University of South Florida-Sarasota Manatee  
Classical Sociological Theory  
SYA 3110.521 CRN 20838  
Spring, 2015

Professor: Donna Trent, Ph.D.

Contact Information:

e-mail: dtrent@sar.usf.edu. Email is my preferred method of communication.

Phone: To set up a phone conversation, I ask that you email me your phone number and a few good times to call between 8 AM and 5 PM. I will return the call within 24 hours for requests made for a phone conversation Monday through Friday. Phone calls are not made on week-ends or official holidays.

Course Description: This course explores the philosophical foundations, central principles and historical development of sociological theory. This will include an overview of the works of Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Georg Simmel and George Herbert Mead, among others. Theoretical concepts and principles will be used to analyze current social situations.

Course Objectives:

At the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Delineate the philosophical foundations of sociological theory including a statement of the philosophical tenets held by each of the major theorists studied.
2. Explain the central principles of sociological theories including a statement of the principles advanced by each theorist studied.
3. Explain the historical development of sociological theory.
4. Apply theoretical concepts to an analysis of social situations

Required Text:


Canvas Use:

The class syllabus is posted in Canvas, an online course management system. This class is 100% online and all assignments and communications will be conducted through Canvas. Information on how to use Canvas is available at: http://usfsm.edu/e-learning-services/student-resources/
**Academic Support Services:**

Information Commons provides students with individual and group study spaces, computers, printers, and various media equipment for temporary use. Information Commons is staffed with a librarian, learning support faculty, tutors, and technology and e-learning specialists. Students challenged by the rigors of academic writing, mathematics, or other course content are urged to contact their professors early in the semester to chart out a plan for academic success, and/or regularly use the tutoring services provided by the Learning Support Services, which are provided at no cost to students.

**Student Evaluation:**

The student's grade in this course will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Questions 1 through 9 @ 7% each</td>
<td>63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay One</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<td>Essay Two</td>
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<td>Essay Three</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reflection Essay</td>
<td>7%</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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A plus-minus grading system will be used in this course.

The chart below shows how the weighted points are turned into letter grades:

- 100-97 = A+
- 96-93 = A
- 92-90 = A-
- 89-87 = B+
- 86-83 = B
- 82-80 = B-
- 79-77 = C+
- 76-73 = C
- 72-70 = C-
- 69-67 = D+
I reserve the right to submit any student work to Turnitin.com or other relevant sites to determine if the work was plagiarized. Students may not sell notes or tapes of lectures or other course content.

**Course Assignments:**

**Discussion Boards:** Students are required to respond to the questions posted by the professor. There are nine discussion questions throughout the semester. Questions pertain to the readings for that week. Questions may require students to look at other websites and then respond on the Discussion Boards. Responses should not be in one or two words but rather a **minimum** of four to six paragraphs to indicate understanding and thought on the subjects under consideration and to include reference to relevant theories, concepts and ideas from the readings. Responses are not to be the opinion of students but rather to demonstrate critical thought and reflection on the part of the student. Students are encouraged to read and reply to their classmates. Students will not be graded on comments to their classmates.

I will have all read, graded and commented on discussion board submissions for you by four days after the due date, if not before. I also will check discussion boards Monday through Friday. If you do not receive full credit for a discussion board, I will provide feedback to you requesting more information or asking you to respond to question(s) I pose. All discussion boards are due at 8 AM. See below for due dates. **DISCUSSION BOARD RESPONSES AND REVISED RESPONSES NOT SUBMITTED BY THE DUE DATE AND TIME WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL NOT BE GRADED IF PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE WITH THE PROFESSOR.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion Board</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Due Date for Requested Revisions</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Jan. 21</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Jan. 28</td>
<td>Feb. 3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Feb. 18</td>
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<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Mar. 11</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Mar. 11</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Mar. 25</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Apr. 1</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Apr. 8</td>
<td>Apr. 15</td>
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**Essays:** The three essay questions cover materials in the assigned readings and discussions. Essays are to be written in APA format and are to be 4-6 pages in length, including a bibliography. Students may use additional sources but are not required to do so. Submit each
under Assignments. Unlike discussion questions, essays cannot be revised after submission and receipt of professor’s feedback. All essays are due at 8 AM. See below for due dates. ESSAYS NOT SUBMITTED BY THE DUE DATE AND TIME WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL NOT BE GRADED IF PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE WITH THE PROFESSOR.

