



Sociology 436.01E: Sociological Theory Fall 2016

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Professor: Yvonne Villanueva-Russell, PhD
Associate Dean, College of Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts

Class Time: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 11:00AM-11:50AM
Class Location: Social Sciences, room 310

Office Location: Ag/It 222B
Office Hours: Wednesday 10AM-11AM; Friday 8AM-11AM
[Office hours held in Social Sciences 307]

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Preferred Form of Communication: email
Communication Response Time: 24 hours (M-F)

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

II. Textbook(s) Required

- 1) Kivistö, Peter. 2013. Social Theory: Roots and Branches (**fifth** edition). New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780199937127
- 2) Several Xeroxed readings. These will be accessible through the eCollege website

Recommended Textbook

- 1) Ritzer, George. 2010. Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots. (**third** edition). New York: McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 9780073404387

Software Required

eCollege (Person Learning Studio)- available through MyLeo
A word processing system (Microsoft Word)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalog Description:

This course examines the nature of theory and reviews major sociological theories, especially structural-functionalism, conflict theory, exchange theory and interactionism. Special attention is given to leading figures representing the above schools of thought. Prerequisite: Sociology 1301 or its equivalent.

Student Learning Outcomes

- 1) Demonstrate **comprehension** of the major concepts in both classical and contemporary sociological theorists as demonstrated on objective examinations.
- 2) Demonstrate the ability to **apply** theories to contemporary phenomena through written papers.
- 3) Demonstrate the ability to **compare** one theorist to another in written papers.
- 4) Demonstrate the ability to **evaluate** and utilize critical thinking through written papers.

Course Format:

This course will revolve around numerous readings and active discussion in class of these selections, as well as lecture to supplement and provide background information on each theorist or theoretical paradigm. We will spend the bulk of time wading through and struggling to understand the writings through primary readings composed by the actual theorists, themselves. But, we will supplement this with discussions as to the relevance of these ideas, and investigate the socio-cultural circumstances surrounding these writers and their ideas.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

TESTS AND GRADING PROCEDURES

Your grade in this course will be made up of several elements: online quizzes, written papers, a midterm & final exam and attendance/participation points. A description of each of these course requirements is below:

A. Exams: 2 @ 75 points each

This assignment is designed to measure student learning outcomes 1:

Demonstrate **comprehension** of the major concepts in both classical and contemporary sociological theorists as demonstrated on objective exams

Two exams will be administered in the course: a midterm and a final. Students will complete both exams, as both will contribute to the student's final grade in the course.

The midterm exam covers the classical theorists covered in the first half of the semester; the second exam (final) will cover the contemporary theorists covered in the second half. Each exam will consist of multiple choice, true-false and matching items.

Online practice quizzes for each theorist will be available online to assist in preparing for each exam. These practice quizzes are optional, and will not contribute to the student's course grade. Quizzes can be taken more than once. Additionally, a study guide will be provided to students in advance of each exam.

The final exam for this course is schedule for: **Wednesday, December 13th from 10:30AM-12:30PM.**

Makeup Exams:

Notice of exams are given tentatively in this syllabus, and will be confirmed in class. Makeup exams will not be given unless a genuine emergency or crisis occurred (you will have to provide documentation), and you will be excused from the exam on the test day ONLY if prior notification has been given. Makeup exams may be given in an alternative format from the rest of the class (i.e. essay exams) and at an alternate time set up for the professor's (not the student's) convenience. Makeup exams must be completed *within two weeks* of the original exam date.

Students with legitimate reasons for missing exams will be allowed a makeup exam ONCE during the semester. If a student has been habitually absent, sick or dealing with some other concern to the extent that they have missed more than one exam, then a meeting with the professor is warranted to discuss whether finishing the requirements of the course is possible from the student's current effort and situation.

B. Papers: 4@ 50 points [Student complete 5 of the 7 assigned papers]

This assignment is designed to measure student learning outcome # 2, 3 & 4.

- Demonstrate the ability to **apply** theories to contemporary phenomena through written papers.
- Demonstrate the ability to **compare** one theorist to another in written papers.
- Demonstrate the ability to **evaluate** and utilize critical thinking through written papers.

There are three types of papers in the course. Students will receive at least one grade for each paper type, described below:

APPLICATION PAPERS

These papers will ask that a student demonstrate comprehension of a theorist's ideas not only by summarizing them, but by applying them to a real-life scenario. Four of these papers are scattered throughout the semester, with specific prompts for students to follow in each writing assignment. At least one of these papers will be used in the calculation of the student's final grade, and each is worth 50 points.

