



**Winter 2020**  
 FACULTY OF ARTS  
 Department of Sociology  
 Department of Sociology Website: <https://soci.ucalgary.ca/>

<b>COURSE TITLE: Contemporary Sociological Theory</b>			
<b>Course Number</b>	SOCI333-01		
<b>Pre/Co-Requisites</b>	SOCI331		
<b>Instructor Name</b>	Dr. Michael Adorjan	<b>Email</b>	MADORJAN@UCALGARY.CA
<b>Instructor Email Policy</b>	Questions and comments are always welcome about all aspects of this course. Please state your full name and course at the beginning of your email (this helps as I teach multiple courses, often with large enrollments). While every attempt will be made to respond to emailed inquiries promptly (e.g. questions about a forthcoming assignment, specific theories and concepts, etc.), A <u>WINDOW OF THREE (3) DAYS MAXIMUM, NOT INCLUDING WEEKENDS</u> should be anticipated for a response. Students should bear this in mind if last minute questions or issues arise, especially before any mid-terms and/or end-term examinations.		
<b>Office Location</b>	SS952	<b>Office Hours</b>	By appointment
<b>Telephone No.</b>	403-220-5982		
<b>TA Name</b>	NA	<b>TA Email</b>	NA
<b>TA Office Location</b>	NA	<b>TA Office Hours</b>	NA
<b>Class Dates</b>	MWF, from Jan 13-Apr 15, 2020		
<b>Class Times</b>	10:00-10:50AM [* revised regarding online classes in March 2020]		
<b>Class Location</b>	KNB 133 [* revised regarding online classes in March 2020]		

\* As of March 17, 2020, this class moves to online-based instruction. For this course, there are no further changes to assignment formats nor due dates. The reflection 'vlog' was due Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup> 2020 via D2L, and the take home exam remains the same (see below). The major change is to online delivery of lectures. Via YuJa software integrated with D2L, remaining lectures related to Symbolic Interactionism, Post Modernism and Feminism will be posted directly to the

'content' folder on D2L. These will include my prepared lectures including videos and graphical content where relevant. To contact Dr. Adorjan email correspondence is still encouraged, in addition to 'Zoom' e-meeting sessions by appointment. Given these extraordinary circumstances, students are encouraged to keep Dr. Adorjan apprised of personal situations that may affect their ability to receive course content, complete assignments and ultimately succeed in the course.

### Course Description

This course surveys major developments in sociological theory following the second World War. The major theoretical paradigms we cover are: functionalism, conflict theory, materialism, symbolic interactionism, postmodernism and feminism. Some recurring questions, concepts and issues will be reinforced across the varying theoretical perspectives, including debates centered on freedom and structure, meaning and interpretation, discourse and reality, and self and society.

### Course Objectives/Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be expected to:

- Demonstrate a strong grasp of contemporary developments in sociological theory since World War 2
- Critically reflect upon both strengths and weaknesses of these theories
- Apply knowledge of theories to news events, popular culture and daily life
- Develop a sociological imagination regarding one's position in society, connecting personal experiences with the theoretical and thematic concepts developed in the course

### Required Textbooks, Readings, Materials, Electronic Resources

The following textbook, available at the bookstore, is required for this course. Used copies are acceptable. An additional required reading on feminism will be posted to D2L. Please see the timetable for details.

Douglas Mann (2011). *Understanding Society: A Survey of Modern Social Theory* (Second Edition). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Alternative textbooks are also recommended to help supplement the main text by Mann. Three suggestions are:

Ruth Wallace and Alison Wolf. (2006). *Contemporary Sociological Theory: Expanding the Classical Tradition* (Sixth Edition). New Jersey: Pearson.

Richard Munch. (1994). *Sociological Theory: Development Since the 1960s* (Third Edition). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

Doyle Johnson (2008). *Contemporary Sociological Theory: An Integrated Multi-Level Approach*. (e-book available)

Anthony Thomson. (2016). *Modern Social Thought: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

## Schedule of Lectures and Readings

The following schedule may be modified based on course progress, with announcements posted to D2L. The order presented is the order we will be covering the materials, and exact dates will vary depending on a number of factors. The pages in the schedule that follow indicate the required course textbook.