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<td>3</td>
<td>Apr. 15</td>
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**Final Examination:** There is no final examination in this course.

**Reflection Essay**

The student will submit under Assignments in Canvas a 2-4 page statement pertaining to how his/her understanding of the social world, inclusive of social processes and social structure, has been impacted through the study of various classical sociological theorists and their concepts and ideas. Please find below additional thoughts to consider as you compose your reflective statement:

I would like you to ask yourself the question: "So what? What difference does knowing this material make to me and how I see, interpret and interact?" I am drawing this from David A. Kolb's model of learning. See this link for more information: [http://academic.regis.edu/ed202/subsequent/kolb2.htm](http://academic.regis.edu/ed202/subsequent/kolb2.htm)

In brief, Kolb suggests that there are four components to learning: being exposed to new ideas/theories, having an experience that pertains to these (could be the discussion boards or various experiences in your own life as your classmates and you have mentioned as they pertain to the theories, analysis (asking how does my knowledge of these theories further inform my understanding of these experiences and vice versa), and finally reflection (what difference does this new knowledge make to me? Am I seeing situations differently? Has this impacted my assessment of self, others, or situations?)

So, for Kolb, the learning experience is not complete until one spends some time reflecting on the relevance of the learning to oneself.

I am interested to hear your reflections in terms of how YOU see the world using these various sociological perspectives and theories. How have YOU changed or grown in your outlook?

Due April 22 at 8 AM.

**Extra Credit**

There are no extra credit assignments in this course.
Use of Turnitin (Plagiarism Software):

I reserve the right to submit student work to Turnitin after the work has been turned in. The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows student assignments be checked for plagiarism. I reserve the right to ask students to submit their assignments to Turnitin through Canvas. Assignments are compared automatically with a database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student’s paper was plagiarized.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), students are requested to maintain confidentiality as a way to keep their personal contact information (i.e. name, address, telephone) from being disclosed to vendors or other outside agencies. By your submission, you are also agreeing to release your original work for review for academic purposes to Turnitin.

Course Requirements and Methods of Instruction:

First Day Attendance

To demonstrate first day attendance, respond to the introduction, questions about the syllabus and your interests in ISS discussion boards by 9 AM on January 10. If the above discussions are not completed by the due date and time, you will be listed as not attending the first class and will be dropped from the course.

Canvas use

Because this course is 100% online, all course assignments and discussions are conducted on Canvas. Information on how to use Canvas is available at: http://usfsm.edu/e-learning-services/student-resources/

Also, the USF Tampa IT Helpdesk provides 24 hour support for CANVAS. Please call 813-974-1222 or email: help@usf.edu if you need assistance outside of USFSM’s E-Learning hours.

USF System Policies:

A. Academic Dishonesty: The University considers any form of plagiarism or cheating on exams, projects, or papers to be unacceptable behavior. Please be sure to review the university’s policy in the USFSM Catalog, the USF System Academic Integrity of Students, and the USF System Student Code of Conduct.

B. Academic Disruption: The University does not tolerate behavior that disrupts the learning process. The policy for addressing academic disruption is included with Academic Dishonesty in
the USFSM Catalog, USF System Academic Integrity of Students, and the USF System Student Code of Conduct.