A list of application papers and their due dates is below:

Type of Paper	Based on which theorist/theory?	Due Date
Application	Emile Durkheim	Hardcopy due at beginning of class: September 15
Application	SI and its many forms	Hardcopy due at beginning of class: October 27
Application	Pierre Bourdieu	Hardcopy due at beginning of class: November 17

COMPARISON PAPERS

Comparison papers seek a different objective: having the student compare and contrast two sets of concepts or two theorists against one another. Two of these papers will be assigned, and one grade will be used in the calculation of the student's final grade.

A list of comparison papers and their due dates are below:

Type of Paper	Based on which theorist/theory?	Due Date
Comparison	Karl Marx to Charlotte Perkins Gilman	Hardcopy due at beginning of class: September 29
Comparison	Feminist Theory	Hardcopy due at beginning of class: December 6

EVALUATION PAPERS

One last type of paper assigned in our course is the evaluation paper. Here, the student will rely on their critical thinking skills to assess the merits of a particular theorist's ideas. Two of these papers will be assigned with at least one grade from this type of assignment being used in the calculation of the student's final grade.

A list of the evaluation papers and their due dates are below

Type of Paper	Based on which theorist/theory?	Due Date
Evaluation	Erased & Marginalized Theorists	Hardcopy due at beginning of class: November 10
Evaluation	Postmodernism & Foucault	Hardcopy due at beginning of class: December 9

*****IMPORTANT NOTES ABOUT ALL WRITTEN WORK:**

- a. Students will complete a total of FOUR papers this semester, although a total of 7 papers will be assigned
- b. The highest grades on FOUR papers will be used in the calculation of the student's final grade. However, at least ONE type of paper will be used in these calculations. [A student cannot use 3 application papers + 1 assessment paper for their final grade.]

- c. An extra paper cannot be used as extra credit. Papers cannot be re-done or re-graded.
- d. Students are expected to integrate as many relevant sociological concepts as possible, making sure to define them before using them in their papers.
- e. Students must cite in-text using APA, ASA or another style they are familiar with
- f. All written work should be turned in at the beginning of class on the date due.
- g. Late assignments will receive a 10% deduction in points
- h. No written assignment will be accepted beyond one week of the original due date.
- i. Any written work in this class is subject to turnitin review. Turnitin.com is a website that checks for plagiarism and generates an originality report that notes which parts of a paper appear unattributed to other student papers, internet sources or articles and books. Please make sure that you cite wherever appropriate. If you need help or advice on how to do this, please contact your professor. See document sharing for guidelines on how to cite. **Students who plagiarize will be allowed to re-do the assignment for ½ the points, but will receive a zero on subsequent assignments.**

C. Attendance & Participation: 25 points

Regular class attendance is crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the material covered during the semester. Therefore, attendance will be taken and recorded regularly. It is your responsibility to have an understanding of course material whether you were present in class or not.

Occasions may arise which make it necessary for a student to miss class but documentation must be presented for any unexcused absence to be changed to an excused one. Because attendance is so important to this course it will figure into the calculation of your final grade. **Attendance will constitute 25 points of your final grade** (see grading procedures for more information).

Habitual tardiness or premature exit from the class will constitute an unexcused absence. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to make sure that you sign the attendance sheet. Please do not sign in a friend as if they were present when they were not.

Grading Procedures

Grades for individual tests will be assigned according to the following scale:

Individual Tests and Papers

A	90 – 100%
B	80 – 89%
C	70 – 79%
D	60 – 69%
F	59% and below

There are 4 papers, 2 exams and attendance points for a total of 375 points attainable in the class.

Attendance & participation	25 points
2 exams @ 75 points each	150 points
4 Papers @ 50 points each	200 points
Total Points	375 points

Final grades will be determined using the following scale:

337 points - 375 points	= A
300 points – 336 points	= B
262 points - 299 points	= C
225 points – 261 points	= D
224 points and below	= F

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

I. Course-Specific Policies

Late Work:

Notice of exams and due dates for papers are given tentatively at this time, and will be confirmed in class. Unless a genuine emergency has arisen, all students are expected to turn in assignments on or before the deadlines assigned. Even if you are absent due to school-related business, you will need to make arrangements to have your work completed and handed-in before your departure. Late assignments will receive a **10% reduction** in points for that assignment. No assignment will be accepted after one week of the original assignment's due date. Do not leave your assignments with the department secretary, in my mailbox, emailed to me, or left under my office door—only hard copies of papers will be accepted.

