

San José State University
Department of Sociology & Interdisciplinary Social Science
SOC 101-01, Social Theory, Spring 2024

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Office Hours: Monday 3-3:30, Tuesday 2-2:30, Wednesday 10-10:30, Online Wednesday 11-11:30 & by appointment

Class Days/Time: Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:30 – 11:45

Classroom: DMH 162

Prerequisites: SOCI 1 and SOCI 100W

“Coercion is natural; freedom is artificial. Freedoms are socially engineered spaces where parties engaged in specified pursuits enjoy protection from parties who would otherwise naturally seek to interfere in those pursuits. One person’s freedom is therefore always another person’s restriction: we would not have even the concept of freedom if the reality of coercion were not already present. We think of a freedom as a right, and therefore the opposite of a rule, but a right *is* a rule. It is a prohibition against sanctions on certain types of behavior. We also think of rights as privileges retained by individuals against the rest of society, but rights are created not for the good of individuals, but for the good of society. Individual freedoms are manufactured to achieve group ends.”

Louis Menand (2001) *The Metaphysical Club: A Story of Ideas in America*, p. 409.

Web Content for this Course

The materials for this course are on Canvas. As a registered student, you have automatically been added to the list of students who have access to this content for this course. For help with this system, see <http://www.sjsu.edu/at/ec/canvas/index.html>

Course Description

Catalog Description: Comparative analysis of micro and macro sociological theories and their origins, including, but not limited to, conflict theories, consensus theories, structural functionalism, symbolic interaction and recent theoretical developments. Required for majors.

Professor Rudy's course: In this course we will study the development of sociological explanations about the social world. We will begin with a brief discussion of the European the discovery of the "social" as a result of the cataclysmic changes brought on by Western Europe's colonial expansion, the growth of its cities and the Industrial Revolution. This period is notable for sociologists because of the important concepts and theories about the modern world developed by Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber. Following these three major theorists we will examine the developments of sociological theory in the United States, and in Europe, as new questions, problems and issues unfolded in the emerging debates that came out of these early analyses. As we begin to read theorists from the twentieth-century we will notice how the discipline of sociology divides up into a variety of important issues and explanations, no longer centrally concerned with capitalism and the development of grand theories.

In completing this course you will be asked to read short excerpts from these theorists, which will require dedicated reading time on your part. To fully appreciate, develop enthusiasm, and participate in the discussion you must complete the reading before class and have thought about what you read. Much of this work is abstract and we will do our best to use these theories to explain contemporary issues such as inequality of wealth and opportunity, immigration and globalization, race and gender, city life, crime and deviance, and popular culture. During this semester, you are responsible for paying attention to issues that are and should be the focus of political candidates and community debates to solve social problems, to give us a common set of events on which we can practice our sociological theory. The success of the course will depend on your willingness to contribute to this discussion and to make these theories meaningful in your daily lives. As you read you should be thinking about how each one of these theories might help you understand and explain a particular issue or topic that is significant in your life. If you complete the reading and written assignments and participate in the discussion, this will be one of your most exciting classes which will transform how you think about yourself and society.

Course Goals and Student Learning Objectives

Course Content Learning Objectives

1. To develop basic knowledge of some of the major theorists in the sociological tradition;
2. To expand your conceptual skills and learn new ways of thinking;
3. Practice reading abstract texts and interpreting them;
4. Learn to express yourselves orally and in writing about concepts, ideas and explanations;
5. Develop skills of applying concepts to explain and understand social life.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Roberta Garner and Black Hawk Hancock, editors, *Social Theory: Continuity and Confrontation – A Reader* 3rd edition, Broadview Press (2014).

The textbook is available at the reserve desk of the King Library for two-hour check-out.

A **good dictionary** is very important, as you will be learning many new words and need to know specific definitions for words you may already feel that you know.

You will be expected to be informed about current events in the US, California, and our local communities. This is best accomplished by regular attention to at least one news source. Be aware that television is the most shallow of the news media, and one can more easily know more by means of radio and newspapers. Suggestions for news coverage will be posted on Canvas, and I encourage you to circulate your suggestions as well.

