

# **SYG 3002: Basic Ideas of Sociology**

Department of Global and Sociocultural Studies – Spring Semester 2023  
Monday/Wednesday/Friday 10:00-10:50 CP 111

Instructor: James Gerardo Lamb

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Please message me using Canvas Inbox. This is the best way to get ahold of me for any questions.

Phone: (773) 255-2889  
For time sensitive/urgent issues (i.e. course deadlines). Please use Canvas/email first if possible.

Office Hours: Mondays/Fridays 1:00-3:00  
Green Library (GL) Cafe or Zoom  
<https://www.wejoinin.com/sheets/mrxfq>

## **Course Description and Purpose**

This course will survey some of the most widely used and discussed sociological ideas, concepts and theories. It will situate these basic contemporary ideas within the longer traditions and classical schools of thinking and theorizing about society and social issues. The course will approach these ideas through their grouping in broad themes and their relations over time. It will go over the key concepts that are building blocks of these ideas and theories and will introduce major theorists who developed them. A central focus will be understanding these abstract sociological theoretical ideas and concepts in a concrete and practical enough way to be able explain and apply them to real world events and issues.

## **Course Objectives**

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

CO 1 Identify, define, and evaluate major sociological theories, theorists and theoretical traditions.

CO 2 Compare and Contrast understandings of social issues from different theoretical perspectives.

CO 3 Critically examine social issues through the application of sociological theories to concrete cases.

CO 4 Communicate an understanding of sociological theories through academic research and writing.

Skills practiced in this course:

1. Team building and maintenance
2. Critical Reading
3. Academic research
4. Professional writing

## **Course Communication**

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox and Announcements. Check out the Canvas Conversations Tutorial or [Canvas Guide](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox.

To contact me please attempt to use the course website, then email, then phone/text only if necessary.

## **Course Website**

The first order of business in this class will be making sure you have access to the course website on Canvas. Class information, announcements, readings, assignments, grades, materials from

class lectures and feedback for your work will all appear on the Canvas website. The website is where you will submit your work. Let me know right away if you have trouble accessing it.

## **Textbook**

The main textbook for the class will be **Contemporary Sociological Theory and its Classical Roots: The Basics Sixth Edition** by George Ritzer and Jeffrey Stepnisky from Sage Publishing Company Copyright 2022 - ISBN 9781544396217 (paperback) | ISBN 9781544396231 (ebook).

## **Office Hours**

Office Hours are an important resource for the course. They will be particularly helpful in writing your research papers. You can sign up individually or with a group if all students agree to a group meeting.

## **Course Organization, Policies, Assignments and Grading**

Each week will be a mix of going over a selection of readings, which will also serve as preparation for the quizzes, academic research and writing modules to learn about the steps in researching and writing your papers and workshop sessions to work in your groups on the papers and assignments leading up to them.

Your grades for the course will be determined by the following criteria and weights:

Attendance at class lectures	15%
Chapter content quizzes	15%
Preparatory assignments for research paper 1	5%
Preparatory assignments for research paper 2	5%
Research Paper 1	30%
Research Paper 2	30%

Overall final class grades will be assigned on the following scale:

A = 93+

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 84-86

B- = 80-83

C+ = 77-79

C = 70-76

D = 60-69

F < 60

## **Attendance**

Attendance at all class meetings is mandatory and will constitute your attendance grade. Attendance will be taken using the FIU Check-In system and App. [FIU Check-In Student Guide](#)

If for any reason your FIU Check-In App is not working or you cannot check in, send me a message.

## **Excused Absences**

In cases of illness or emergency, or for authorized university events or activities, absences can be marked as excused with proper documentation. If something comes up, please talk to me or write me a message!

## **Weekly Quizzes**

At the end of each chapter, except for Chapter 1, there will be a short content quiz. It will generally be about 5 questions in multiple choice, true-false or fill in the blank format. The quizzes will be based on the readings but incorporate lecture. Quizzes will be available after lecture on Friday and through the weekend and will be timed. All quizzes will be taken through the Canvas course website. There will be a total of 11 quizzes throughout the class and you will be able to drop the lowest grade, leaving 10 grades.

## **Preparatory Assignments for Research Papers**

Leading up to each research paper there will be short “scaffolding” or preparatory assignments due at the end of class weeks leading up to when the research papers are due. They are graded only on a check/no check basis. If they are turned in on time, complete and demonstrate effort, full credit will be given.