- 1 – Introductions and Hobbes

Mann Ch.2:  
Hobbes – pg.#24

- 2 – Functionalism

Mann Ch.2:  
Parsons – pg.#31-39  
Merton – pg.#39-41

- 3 – Conflict theory and midterm review

Mann Ch.2:  
Mills – pg.#45-51

- February 13: Midterm [please note that the final midterm content will be announced in the week leading up to the midterm]

READING WEEK BREAK

- 4 – Materialism

Mann Ch.3:  
Bourdieu – pg.#85-89

- 5 – Symbolic Interactionism

Mann Ch.6:  
Blumer – pg.#190-196  
Goffman – pg.#196-206

- 6 – Postmodernism and Foucault

Mann Ch.7:

Foucault – pg.#237-240; pg.#250-257

- 7 – Feminism

Three Waves – pg.#322-329

[Additional readings will be announced]

## Methods of Assessment and Grading Weights

- |                            |     |                            |
|----------------------------|-----|----------------------------|
| • Midterm                  | 30% | FEB 14                     |
| • Critical Reflection Vlog | 40% | MAR 13, 11:50PM, VIA D2L   |
| • Final take-home exam     | 30% | APRIL 22, 11:50PM, VIA D2L |

## Assessment Components

### Midterm exam

The full class time will be available to write the midterm exam. The first exam will likely cover all material (i.e., readings and lecture discussions) from functionalism through conflict theory (Parsons, Merton and Mills), though the finalized content will be announced closer to the midterm date. The midterm will be a written examination, not multiple choice.

### Critical Reflection Vlog

Critical reflection in sociology is different from a 'regular' essay in several ways (adapted from MacDonald, 2011):

- Links experience to knowledge (especially, for this course, theoretical knowledge)
- Engages both reason and emotion
- Situates individual experiences within a broader social and cultural context
- Helps to understand and challenge one's values, beliefs and biases, in order to determine their impact on our ideas and actions
- Question unexamined assumptions related to personal identity and knowledge of society
- Helps to imagine alternative ways to think and act

Unlike traditional academic essays, critical reflection, in written or oral form:

- Makes use of the first person
- Considers the self an object of inquiry
- Incorporates experiences as a form of evidence
- Still follows formal English and follows proper referencing and citation guidelines in written form, and formal English in oral form

The critical reflection in this course is geared to be a structured piece of sociological analysis, rather than other varieties of reflection such as simply a journal or self-assessment. You will be evaluated on your level of engagement and knowledge with theory through your reflection upon theory. You will be required to choose ONE theoretical paradigm covered in the course (and focus further on a particular version of that theory – see below), though you are welcome to address more than one theory and/or theorist within a theoretical paradigm (though be careful given the time requirements needed to demonstrate your knowledge of theory as well as your reflection on that theory).

Be careful that in your selection of a particular paradigm (i.e., theoretical framework) and its application you pay heed to the differences among theorists within that paradigm and select a particular version of the theory that you find most striking and relevant when considering links to required tasks (see below). So for example if feminism is your chosen paradigm avoid discussing ‘feminism’ generally and be mindful of the (wide) differences between, for instance, 2nd wave feminist theories vs. later ‘intersectional’ approaches. In other words, you should refer to the theorist whose theory is most salient for your reflection. You are free to select any theory from the beginning to end of the course, though most student prefer to select a theorist and theoretical framework already covered in lectures.

### Required Tasks

You are required to focus on EITHER:

1 – A contemporary news event OR popular culture phenomena (e.g., movie, television series, online video, etc.)

There is flexibility regarding what counts as ‘contemporary’ events, though within the last couple of years is preferred, and you are encouraged to seek feedback on what you wish to reflect upon early on. News events can be local to Calgary, national or international.