Assignments and Grading Policy

To achieve an above average grade, you will need at a minimum to read all the assignments, attend class and take good notes, review your notes and the readings after lecture, participate in class discussion, and write clear and well-organized reflections and exams. I expect that you will do all the work necessary during this semester to complete this course with a grade you feel accurately reflects your capacities. If you are having any difficulties you are responsible for seeing me during my office hours to keep me informed about your progress and any difficulties you encounter. Your final grade is **FINAL** and I will not allow any additional work or revisions to change it.

I do not use the grading function on CANVAS, I use the formula in this section to calculate grades.

As a three-credit course, you should expect to spend six hours each week outside of class reading, writing, discussing and thinking.

PARTICIPATION – 10%

This course combines lecture and class discussion, which means that each one of us is responsible for the success of the class. I will make every effort to stimulate discussion, and you will need to read and prepare before class to fully benefit from the class. If the discussion is lagging, I will call on specific students to solicit their thoughts.

Half of your participation grade (5%) will be determined by how well I get to know you and the quality of your effort in participating in class discussion. In addition to class discussion, other ways in which you may participate include visiting me in my office hours and interacting with me via email and Canvas. If you use email, introduce yourself to me so I can associate a face with your messages.

The **other half** of your grade (5%) will consist of your reading **two quotes from two** theorists assigned to you, and participating in a group presentation of one of the readings. You must submit your quote to the Canvas Discussion entitled “Quotes” before class meets, and then in class, read aloud the quote you chose and briefly explain its significance. The quote must

include author and page number from our text. You choose the quote after reading the selection and deciding what is a significant or important section of the reading. The quotes must be roughly 3-5 lines in the text, or 2-4 sentences in length.

You are expected to practice a classroom etiquette of respect for others. This means we will show respect for other's ideas and debate the ideas not the person. Your comments are best directed to help each person achieve the skill of clearly explaining their thoughts orally.

ORAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS – 15%

As part of a group of students, you will be asked to present one of the readings in class. Guidelines for the presentations will be posted on Canvas.

REFLECTION PAPERS & WRITING – 15%

You must complete all the written assignments to pass this class.

You will be required to write **two papers**, 2-3 pages in length, consisting of a quote you choose from one of the theorists we are reading and a two- to three-page reflection about the quote and the theory. You will also have an opportunity to write a third paper. If you write two papers, each paper is worth 7.5% of the paper grade. If you write three papers, each paper will be worth 5%. The reflection will consist in writing about the significance or importance of the quote for understanding the theorist, as well as reflecting on observations of your daily life that the quote and the theory enable you to explain. The example you include can be explained by the causal argument that the theory proposes as the reason why something happens in society.

The due dates for the reflections are: **March 5** (Marx to Merton), **April 11** (Weber to Anyon), **May 9** (Gramsci to D'Emilio).

EVERYONE MUST HAND IN A PAPER ON March 5th.

You may only write about a theorist once: if you write about DuBois for your second paper you may not write about him again for the third paper. Second, you must write about a theorist in the schedule since the last paper, as indicated in the parentheses. Submit all papers electronically to the appropriate assignment page on Canvas and turn in a paper printed copy at the beginning of class.

Late materials will lose points, specifically one-third (1/3rd) of a letter grade for each 24 hours that it is late. **After seven days papers may receive 5 out of 10 total points, and it is my sole prerogative to decide.** If you are ill and will not be able to attend class, you are responsible for informing me before class or as soon as possible.

THREE IN-CLASS ESSAY EXAMS – 20% each

These will be essay exams with a selection of 2 or 3 essay questions in addition to definitions of specific concepts from the readings and lecture. The essay questions will ask you to define and use concepts or may ask you to compare two theorists, or may ask you to describe how they explain some phenomenon. You will need a blue or green book for these exams.

To prepare for the exams, you should pay careful attention during class as I will pose study questions for the exam during each class. Additionally, always consult the Study Guide and Questions at the end of the chapters we read in our textbook. You will be tested on the

readings assigned and the discussion and lecture material from class. Success on exams is usually considerably improved by studying with a group of other students.

Unless you inform me before the exam, there will be **no make-up exams**. If you miss the exam you will get a zero as a grade.