Grades of Incomplete:

I do not assign grades of incomplete in this course. All coursework must be handed in to me by **Friday, December 8th**. Your grade will be assigned based on the points you have earned from all completed work at that time. It is your responsibility to finish assignments prior to their due dates or to make alternate arrangements for their completion. Do not assume I can or will extend due dates or course requirements for your individual needs or preferences.

I do not drop students from my courses. If you feel Sociology 436 is not the course for you, please take the necessary steps to remove yourself from this class. Simply not attending in hopes that I will remedy the situation for you will not occur. You are responsible for the consequences stemming from either coming to class, or not coming to class.

Important dates:

Last Day to Drop: November 2nd, 2017

Last Day to Withdraw from the semester: November 26th, 2017

A Note about Final Grades:

Final grades are assigned on the 90, 80, 70% scale noted above. These percentages and their corresponding grades are firm. That is, if your final average is a 68% you have earned a "D." Let me spare you the conversation that inevitably follows: No, I cannot and will not round your grade up to a 70% or a "C." Students often protest this act, saying they were

"only 2 points shy of a passing grade." This is not exactly correct. In truth, they were 2 percentage points away from the next grade, amounting to being 9.3 raw points off. This is nearly an entire grade difference on a major test. Percentage points and raw points are two very different things. In short, I do NOT round up to determine your final grade.

Extra Credit and Curving:

From this syllabus it is very clear as to the number of assignments and the possible points to be attained in the course. From day one, you begin earning a grade in this class, so remember that when you decide to skip class, choose not to do the readings, or fail to take detailed lecture notes. Do not rely on a friend to take notes for you, or for your instructor to explain what the readings are about a second time after class, as it is your responsibility to read, listen and comprehend the material presented. If you do not understand a concept or issue, please ask me to clarify, or stay after class for further elaboration. The exams will reflect a balance of in-class lecture and discussion, as well as outside readings. So, it is important for you to be consistently diligent in your efforts throughout the semester.

I have never and will never curve the grades of a class to conform to an artificial bell curve or other objective or subjective standard, so requests to do so will fall on deaf ears. That means that it is the students' responsibility to prepare for the exams, to make sure that they have acquired all information possible through attending lectures and doing the readings, and that they perform to the best of their abilities on the exams. I will assist the class by means of lectures, discussions, study guides and reviews, but I do not intend to manipulate your test score, drop a test score or inflate your test scores so that it will be more to your liking. An improvement of grades will come from *your* studying efforts, and not from your instructor's generosity in grade, so please do not expect or ask for more, or extra points in this course.

Academic Dishonesty:

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must work to provide an environment in which each student has the opportunity to be evaluated fairly on the basis of his/her own performance. University regulations regarding academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

The first infraction of plagiarism will be accompanied by a stern warning and the opportunity to re-do the assignment with the paper being worth only ½ credit. The second infraction of plagiarism will result in a zero on that assignment.

ALL instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Head and this person may decide upon punishment independent of this professor's actions. In short, cheating, plagiarizing and engaging in unethical student behavior carries a high price for such short term rewards—don't do it!

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Email is the preferred way to get in touch with your professor: Yvonne.VRussell@tamuc.edu. Expect an answer within 24 hours, Monday-Friday.

UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Dates for quizzes and written assignments are scheduled tentatively at this time. They may be changed but advanced notice will be given in class. You are expected to read the assigned material *prior* to its discussion in class.

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Assignment Due
(M) Aug 28	Introductory Remarks		
(W) Aug 30	Early origins of Sociology & Sociological Theory:	Movie: Modern Times	
(F) Sept 1	August Comte	None – see notes on Positivism on eCollege	
(M) Sept 4	NO CLASS – LABOR DAY	NO CLASS	NO CLASS