C. Contingency Plans: In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USFSM to suspend normal operations. During this time, USFSM may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, Elluminate, Skype, and email messaging and/or an alternate schedule. It’s the responsibility of the student to monitor Canvas site for each class for course specific communication, and the main USFSM and College websites, emails, and MoBull messages for important general information. The USF hotline at 1 (800) 992-4231 is updated with pre-recorded information during an emergency. See the Campus Police Website for further information.

D. Disabilities Accommodation: Students are responsible for registering with the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) in order to receive academic accommodations. Reasonable notice must be given to the SDS office (typically 5 working days) for accommodations to be arranged. It is the responsibility of the student to provide each instructor with a copy of the official Memo of Accommodation. Contact Information: Disability Coordinator, 941-359-4714 http://usfsm.edu/disability-services/

E. Fire Alarm Instructions: At the beginning of each semester please note the emergency exit maps posted in each classroom. These signs are marked with the primary evacuation route (red) and secondary evacuation route (orange) in case the building needs to be evacuated. See Emergency Evacuation Procedures.

F. Religious Observances: USFSM recognizes the right of students and faculty to observe major religious holidays. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class for a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the second week of classes. Instructors canceling class for a religious observance should have this stated in the syllabus with an appropriate alternative assignment.

G. Web Portal Information: Every newly enrolled USF student receives an official USF e-mail account. Students receive official USF correspondence and Canvas course information via that address.

H. The Counseling and Wellness Center is a confidential resource where students can talk about incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. This confidential resource can help students without their having to report the situation to either the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSSR) or the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEO) unless they wish. Please be aware that professors, administrators, or other staff must report incidents of sexual harassment and gender-based crimes including sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. If students disclose any of these situations in class, in papers, instructors are required to report it to OSSR or DIEO for investigation. The Deputy Coordinator for USFSM is Mary Beth Wallace, AVP for Student Enrollment, Engagement and Success, 941-359-4330 or marybeth@sar.usf.edu.

Counseling Center and Wellness Center 941-487-4254
USF Sarasota-Manatee Policy Regarding Incomplete Grades

An Incomplete should be given only if an unavoidable and non-academic event prohibits a student, who has been attending and submitting work, from taking a final exam or turning in a final paper on time.

• It is not appropriate to give an incomplete as a way to extend a deadline unless extenuating circumstances can be documented. Students should be given the grade they have earned, according to the policies of your syllabus. They do have 3 opportunities to retake low-grade courses with grade forgiveness.

• And it is also not appropriate to give an incomplete if extenuating circumstances have caused the student to miss substantial instruction. In that case the student may have options, but they should be pursued through their advisor or the dean.

Last Date to Withdraw

The last date to withdraw with no academic penalty and no refund is March 21.

Schedule of Class Assignments:

REMEMBER: DISCUSSION BOARD RESPONSES AND ESSAYS NOT SUBMITTED BY THE DUE DATE AND TIME WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AND WILL NOT BE GRADED IF PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS HAVE NOT BEEN MADE WITH THE PROFESSOR.

Class 1  Introduction to Classical Sociological Theory: The Early Years
        Jan.  7

Discussion Board: Student Introductions (not graded). Due 9AM Jan. 10.

Discussion Board: Questions about Syllabus (not graded) Due 9AM Jan. 10.

Class 2  Foundations of Classical Sociological Theory
Jan. 14  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 1

Discussion Board Question 1: Discuss the social and intellectual changes that preoccupied early social theorists. Be certain to delineate the ideas of the Enlightenment that discredited traditional social institutions like religion, monarchy and feudalism.

Class 3  Auguste Comte
Jan. 21  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 4

Discussion Board Question 2: Explain Comte’s version of positivism and compare this to contemporary views of positivism. What of Comte’s thought remains in our contemporary understanding of positivism? What have we discarded?

Class 4  Herbert Spencer
Jan. 28  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 5

Discussion Board Question 3: Name and explain the four dimensions of Spencer’s evolutionary theory of society. Be certain to address Spencer’s two types of cooperation and the differences between regulative and sustaining systems. Provide examples of each.

