issues and/or problems using sociological concepts, theories, models and/or frameworks. 4. Compares and contrasts sociological theories, different social groups, analytical perspectives and/or methods of data analysis utilizing sociological theories, concepts, models, and/or frameworks. 5. Recognizes/identifies/defines sociological theories and/or methods and the concepts within them. 6. Identifies/summarizes/provides examples of how sociological theories and/or methods, models, frameworks apply to the analysis of a social issue and/or problem. 7. Compares and contrasts different theoretical perspectives, theoretical terms, social groups/problems, analytical units or scales and/or methods of data analysis utilizing sociological theories, concepts, models, and/or frameworks. 8. Identifies the strengths and limitations of sociological theories and their applications methodologically. May offer recommendations for problem solving future research directions or innovations in perspectives. Discusses what was learned and what questions remain or arise from the project.
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Critical/Analytical Thinking Rubric Table (20 points)

Category	20 pts. (demonstrates all indicators)	15 pts. (demonstrates 3 indicators)	10 pts. (demonstrates 2 indicators)	5 or fewer pts. (demonstrates 1 or no indicators)
<p>Critical/Analytical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate ability to Think Critically/Analytically in Sociology 	<p>Indicators of Critical/Analytical Thinking:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Describes, summarizes, and provides examples of social issues and/or problems using sociological concepts, theories, models and/or frameworks. 2. Compares and contrasts different social groups, theoretical perspectives and/or methods of data analysis utilizing sociological concepts, theories, models, and/or frameworks 3. Compares and contrasts one or more social phenomena across two or more theoretical perspectives 4. Formulates and discusses conclusions resulting from analysis of social phenomena, issues, and/or perspectives. May offer recommendations for problem 			

	solving, future research directions or innovations in perspectives.
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Course Grading

Grading Breakdown Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Percent per Item	Total Percentage
Syllabus Quiz	1	2.5%	2.5%
Zoom Sessions (Attendance/Alternate)	8	3.125%	25%
Quiz Yourself/Study for Exams	8	0.9375%	7.5%
Exams	8	3.75%	30%
Group Contract	1	2.5%	2.5%
Peer Reviews	2	1.25%	2.5%
Sociological Theories Term Paper Assignments	5	6%	30%
Total	33	N/A	100%

Letter Grade Table

Letter Grade	Percent
A	95-100
A-	90-94
B+	85-89
B	83-84
B-	80-82

Letter Grade Table

Letter Grade	Percent
C+	75-79
C	70-74
D	60-69
F	< 60

Extra Credit

No extra credit is offered in this course.

Missed or Late Assignments

Excepting religious holidays and/or dire circumstances (which should be reported to the Disability Resource Center), under no circumstances will missed or late assignments (including exams) be accepted. On the bright side, *you may work as far ahead as you can or wish!*