

The University of Calgary  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Department of Sociology

Contemporary Sociological Theory  
Sociology 333.01  
Winter Session 2009-10

Instructor: Thomas Lynch, Ph.D.  
Class Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.  
Lecture Room: ST-130

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Class Assistance Office Hours: Wednesday, 5-6 pm, Room 1052

### **Learning Objectives**

The learning objectives for this course include:

- 1) Understand what social theory is and why it counts;
- 2) Understand how social theory has developed during the last 50 years;
- 3) Examine the following major theorists from the 20<sup>th</sup> century: Erving Goffman, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu and Stuart Hall; and,
- 4) Consider how social theory can relate to your life

Students will be expected to have read the required readings for each class and will be encouraged to discuss the readings in class. I am hoping that those with a political science, history or economics background will contribute from each of these disciplines to any classroom discussions.

I am using a text by Hancock and Garner entitled, "Changing Theories: New Directions in Sociology" as my principal text. We will also be viewing and considering two films "A Crude Awakening" and "The American Ruling Class". You need to see these films in class as exam questions will be structured around their content.

### **Required Texts**

Black Hawk Hancock and Roberta Garner, "Changing Theories: New Directions in Sociology", (2009), available in the University Bookstore

### **Grading**

Letter Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

A+	98-100
A	95-97
A-	92-94
B+	85-91
B	80-84
B-	75-79
C+	70-74
C	65-69
C-	60-64

D+	57-59
D	53-56
D-	50-52
F	0-49

Higher marks will be reserved for student work that is well-argued, makes excellent use of the assigned readings, integrates insights from the films and are well-written.

This course will be closely graded. It will require a very solid effort from you in order to score a high grade. In line with University practices, you should be aware that grade components may be scaled to maintain equity between sections and consistency with departmental norms.

### **Course Assignments**

There will be several required in-class tests worth a total 60% of your final grade. In addition, there will be a major essay required at the end of the course. This final essay will be worth 40%.

The following course marking distribution system will be used:

- 1) Four short examinations worth 15% each. Each exam will focus on material from our text and lectures and require students to have mastered an understanding of the chapters dealing with each theorist as well as the in-class lecture material. I have decided that each exam will consist of 10-15 multiple choice questions.
- 2) A final writing assignment consisting of a double spaced, 10 page essay, on the following topic:

"Each of the films presented in class illustrates how social power can impact our lives and destinies. Each theorist whom we have studied can be used to analyze the story of power told in each film. Please choose one theorist and analyze both films using that theorist's work. Your analysis should utilize a broad selection of relevant theoretical concepts and include a conclusion that assesses the strengths and weaknesses of the specific social scientist's theory as a tool for understanding the content and context of power as presented in each film."

I will prepare a marking rubric for the final assignment which will help you construct this paper, and there will be an in-class Q&A opportunity to clarify the rubric.

On the writing assignment, marks will be deducted for spelling errors. Marks will also be deducted for poor or blatantly wrong grammar. If you do not have a copy of Strunk and White's "Elements of Style" you may want to buy one from the bookstore. Part of the Q&A session will include writing tips for students.

### **Lecture Schedule, Assignments and Readings**

#### **January 12-14**

Introduction to Class, Discussion of Expectations and Where and How to Concentrate Your Effort

Lecture on "What is Theory in Sociology" read pages 1-15 in our text

<b>January 19-21</b>	<b>"A Crude Awakening"</b> , and, from our text, Chapter 1 pages 19-47
<b>January 26-28</b>	<b>pages 51-95, Chapter 2 in our text</b>
<b>February 2-4</b>	Goffman and his place in social theory, pages 103-125
<b>February 9</b>	Goffman concluded, and <b>Final Assignment Rubric</b> with Q&A opportunity for final writing assignment handed out
<b>February 11</b>	<b>Goffman Test</b> and Beginning of Foucault, text readings 130-156
<b>February 23-25</b>	Foucault, continued
<b>March 2</b>	Foucault concluded
<b>March 4-9</b>	<b>Foucault Test</b> and <b>"The American Ruling Class"</b>
<b>March 11-25</b>	Pierre Bourdieu, from the readings pages 159-188
<b>March 30 and April 1</b>	<b>Bourdieu Test</b> , Stuart Hall, from the readings pages 189-208
<b>April 6-8</b>	Stuart Hall, continued
<b>April 13</b>	<b>Hall Test</b> , and Summary Lecture: Social Theory as Scientific Theory
<b>April 15</b>	Concluding Summary, Strengths and Weaknesses of each theorist, read pages 209-20 from our text
<b>April 22</b>	Final paper due

**Mandatory Information:**

***Emergency evacuations:***

In the case of fire or other emergency evacuation of this classroom/lab, please proceed to the assembly point by the Food Court in the Professional Faculties Building.

***Deferrals:***

If at all possible you must provide *advance* notice to the instructor if you are unable to take a test or pass in an assignment or essay on time. All requests for deferral of a course component 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. Deferrals will be allowed in the following circumstances: illness, domestic affliction or

religious conviction. Travel arrangements and misreading of the syllabus are not valid reasons for requesting a deferral. Deferrals will not be granted if it is determined that just cause is not shown by the student.

If you have missed a test for a legitimate reason, the instructor can require you to write a "make up" test as close in time to the original test as possible or can choose to transfer the percentage weight to another course component. If the instructor schedules a "make up" test for you, its date and location will be at the convenience of the Sociology Department.

Please note that requests to defer a final examination or to defer term work past the end of a term go through the Undergraduate Programs Office (UPO) and must be processed by the deadlines that are established in the U of C Calendar. You can find the forms you need online:

*Deferred Final Exam Application:*

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/Winter2008DEFERREDFINALEXAMINATIONS.pdf>

*Deferred Term Work Form:*

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/files/registrar/defTW.pdf>

You must submit these deferral forms to the Social Sciences Associate Dean (Students) through the UPO office: Undergraduate Programs Office, 4th Floor, MacEwan Student Centre. Only the Associate Dean approves requests for deferrals which extend beyond the end of a term. Instructors are not involved in such decisions. To make an appointment with the Associate Dean, phone (403) 220-8155.

**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:** Plagiarism, cheating and other academic misconduct are regarded as serious academic offences. 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. Written 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, phone 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 in class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor or teaching assistant. Papers will not be accepted in the main Sociology Department office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the main Sociology Department office. The Freedom of Information and 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 be available for pick-up only during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or at the beginning of the next term.
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are available only online.