GRADE SCALE:

A+ $\geq 97 < 100$	B+ $\geq 87 < 90$	C+ $\geq 77 < 80$	D+ $\geq 67 < 70$
A $\geq 93 < 97$	B $\geq 83 < 87$	C $\geq 73 < 77$	D $\geq 63 < 67$
A- $\geq 90 < 93$	B- $\geq 80 < 83$	C- $\geq 70 < 73$	D- $\geq 60 < 63$

University Policies (see Syllabus page on Canvas)

SOCI 101 / Social Theory, Spring 2024, Course Schedule

This is the schedule of classes and readings and assignments. The schedule may change, and those changes will be announced in class and on Canvas.

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	25 January	<p>Introduction, words, concepts and theories</p> <p>https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/10000006719947/europeans-view-americans.html?smid=url-share</p> <p>Sociology as study of groupness and the social causes of action and inaction; Individuals and groups, on which does activity depend? Causal explanations of individual and social action</p> <p>READ: General Introduction by Garner pp. xix-xxiii What are the six questions that many theories explore?</p>
2	30 January	<p>Karl Marx – Division of Labor, Capitalism and Power READ: Classical Theory introduction by Garner pp. 33-34 AND Introduction to Marx’ theory by Garner pp. 35-37</p>
	1 February	<p>Karl Marx – Division of Labor, Capitalism and Power Karl Marx – Capitalism, Commodities and Social Class READ: Intro and Marx and Engels – <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> pp. 37-45 READ: intro and Marx and Engels — <i>The German Ideology</i> pp. 45-47</p>
3	6 February	<p>Karl Marx — Alienation & Commodity Fetishism READ: Marx – Estranged Labor & Capital: on Fetishism and on Machinery 48-58</p>
	8 February	<p>Application of Marx’ theory to contemporary USA Adolph Reed (2023) “We must avoid race reductionism” <i>Jacobin</i> Adolph Reed (2020 Feb 18) “Bookerism and the Black Elite” <i>The New Republic</i></p>
4	13 February	<p>Émile Durkheim – Social Facts, Social Solidarity, & Suicide READ: Introduction to Durkheim by Garner pp. 73-76</p>
	15 February	<p>Émile Durkheim – Social Facts, Social Solidarity, & Suicide READ: Durkheim — <i>The Rules of Sociological Method</i> 76-78 AND <i>Suicide</i> pp. 78-85</p>
5	20 February	<p>Robert Merton–Anomie & “deviance” in the US READ: Introduction to Merton by Garner pp. 90-92 AND Merton — <i>Social Structure and Anomie</i> pp. 92-98</p>
	22 February	<p>First IN-CLASS EXAM (bring an exam book, Blue or Green)</p>
6	27 February	<p>Max Weber - The Protestant Ethic READ: Introduction to Weber by Garner pp. 101-104</p>
	29 February	<p>Marx Weber: Divisions in Society Max Weber - Class, Status & Party READ: Weber — <i>Essays in Sociology</i> pp. 105-108</p>
7	5 March	<p>Max Weber – Power, Forms of Authority and Bureaucracy READ: Weber — <i>Essays in Sociology</i> pp. 108-110 AND Max Weber – Bureaucracies and Organizational Sociology READ: Weber — “VIII. Bureaucracy pp. 109-110</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
	7 March	<p>PAPER #1 DUE FROM EVERY ONE AT START OF CLASS 5 March</p> <p>Max Weber applied: Theda Skocpol – Power, US political life and civil society</p> <p>READ: Theda Skocpol, introduction pp. 116-117 Theda Skocpol, “The Narrowing of Civic Life” pp. 118-121</p>
8	12 March	<p>How cities create intellectual and calculating individuals – Georg Simmel Chapter 5, Introduction to Georg Simmel, pp. 123-5 Simmel, “The Metropolis and Mental Life” pp. 128-135</p>
	14 March	<p>American Sociology & George Herbert Mead - Self & Society READ: General introduction by Garner p. 173 AND “The American Emergence” by Garner pp. 175-176 AND Introduction to Cooley and Mead by Garner AND Mead — <i>Mind, Self, and Society</i> pp. 176-181</p>