OR

2 – A particular personal OR professional experience [the details of what you reveal in your reflection will remain confidentially kept between you and Dr. Adorjan. Course teaching assistants and/or graders will NOT be reviewing these reflections]

You are then tasked to address all of the following related to either #1 or #2:

- Describe the central tenets and assumptions of the theoretical paradigm you’ve selected
- Succinctly summarize the topics selected/personal experiences [include links to news clips or online videos where possible]

- Justify why you selected the theory in relation to the topics discussed, and reveal the connections between them
- Unpack in more detail both the strengths and weaknesses of your chosen theory, and in particular in relation to the particular theorist chosen, in explaining and understanding the topics discussed
- Despite the weaknesses you identify, justify why the theory is still useful

To remain focused, you are recommended to select only a single news/pop culture item or personal or professional experience. Secondary sources are not required, though direct reference to the textbook is expected (i.e., not just citing class discussions and lecture notes). Secondary sources are also recommended as they may help to analyze and apply nuances of your chosen theory not illuminated through the general textbook.

#### Assessment of reflections

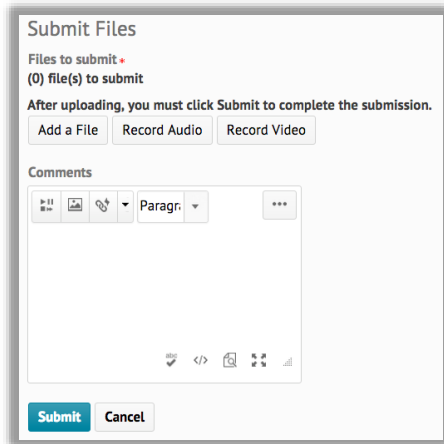
Drawing basic theoretical connections is necessary but not sufficient for a good grade. You will be assessed both based on your ability to critically engage with theory as well as your level of application and ‘sociological imagination’.

#### Video Log Information

The video log or ‘vlog’ reflection will be due March 13<sup>th</sup> at 11:50pm via D2L. Late penalties apply at 10% per day (including submission on March 14<sup>th</sup>), up to 3 days’ late, after which the grade will be 0% (F). Recognizing that upload times may vary, with D2L uploads sometimes very slow, students should email me right away if they expect much of a delay in their file submission. Please note that I recognize D2L slow uploading may be stressful on the evening of the due date and will accept late submissions up to a few hours with the understanding that students contact me to alert me to the technical issue. Files submitted a few hours late with a sufficient ‘heads up’ of a technical issue with uploading will not be penalized, but those submitted beyond this threshold with no email regarding technical issues will be impacted by the late penalties outlined above. I encourage students to thus submit files as soon as possible, where possible.

Rather than a written reflection, this class requires students to submit a video log (vlog) via a confidential D2L dropbox folder. The vlog must be no longer than 7 minutes, and must show your face to be able to identify you and give you credit. Think of this assignment as an oral presentation but one that is individualized and confidentially submitted and viewed. Vlogs that go over by a few seconds will not be docked marks, but vlogs over 10 seconds the time limit risk losing some marks (I’m testing oral presentation skills and concision, and also this is to ensure that file sizes are manageable). There is no minimum length for the vlog. Students are not expected to have advanced video editing skills; special effects are not required nor is their presence assessed in relation to the grade.

Many students choose to record their video via their phones, tablets, or computers. Editing of the video is welcome – i.e., students are not required to ‘get it perfect’ in one take. Alternatively, students can record the vlog through the ‘record video’ function in the dropbox submission folder:



However, students who make use of this feature should note that D2L permits each recorded video to be a maximum of 3 minutes in length (this is my most recent experience – please notify me if this has changed). Therefore, to fulfil the requirements of the vlog, students will likely wish to upload more than one video (often three videos, two of which are three minutes in length, and one of which is one minute, fulfilling the 7-minute maximum time permitted). MP4 or AVI formats are preferred, with the title of the video your surname and first name (i.e., Surname, First name.mp4). Unrecognized video formats will likely cause delays in receiving a grade. Students should be advised that while D2L permits large files, file compression is recommended as upload times are lengthy for larger files. D2L will not accept files larger than one gigabyte (I’m not aware this has changed subsequent to D2L’s upgrade), so students are encouraged to use video compression technology to keep files under 500 megabytes if possible.

