University of South Florida-Sarasota Manatee
Classical Sociological Theory
SYA 3110.522 CRN 89193
Fall, 2014

Professor: Donna Trent, Ph.D.

Contact Information:

email: 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 Topics: This course will cover the following content areas:
1. historical development of sociological theory
2. central principles of classical sociological theories including functionalism, conflict theory and symbolic interactionism
3. philosophical foundations of sociological theory
4. roles of early women sociologists in theory development

Course Objectives: The objectives of this course are to:
1. Develop familiarity with the major classical theorists and their concepts and ideas in sociology
2. Compare and contrast philosophical foundations of major classical sociological theories
3. Identify central principles of major classical theories.
4. Examine social stability and problems from various classical sociological perspectives.

Course Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students 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
5. Discuss the contributions of the early women sociologists and the theorists of the pragmatist tradition to the development of applied sociology

**Required Text:**


**Student Evaluation:**

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

- Discussion Questions 1 through 9 @ 7% each 63%
- Essay One 10%
- Essay Two 10%
- Essay Three 10%
- Reflection Essay 7%

Total 100%

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+
66-63 = 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sept. 4</td>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept. 11</td>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept. 18</td>
<td>Sept. 25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Oct. 2</td>
<td>Oct. 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oct. 9</td>
<td>Oct. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Oct. 16</td>
<td>Oct. 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Oct. 30</td>
<td>Nov. 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nov. 6</td>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nov. 13</td>
<td>Nov. 20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 or after 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.

**Essay #** | **Due Date**
---|---
1 | Sept. 25
2 | Oct. 23
3 | Nov. 20

**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: Dec. 4 at 8 AM

**Course Requirements, Methods of Instruction:**

**First Day Attendance**

To demonstrate first day attendance, please listen to the audio recording on the Introductory Class Discussion Board and then respond to the introduction and questions about the syllabus...
discussion boards by 9 AM on August 30. 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/

Course Policies and Procedures:

Attendance, Absences and Making up Work

This course is conducted online. It is assumed that you have a working computer and access to the internet. Should you have problems you’re your own computer or internet, computers are available on the USF S/M campus for student use. Computer problems are not an accepted excuse for late assignments.

DISCUSSION BOARD RESPONSES AND ASSIGNMENTS 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.

Voluntary Canvas sessions may be offered throughout the semester. Recordings of these will be available on Canvas for students who are unable to attend.

I also reserve the right to require a meeting with a student should academic progress indicate such would be useful.

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.

**USF Sarasota-Manatee Policies and Procedures**

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.
Last Date to Withdraw

The last date to withdraw with no academic penalty and no refund is November 1.

Schedule of Class Assignments:

**REMINDE**: 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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Introduction to Classical Sociological Theory: The Early Years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 28</td>
<td>Read: Ritzer, Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Write responses to:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Board: Student Introductions (not graded). Due 9 AM Aug. 30.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussion Board: Questions about Syllabus (not graded) Due 9 AM Aug 30.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 2    Auguste Comte
Sept. 4    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 3    Herbert Spencer
Sept. 11   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 4  Comparing Comte and Spencer  
Sept. 18  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 5  Emile Durkheim  
Sept. 25  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 6  Karl Marx  
Oct. 2  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 7  Max Weber  
Oct. 9  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 8  Comparing Durkheim, Marx and Weber  
Oct. 16  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 9  Georg Simmel  
Oct. 23  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.)

Class 10  Early Women Sociologists  
Oct. 30  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?

Last date to withdraw without academic penalty and no refund is November 1.

Class 11  George Herbert Mead  
Nov. 6  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 12  Mead and the Pragmatist Tradition  
Nov. 13  Review, Ritzer, Chapter 10 on Early Women Sociologists and Chapter 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 13  Write Reflection Essay  
Nov. 20

Class 14  Thanksgiving – No new assignments and nothing due.
Nov. 27

Class 15  Course Wrap-Up
Dec. 4   Due: Reflection Essay