9	19 March	<p>American Sociology & George Herbert Mead - Self & Society</p> <p>Patricia and Peter Adler – Gloried Self READ: Adlers — The Gloried Self, pp. 181-189 STUDENT GROUP PRESENTATION OF THIS READING</p>
	21 March	<p>W.E.B. DuBois – Social Theory of Race READ: Introduction to DuBois by Garner pp. 189-192</p>
10	26 March	<p>W.E.B. DuBois – Social Theory of Race READ: DuBois — <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i> pp. 192-196 AND DuBois — The Souls of White Folk p. 196</p>
	28 March	<p>Second IN-CLASS EXAM (bring an exam book, Blue or Green)</p>
11	1 – 5 April	<p>SPRING RECESS – No Classes</p>
12	9 April	<p>Antonio Gramsci –Social Class, Culture, Consent & Hegemony READ: Introduction “Reconstructed Marxism” by Garner pp. 221-222 AND Intro to Antonio Gramsci 248-252, and Gramsci — <i>The Prison Notebooks</i> pp. 252-260</p>
	11 April	<p>Jean Anyon – Hegemony and Schools Introduction to Anyon by Garner pp. 260-261 Anyon — “Social Class and the Hidden Curriculum of Work” pp. 261-276</p> <p>PAPER #2 DUE AT THE START OF CLASS 11 April</p>
13	16 April	<p>A Theory of Power: C. Wright Mills READ: Introduction “American Hegemony and its Critics” by Garner pp 279-282 AND Introduction to C. Wright Mills by Garner pp. 295-298</p>
	18 April	<p>Mills — <i>The Power Elite</i> pp. 298-302 STUDENT GROUP PRESENTATION OF THIS READING</p> <p>Howard Becker - Symbolic Interactionism READ: Introduction to Becker by Garner pp. 302-304 AND Becker — <i>Outsiders</i> pp. 304-311 Listen to NPR story about marijuana smoking among retirees in Orange County: http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=111783991 STUDENT GROUP PRESENTATION OF THIS READING</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
14	23 April	Michel Foucault - Post-Structuralism & Social Control READ: Garner Introduction to Foucault pp. 365-369 AND Michel Foucault – “Body of the Condemned” pp. 369-372 AND Michel Foucault – The Panopticon: Power and Discipline 372-376
	25 April	Sociologies of Race & Ethnicity: Fanon and Omi & Winant READ: Introduction to race pp. 455-57 Frantz Fanon: Negritude & Colonial Liberation – <i>Wretched of the Earth</i> , pp. 458-62 Michael Omi and Howard Winant: Theory of racial formation, pp. 468-73
15	30 April	Gender, Power and Capitalism: Dorothy Smith Garner – Intro to Gender and Sexuality pp. 485-89 Dorothy Smith – <i>The Conceptual Practices of Power</i> , pp. 489-94 https://www.npr.org/2023/06/21/1183467075/the-labor-of-love
	2 May	Engaged Feminism and Race – Angela Davis READ Introduction and Excerpt from interview with Lisa Lowe, pp. 502-10
16	7 May	Explaining masculinity – Raewyn Connell READ Introduction and selection from <i>Masculinities</i> pp. 510-17
	9 May LAST CLASS	Gender, Power and Capitalism: John D’Emilio John D’Emilio – Gender, Social Structure, and Gays identity Garner – Introduction to D’Emilio pp. 517-18 AND D’Emilio – <i>Making Trouble</i> pp. 518-525 Listen to THROUGHLINE # 252 “The Lavender Scare” [58 minutes] https://www.npr.org/2023/08/09/1192980071/the-lavender-scare PAPER #3 DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS 9 May
Final	Tuesday 21 May 9:45 –12:00pm	FINAL EXAM DMH 162

The California Faculty Association (the labor union of Lecturers, Professors, Coaches, Counselors, and Librarians across the 23 CSU campuses) is in a difficult contract dispute with California State University management. It is possible that we will call a strike or other work stoppage this semester. I promise to promptly inform you of any schedule disruption. Our working conditions are your learning conditions; we seek to protect both.

For further information go to www.CFAbargaining.org.