These are an opportunity to receive feedback as you develop your research papers. The assignments are exactly the same for the two research papers. They are always due on the Friday of the week assigned and are worth 1 point each, with 5 per research paper, so cumulatively worth 10% of your final class grade.

The Peer Review Assignments, the last before the papers are due, are special assignments. They will utilize Eli Review software, with an in-class tutorial before they are due.

Since the research papers will be done in randomly assigned groups, only one assignment per group is turned in.

The due dates for each of the assignments are listed in the course calendar below and will appear with instructions under the assignments tab on the course website in Canvas.

## **Research Papers**

Your main products in this course, together accounting for the majority of your grade, will be two original sociological research papers. The basic requirements for the papers are that they are 1,000-1,500 words and include three sources: the textbook, an academic research journal article and a news media article.

Papers must include a formal thesis and sociological argument that structures the paper and which links together your three sources in the service of substantiating your thesis/argument. The papers must address the general theme of applying sociological ideas, concepts and theories from class to both the academic study and news reporting of real-world events and issues. They need (ASA) citations and a bibliography.

There will be lecture time devoted to going over the skills needed to produce a formal academic sociology research paper, like finding scholarly research articles, constructing and supporting a valid thesis, how to properly cite sources and research paper organization. In addition, there will be lecture time set aside to work in your groups. Groups are also strongly encouraged to attend office hours. Finally, your groups will probably need to meet on your own time, either in person or via zoom. You should also make use of the group discussion tab on Canvas to work together asynchronously on assignments and the final product.

Papers will be graded according to a detailed rubric that will be available on the class website on Canvas.

### **Plagiarism Detection through Turnitin.com**

All papers submitted for this course will be automatically analyzed by Turnitin. Turnitin is a plagiarism detection tool which creates an originality report of the assignments that students upload to the site. It also helps with improving students' research techniques and citation methods. [Here are some resources to use.](#)

Plagiarism is defined as:

- i. The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.
- ii. Assisting another Student in the deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own.

Plagiarism is considered serious academic misconduct.

### **Academic Misconduct Statement**

Florida International University is a community dedicated to generating and imparting knowledge through excellent teaching and research, the rigorous and respectful exchange of ideas, and community service. All students should respect the right of others to have an equitable opportunity to learn and to honestly demonstrate the quality of their learning. Therefore, all students are expected to adhere to a standard of academic conduct, which demonstrates respect for themselves, their fellow students, and the educational mission of the University. All students are deemed by the University to understand that if they are found

responsible for academic misconduct, they will be subject to the [Student Conduct and Honor Code](#) procedures and sanctions as outlined in the [FIU Regulation 2501](#) and the [Student Handbook](#).

## **Panthers Care and Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)**

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you, for the classmate's wellbeing or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU's Panthers Care website: <http://PanthersCare.fiu.edu/>.

Counseling and Psychological Services ([CAPS](#)) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress and other concerns life brings. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don't wait to call 305-348-2277 to set up a time to talk or [visit the online self-help portal](#).

## **Accessibility and Accommodations**

The Disability Resource Center collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and sustainable. The DRC provides FIU students with disabilities the necessary support to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students. If you have a diagnosed disability and plan to utilize academic accommodations, please contact the Center at 305-348-3532 or visit them at the Graham Center GC 190. If you need additional information or assistance visit FIU's [Disability Resource Center page](#). For more information on [Canvas visit the accessibility page](#).

## **Key Dates**

Monday, January 9	First Day of Lecture
Sunday, March 19	Research Paper 1 Due
Monday, March 20	Last Day to Drop with DR Grade
Saturday, April 29	Research Paper 2 Due/End of Course

## **Week 1: Introducing the Class**

### **Reading:**

Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 1: Introduction to Sociological Theory

### **Monday, January 9/Wednesday, January 11/Friday, January 13:**

- Review syllabus
- Review Canvas
- Review textbook

- Assign groups for research paper 1
- Review paper rubric

- Review resources for papers
  - Basic Essay Structure – library tutorial module 6 slide 8 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>
  - library research guide - <https://library.fiu.edu/gss>
  - library tutorials - <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>
  - research librarian - [https://library.fiu.edu/prf.php?account\\_id=4266](https://library.fiu.edu/prf.php?account_id=4266)
  - Center for Excellence in Writing - <https://case.fiu.edu/writingcenter/student-services/index.html>

- Library Visit
- Center for Excellence in Writing
- Eli Review

- Review reading
  - What is Sociological Theory?

## **Week 2: Classical Theories I**

### **Reading:**

Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 2: Classical Theories I

### **Wednesday, January 18/Friday, January 20:**

- Review Reading
  - Durkheim
  - Marx
  - Weber
- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 1: Choose a Topic
  - The Research Journey <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/research>
  - The Research Process – where can I get help finding a topic? <https://library.fiu.edu/gettingstarted>
  - Getting Started with Research <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>
  - Background Research - library tutorial module 1 slide 8 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>
- Workshop for group project

**Friday, January 20: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE**

**Sunday, January 22: QUIZ 1 DUE**

## **Week 3: Classical Theories II**

### **Reading:**

Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 3: Classical Theories II

**Monday, January 23/Wednesday, January 25/Friday, January 27:**

- Review reading
  - Simmel
  - Veblen
  - Mead
  - Du Bois
  
- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 2: Annotated Bibliography
  - Annotated Bibliographies <https://library.fiu.edu/citation/annotbibs>
  - Creating and Formatting Annotated Bibliography <https://guides.library.charlotte.edu/c.php?g=173027&p=1142943>
  - Annotated Bibliography Videos <https://guides.library.charlotte.edu/c.php?g=1029765&p=7672614>
  - Getting Started with Research <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>
  - The Research Process – <https://library.fiu.edu/c.php?g=159967&p=1048703>
  - Identify Scholarly & Popular Sources <https://library.fiu.edu/gss/peer-review#s-lg-box-10880499>
  - Library Website Research: Start video [https://youtu.be/QiNY\\_TOFwm4](https://youtu.be/QiNY_TOFwm4)
  
- Workshop for group project

**Friday, January 27: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE**

**Sunday, January 29: QUIZ 2 DUE**

### **Week 4: Contemporary Grand Theories I**

#### **Reading:**

Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 4: Contemporary Grand Theories I

**Monday, January 30/Wednesday, February 1/Friday, February 3:**

- Review reading
  - Conflict Theory
  - Structural Functionalism
  - General Systems Theory
  
- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 3: Thesis Statement
  - Review prompt and instructions
  - Thesis Statement video <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>
  - How to Narrow Your Topic video <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/started>
  - Framing a Problem video - library tutorial module 3 slide 3 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>
  - Library Website Discovery video – library tutorial module 3 slide 11 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>
  - Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 57-61 [https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf)



- Workshop for group project

**Friday, February 3: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE**

**Sunday, February 5: QUIZ 3 DUE**

### **Week 5: Contemporary Grand Theories II**

#### **Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 5: Contemporary Grand Theories II

**Monday, February 6/Wednesday, February 8/Friday, February 10:**

- Review reading

Neo Marxian Theory

The Civilizing Process

The Colonization of the Lifeworld

The Juggernaut of Modernity

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 4: Outline - Body Paragraph Topic Sentences

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 29-33

[https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf)

Synthesizing Information for Academic Writing – library tutorial Module 6 slide 4

Steps to Synthesis Writing – library tutorial Module 6 slide 5

<https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

- Workshop for group project

**Friday, February 10: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE**

**Sunday February 12: QUIZ 4 DUE**

### **Week 6: Contemporary Theories of Everyday Life**

#### **Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 6: Contemporary Theories of Everyday Life

**Monday, February 13/Wednesday, February 15/Friday, February 17:**

- Review reading

Symbolic Interactionism

Dramaturgy

Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis

Exchange Theory

## Rational Choice Theory

- Introduce research paper preparatory assignment 5: Peer Review Assignment

-Outline: Transition/Linking Sentences

Anatomy of a Research Paper Video – library tutorial Module 6 slide 7

Review Anatomy of a Research Paper – **Concluding Sentence = Return to Thesis (“Linking”)**

Undergraduate Writing Guide for Sociology Pp. 29-33

[https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf)

- Eli Review Tutorial

- Workshop for project

**Friday, February 17: RESEARCH PAPER 1 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 5 DUE**

**Sunday, February 19: QUIZ 5 DUE**

## **Week 7: Midterm Week**

### **NO Reading**

**Monday, February 20/Wednesday, February 22/Friday, February 24:**

- Review citations and bibliography

Why Citations Matter – library tutorial module 5 slide 3 <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/tutorials>

Why Citations Matter video & tutorial - <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/citations>

Library Citations Guide - <https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/citations>

- Review ASA citation formatting and citation management programs

Library Citation Guide step 2: Citation Information and Generators

<https://library.fiu.edu/infolit/citations>

Undergraduate Sociology Writing Guide – Pp. 68-78

[https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Writing%20for%20Sociology%20Guide%20Second%20Edition.pdf)

When to Use Citations

[https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/When%20to%20Use%20Citations.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/When%20to%20Use%20Citations.pdf)

How to Use Quotations

[https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/How%20to%20Use%20Quotations.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/How%20to%20Use%20Quotations.pdf)

Formatting Citations

[https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/Formatting%20Citations.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Formatting%20Citations.pdf)

Sample Bibliography Formats

[https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student\\_services/writing\\_guide/Sample%20Bibliography%20Formats.pdf](https://sociology.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/documents/student_services/writing_guide/Sample%20Bibliography%20Formats.pdf)

- Review research paper grading rubric
- Research Paper Draft Review Meetings
- Workshop for group project

**Friday, February 24: \*\*\* RESEARCH PAPER 1 DUE \*\*\***

### **SPRING BREAK WEEK February 27-March 3**

- Assign Groups for Research Paper 2

### **Week 8: Contemporary Integrative Theories**

#### **Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 7: Contemporary Integrative Theories

**Monday, March 6/Wednesday, March 8/Friday, March 10:**

- Review reading
  - A More Integrated Exchange Theory
  - Structuration Theory
  - Culture and Agency
  - Habitus and Field

- Workshop for group project

**Friday, March 10: RESEARCH PAPER 2 ASSIGNMENT 1 DUE**

**Sunday, March 12: QUIZ 6 DUE**

### **Week 9: Contemporary Feminist Theories**

#### **Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 8: Contemporary Feminist Theories

**Monday, March 13/Wednesday, March 15/Friday, March 17:**

- Review reading
  - The Basic Theoretical Questions
  - The Classical Roots
  - Contemporary Feminist Theories

## Challenges to Feminism

- Workshop for group project

**Friday, March 17: RESEARCH PAPER 2 ASSIGNMENT 2 DUE**

**Sunday, March 19: Quiz 7 DUE**

## **Week 10: Theories of Race and Colonialism**

### **Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 9: Theories of Race and Colonialism

**Monday, March 27/Wednesday, March 29/Friday, March 31:**

- Review reading
  - Fanon and the Colonial Subject
  - Postcolonial Theory
  - Critical Theories of Race and Racism
  - Racial Formation
  - A Systematic Theory of Race
  - Southern Theory and Indigenous Resurgence

- Workshop for group project

**Friday, March 31: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 3 DUE**

**Sunday, April 2: QUIZ 8 DUE**

## **Week 11: Postmodern Grand Theory**

### **Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 10: Postmodern Grand Theory

**Monday, April 3/Wednesday, April 5/Friday, April 7:**

- Review reading
  - The Transition from Industrial to Postindustrial Society
  - Increasing Governmentality (and Other Grand Theories)
  - Postmodernity as Modernity's Coming of Age
  - The Rise of Consumer Society, Loss of Symbolic Exchange, and Increase in Simulations
  - The Consumer Society and the New Means of Consumption
  - Queer Theory: Sex and Sexuality

- Workshop for group project

**Friday, April 7: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENT 4 DUE**

**Sunday, April 9: QUIZ 9 DUE**

**Week 12: Globalization Theory**

**Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 11: Globalization Theory

**Monday, April 10/Wednesday, April 12/Friday, April 14:**

- Review reading

Major Contemporary Theorists on Globalization  
Cultural Theory  
Economic Theory  
Political Theory

- Eli Review Tutorial

- Workshop for group project

**Friday, April 14: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PREPARATORY ASSIGNMENTS 5 DUE**

**Sunday, April 16: QUIZ 10 DUE**

**Week 13: Science, Technology and Nature**

**Reading:**

- Ritzer and Stepnisky Chapter 12: Science, Technology and Nature

**Monday, April 17/Wednesday, April 19/Friday, April 21:**

- Review Reading

Affect Theory and the New Materialism  
Science studies and Actor-Network Theory  
Theories of the Anthropocene

- Research Paper Draft Review Meetings

**Friday, April 21: RESEARCH PAPER 2 PEER REVIEW REVISIONS DUE**

**Sunday, April 23: QUIZ 11 DUE**

**Week 14: Final Exam Week**

**Saturday, April 29: \*\*\* RESEARCH PAPER 2 DUE \*\*\***