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Assignment Due
(W) Sept 6	Emile Durkheim, the man	[Recommended Reading: Ritzer, pp. 13-19]	
(F) Sept 8	Durkheim and empirical sociology	"What is a Social Fact?" p. 44	
(M) Sept 11	Durkheim and modernity	"On Mechanical and Organic Solidarity" p. 39	
(W) Sept 13	Durkheim and Social Forces	"Anomic Suicide" p. 50	Take Durkheim practice quiz on eCollege
(F) Sept 15	Karl Marx, the man	Recommended Reading: Ritzer, pp. 19-27	Durkheim (application) Paper Due
(M) Sept 18	Unpacking Marx's essential elements	"The General Formula for Capital" p. 35 AND "Commodities" p. 23	
(W) Sept 20	Early Marx	"Alienated Labor" p. 3	
(F) Sept 22	Marx and his outline for the future	"Manifesto of the Communist Party" p. 15	
(M) Sept 25	Marxian connections to other authors: Charlotte Perkins Gilman	"The Dependence of Women" p. 151	
(W) Sept 27	Marxian connections to other authors: C. Wright Mills		
(F) Sept 29	C. Wright Mills	"Culture and Politics" p. 221	Marx (comparison) paper due
(M) Oct 2	C. Wright Mills	"Sociological Imagination" on eCollege	
(W) Oct 4	Max Weber, the man	Recommended Reading: Ritzer, pp. 27-41	Take Marx practice quiz on eCollege
(F) Oct 6	Weber on capitalism	"The Spirit of Capitalism" p. 74	
(M) Oct 9	Weber on rationality	"Bureaucracy" p. 85	
(W) Oct 11	Weber on authority	AND "The Sociology of Charismatic Authority" p. 91	Take Weber practice quiz on eCollege
(F) Oct 13	MIDTERM	MIDTERM	MIDTERM
(M) Oct 16	George Herbert Mead, the man	Recommended Reading: Ritzer, pp 55-63	
(W) Oct 18	Unpacking Mead's essential elements	"The Fusion of the 'I' and the 'Me'" p. 190	

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Assignment Due
(F) Oct 20	Illustrating Symbolic Interactionism	In-class exercise	
(M) Oct 23	The Symbolic Interaction paradigm: Herbert Blumer	"Society as Symbolic Interaction" p. 250	Take Mead practice quiz on eCollege
(W) Oct 25	The extension of Symbolic Interactionism into Dramaturgy: Erving Goffman	"Performances" p. 257 Recommended Reading: Ritzer, pp. 136-143	
(F) Oct 27	Revising History—Erasure	"Present At the Creation" by Lengermann, & Niebrugge-Brantley posted on eCollege	SI (application) paper due
(M) Oct 30	Jane Addams	Excerpt from Jane Addams- posted on eCollege	
(W) Nov 1	Revisiting History- Marginalized Voices	"The Emergence of African American Sociologists" posted on eCollege	
(F) Nov 3	DuBois, Cayton, Drake and Frazier	1) Excerpts from DuBois 2) Excerpts from Cayton & Drake 3) Excerpts from Frazier All posted on eCollege	
(M) Nov 6	No class- Professor out of town for conference	No class- Professor out of town for conference	No class- Professor out of town for conference
(W) Nov 8	African American Authors, continued		Take marginalized authors practice quiz on eCollege
(F) Nov 10	Pierre Bourdieu	pp. 173-183 in optional Ritzer book AND "The Correspondence between Goods Production and Taste Production" p. 494	Marginalized authors (evaluation) paper due
(M) Nov 13	Bourdieu in the real world- Annette Lareau	"Social Class Differences in Family-School Relationships: The Importance of Culture Capital" posted on eCollege	
(W) Nov 15	Bourdieu in the real world- education	"Social Class and the Transition to Adulthood" posted on eCollege	Take Bourdieu practice quiz on eCollege
(F) Nov 17	Feminist Theory- Overview	pp. 208-213 in recommended Ritzer book	Bourdieu (application) paper due
(M) Nov 20	Dorothy Smith & Standpoint Theory	"Sociology from Women's Experiences" p. 360 Recommended Reading: Ritzer, p. 207-213	
(W) Nov 22	NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING	NO CLASS	NO CLASS
(F) Nov 24	NO CLASS- THANKSGIVING	NO CLASS	NO CLASS

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment	Assignment Due
(M) Nov 27	Patricia Hill Collins & Intersectionality	"Towards an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology" p. 350 Recommended Reading: Ritzer, p. 204-207	
(W) Nov. 29	Patricia Hill Collins & Controlling Images		Take Feminist Theory practice quiz on eCollege
(F) Dec 1	What do the Beastie Boys have to do with Postmodernism?	pp. 215-230 in recommended Ritzer book	Feminist Theory (comparison) paper due
(M) Dec 4	No Class- Professor out of town for a conference	No Class- Professor out of town for a conference	No Class-
(W) Dec 6	Postmodernism and "discipline:" Michel Foucault	"Panopticism" p. 508	
(F) Dec 8	POMO wrap-up		POMO (evaluation) paper due
(W) Dec. 13	FINAL EXAM 10:30AM-12:30PM	FINAL EXAM 10:30AM-12:30PM	FINAL EXAM 10:30AM-12:30PM