Class 5  Comparing Comte and Spencer
Feb. 4  Review Ritzer, Chapters 4 and 5

Essay 1: Compare and contrast the sociological theories of Comte and Spencer. Why are both theorists important to the development of structural functionalism? How did each use the concepts of social statics and social dynamics? What are the political differences between each theorist, and how did these influence the way they viewed society? How did Comte and Spencer understand the role of morality in society?

Class 6  Emile Durkheim
Feb. 11  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 7

Discussion Board Question 4: Explain Durkheim’s concept of division of labor, highlighting the shift from mechanical to organic solidarity in modern society. What do you think your future occupation/career will be? Discuss how this occupation/career exemplifies organic solidarity?

Class 7  Karl Marx
Feb. 18  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 6

Discussion Board Question 5: Explain what Marx means by “historical materialism”. Be certain to address the two primary classes Marx identified under capitalism, the distinction between
these groups, the relations of production and the forces of production as these assist in understanding historical change from a Marxist perspective. Provide a contemporary example of these two classes and explain how the relations of production between these is impacted by current forces of production.

Class 8  Max Weber  
Feb. 25  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 8

Discussion Board Question 6: Explain what Weber means by the term “ideal type”. Name, explain and provide an example of each of Weber’s three ideal types of authority. Provide a contemporary example of each.

Class 9  Spring Break  
Mar. 4  No new assignments and no assignments due

Class 10  Comparing Durkheim, Marx and Weber  
Mar. 11  Review Ritzer, Chapters 6, 7 and 8

Essay 2: Compare and contrast the views of Durkheim, Marx, and Weber in regard to long-term social change. Using the vocabulary of each theorist (and defining key concepts), be sure to discuss each theorist’s views on the mechanisms and/or processes that contribute to social change (e.g., solidarity and the division of labor, class conflict and possibility of revolution, rationalization). Complete your response by evaluating each theory’s merits and shortcomings for sociological inquiry.

Class 11  Georg Simmel  
March 18  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 9

Discussion Board Question 7: Use Simmel’s ideas about secrecy to explain what it means to live in an informational society. Be sure to describe the types of relationships and forms of social interaction that Simmel associates with secrecy. Provide an example of Simmel’s ideas about secrecy to the economy, politics, or international relations. (Hint: An example would be the role of whistleblowers as agents of betrayal.)

Last date to withdraw is March 21.

Class 12  Early Women Sociologists  
March 25  Read: Ritzer, Chapter 10

Discussion Board Question 8: Discuss how Gilman and Weber view the relationship between gender, the household, the family, and the capitalist workplace. How does each theorist propose the household should be reformed? Describe the household in which you grew up. Has the
household changed much in the 100 years since Gilman and Weber wrote? Do you think the current household needs reform? If so, what reforms would you suggest?

Class 13 George Herbert Mead
April 1 Read: Ritzer, Chapter 15

Discussion Board Question 9: Explain Mead’s understanding of the development of the self with specific reference to the roles of mind and society in this process. Be sure to 1) differentiate between the play and game stages in childhood development and 2) explain why the “I” is a source of creativity and the “me” a source of social control and 3) provide an example to illustrate the development of the self in the play and game stages.

Class 14 Mead and the Pragmatist Tradition
April 8 Review, Ritzer, Ch. 10 on Early Women Sociologists and Ch. 15 on Mead

Essay 3: Situate Mead’s work within the American pragmatist tradition of the Progressive era. How does pragmatism relate to Mead’s work for social reform? Discuss how other social thinkers of the time, such as Dewey, Addams, and Kelley, practiced pragmatism through their work at the Hull House. Compare and contrast the ideas of the theorists associated with the Pragmatist Tradition with the ideas of the Early Women Sociologists.

Class 15 Write: Reflection Essay
April 15

Class 16 Course Wrap-Up
April 22 Due: Reflection Essay