If students are experiencing technical difficulties recording their videos, or if they do not wish to record the videos directly on their devices, they are encouraged to book an ‘audio/visual editing suite’ on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Taylor Family Digital Library (i.e., the ‘digital media commons’). There is a website to book time in advance:

<https://library.ucalgary.ca/avsuites>



Final take-home exam

30%

April 22, 2020

The final take-home examination will be made available on D2L on the final date of class. The exam will be due in one week, and must be submitted in Microsoft Word .doc or .docx format to the D2L dropbox set up for the final exam. The exam MUST be received no later than 11:50pm on April 22, 2020. There will not be late penalties applied: exams submitted past the due date will receive an F grade. Further details will be provided closer to the end of the course.

### Grading Scale

Letter grades will be assigned and submitted to the registrar based on the following scale:

Grade	Percent range	Grade Point Value	Description
A+	96 – 100%	4.0	Outstanding performance
A	90 – 95.99%	4.0	Excellent performance
A-	85 – 89.99%	3.7	Approaching excellent performance
B+	80 – 84.99%	3.3	Exceeding good performance
B	75 – 79.99%	3.0	Good performance
B-	70 – 74.99%	2.7	Approaching good performance
C+	67 – 69.99%	2.3	Exceeding satisfactory performance
C	63 – 66.99%	2.0	Satisfactory performance
C-	59 – 62.99%	1.7	Approaching satisfactory performance
D+	55 – 58.99%	1.3	Marginal pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject
D	50 – 54.99%	1.0	Minimal Pass. Insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the same subject.
F	<50%	0	Failure. Did not meet course requirements.

### Grade Reappraisal

Within two weeks of the date the exam/assignment is returned, students seeking reappraisal of examinations or assignments must submit a written response to the instructor explaining the basis for reconsideration of one's mark. The instructor will reconsider the grade assigned and will then book a time with the student to discuss their work and rationale. It should be noted that a re-assessed grade may be raised, lowered, or remain the same. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.

## Technology Use

Students are encouraged to bring their electronic devices to class (e.g. laptops, smartphones, tablets, etc.) to assist with note taking and learning. Students are expected NOT to distract other students by browsing social media sites, watching any videos, answering phone calls or text messages (unless emergencies), playing video games, or any other activity that would distract other students either through audio or video content. All devices must be set to buzzer or silent mode during the lecture.

## Handing in Papers, Assignments

1. The main Sociology Department office does not deal with any course-related matters. Please speak directly to your instructor.
2. Protection of Privacy: The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIPP) legislation does not allow students to retrieve any course material from public places. Anything that requires handing back will be returned directly during class or office hours. If students are unable to pick up their assignments from the instructor, they can provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary
3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

## Research Ethics

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 Faculty 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.

## Copyright Legislation

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorized sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

## Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by professor(s) (including course outlines, presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the professor(s). These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the professor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these

course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

### Academic Misconduct

Please refer to the website listed below for information on University of Calgary policies on Plagiarism/Cheating/Other Academic Misconduct:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>

### Absences and Deferrals

Students who are absent from class assessments or unable to submit assignments by their due dates (e.g., tests, participation activities, or other assignments) should inform Dr. Adorjan as soon as possible. Dr. Adorjan, in consultation with the student, reserves the discretion regarding how to proceed, including scheduling a deferred exam or submission date for the midterm and/or assignments.

For information on possible forms of documentation, including statutory declarations, please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/m-1.html>

Deferred Final Exam Form: Please note that requests to defer a Registrar scheduled final exam are dealt with through the Registrar's Office. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>

Deferred Term Work Form: Deferral of term work past the end of a term also requires a form to be filled out. It's available at:

[https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/1/deferred\\_termwork15\\_0.pdf](https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/1/deferred_termwork15_0.pdf)

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the form should be taken to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (SS 110) for approval by an Associate Dean (Students).

