

**Sociological Theories
SYA 4010 Spring 2008**

Guillermo J. