

Department of Sociology  
University of Calgary

SOCI 331

# Classical Sociological Theory

Spring 2008

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Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 4:30 - 5:30 pm; and by appointment

## Course Description

This is a core course for students majoring in Sociology. It has several objectives:

- 1) to provide students with an introduction to the intellectual history of their chosen discipline (How and when did it become possible to think about “society”? What topics were important to early social theorists and sociologists? How do these topics relate to the social, political and economic context at the time? When did sociology become a recognized field of inquiry? What did early social theory and sociological writing *look* like? );
- 2) to acquaint students with the writings of classical social theorists and sociologists whose ideas and concepts are still encountered in contemporary sociology;
- 3) to provide students with practical experience in reading social theory;
- 4) to provide students with an opportunity to examine contemporary issues and ideas through the lens of historical writings.

We will be reading excerpts from original works written between 1640 and 1940, with a focus on the “classical period” (approximately 1830-1930).

Classes will consist of lectures, films, small group work, and discussion.

Blackboard will be used to post course documents and assignments and for electronic communication outside of class.

## Textbook

Michael S. Kimmel, ed. *Classical Sociological Theory*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

## Assessment

Assignments: two “thinkpiece” essays of 3-4 pages each.

Thinkpiece #1 assigned May 22, due May 27

Thinkpiece #2 assigned June 12, due June 17

Tests: an in-class midterm (June 5) and a registrar-controlled final (date to be determined).  
These tests will include multiple choice, matching, short answer and essay questions.

Small group participation: Periodically, during class, you will divide into small groups to discuss questions related to the readings and generate responses to share with the rest of the class. You need to be present and *have done the reading* to get credit for participation.

## Grading

|                        |      |
|------------------------|------|
| Assignments (15% each) | 30 % |
| Midterm                | 30%  |
| Group participation    | 5%   |
| Final exam             | 35%  |

Your final letter grade will be determined according to the following schedule:

| Percentage Grade | Letter Grade |
|------------------|--------------|
| 95-100           | A+           |
| 90-94            | A            |
| 85-89            | A-           |
| 80-84            | B+           |
| 75-79            | B            |
| 70-74            | B-           |
| 67-69            | C+           |
| 63-66            | C            |
| 60-62            | C-           |
| 55-59            | D+           |
| 50-54            | D            |
| 49 or less       | F            |

## **Instructor's Policies**

### **1. Communication outside of class:**

*For administrative questions about the course:* Post questions in the “Course Administration” forum on Blackboard. (Check the course outline or university calendar first; the answer is often in one of those places.)

*For questions about course content (lectures, readings, theoretical musings):* Post questions in “Course Content” forum or visit me during office hours.

*For personal matters related to your participation in the course:* Email me directly or visit during office hours.

**2. Electronic submission of assignments will not be accepted. Thinkpieces must be submitted in class, in hard copy, on the day they are due.**

**3. I do not distribute copies of my lecture notes and slides. If you miss class, will need to get notes from another student.**

**4. Please be courteous to the other people in the room:**

If you must arrive late or leave early, take a seat near the door.

If you must eat during class, choose food that offers minimal noise and odour. It is preferable, however, that you eat before class starts or during the break.

If you are going to use your computer to take notes during class, please overcome the temptation to surf the Internet, check Facebook, or write email, even if you do so quietly. People sitting near you can see what you are doing, and it distracts them.

## **Department and University Policy Stuff**

**Exam Policies:** You must provide advance notice to the instructor if you are unable to take an exam. All requests for deferral of an examination due to health reasons must be accompanied by written documentation as outlined in the University Calendar and should be obtained while the student has the physical or emotional problem rather than after recovery. Deferred exams may be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or religious conviction. If you have missed an exam for a legitimate reason, you will be able to write a “make up” exam as close to the original exam as possible. The date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons

for requesting a deferred exam. Deferred exams will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

**Ethics Research:** Students are advised that any research with human subjects--including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation--must have the approval of the Departmental Ethics Committee. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subjects research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

**Academic Misconduct:** Cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the University Calendar, which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

**The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)** legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

**Safewalk:** The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on Campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

**Academic Accommodation:** Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 295, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. *It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.*

#### **Handing in Papers Outside of Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades:**

1. When students are unable to submit papers at class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant rather than at the Sociology Department main office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the Sociology Department main office. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public place, (i.e., outside an instructor's office, the department office, etc.). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will only be available for pick-up during the instructor's office

hours at the end of this term or the beginning of the next term.

3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology department. They are only available online.

**Schedule** (Dates of assignments and tests are fixed; theorists and readings are subject to revision)

May 15 Introduction to course

May 20 Hobbes (Ch. XIII), Locke, Rousseau, Smith

May 22 Burke, Paine, Wollstonecraft

May 27 Martineau, Douglass, Comte  
*1<sup>st</sup> assignment due*

May 29 Marx

June 3 Marx and review

June 5 *In-class midterm*

June 10 Weber

June 12 Durkheim

June 17 Simmel, Ward  
*2<sup>nd</sup> assignment due*

June 19 Veblen, DuBois, Dewey

June 24 Gilman, Parsons, Woolf

June 26 Wrap-up and review

*Final exam* will be scheduled sometime during the exam period of June 27-30.