### Academic Accommodation

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/). Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at:

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>

Students needing an Accommodation based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the course instructor.

### Wellness and Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive support when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through Student Wellness Services (Room 370 MacEwan Student Centre,

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services>) and the Campus Mental Health Strategy (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>).

### **Student Success Centre**

The Student Success Centre provides services and programs to ensure students can make the most of their time at the University of Calgary. Our advisors, learning support staff, and writing support staff assist students in enhancing their skills and achieving their academic goals. They provide tailored learning support and advising programs, as well as one-on-one services, free of charge to all undergraduate and graduate students. For more information visit: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success>

### **Student Ombuds Office**

The Student Ombuds Office supports and provides a safe, neutral space for students. For more information, please visit [www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/) or email [ombuds@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca).

### **Student Union (SU) Information**

The SU Vice-President Academic can be reached at (403) 220-3911 or [suypaca@ucalgary.ca](mailto:suypaca@ucalgary.ca); Information about the SU, including elected Faculty Representatives, can be found here: <https://www.su.ucalgary.ca>.

### **Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points**

Assembly points for emergencies have been identified across campus. Assembly points are designed to establish a location for information updates from the emergency responders to the evacuees; from the evacuated population to the emergency responders. For more information, see the University of Calgary's Emergency Management website:

<https://live-risk.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/evac-drills-assembly-points/assembly-points>

### **Safewalk**

Campus security will escort individuals, day or night, anywhere on campus (including McMahon Stadium, Health Sciences Centre, Student Family Housing, the Alberta Children's Hospital and the University LRT station). Call 403-220-5333 or visit <http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>. Use any campus phone, emergency phone or the yellow phone located at most parking lot pay booths. Please ensure your personal safety by taking advantage of this service.

## Grade Descriptors for Theoretical Reflection Video Log [Revised March 2020]

	Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade F
<b>Addressing the Task</b>	Identifies and addresses clearly the main tasks and the subsidiary, embedded, or implicit aspects coherently and lucidly.	Identifies and addresses the main tasks and most of the subsidiary, embedded or implicit aspects.	Addresses the main tasks but some only superficially.	Some of the main tasks are not addressed, with others addressed only superficially.	Lacks an understanding of what the assignment requires or responds inappropriately or tangentially to the task or topic.
<b>Theoretical Engagement</b>	Vlog consistently demonstrates informed, thoughtful and sustained intellectual engagement with the chosen theoretical framework. Theoretical ideas are applied appropriately and insightfully. Demonstrates ability to engage with both strengths and limitations of the theory and to apply the theory to new areas in a critical and insightful way.	Vlog demonstrates informed and thoughtful intellectual engagement with the chosen theoretical framework. Theoretical ideas are applied appropriately. Demonstrates ability to engage with both strengths and limitations of the theory.	Vlog indicates some intellectual engagement with the chosen theoretical framework, but not always with sufficient depth, breadth or understanding. Theoretical ideas are sometimes applied inappropriately or tenuously.	Vlog indicates superficial engagement with the chosen theoretical framework. The vlog suffers from poor articulation and consistently vague references.	Vlog indicates an absence of intellectual engagement with a particular theoretical framework. Theoretical references are irrelevant or superficial and arguments are seriously flawed.
<b>Mechanics</b>	Oral presentation is clearly audible and well spoken. Time limit of 7 minutes is adhered to.	Oral presentation is clearly audible and well spoken, though the vlog slightly exceeds the 7-minute time limit.	Oral presentation has a few technical difficulties affecting the clarity of its audibility AND/OR the presentation is average in clarity and spoken word AND/OR the vlog slightly exceeds the 7-minute time limit.	Oral presentation has serious technical difficulties affecting the clarity of its audibility AND/OR the presentation is below average in clarity and spoken word AND/OR the vlog exceeds the 7-minute time limit.	Oral presentation has serious technical difficulties affecting the clarity of its audibility AND/OR the presentation suffers serious problems in clarity and spoken word AND/OR the vlog greatly exceeds the 7-minute time limit.

Revised for SOCI333, March 2020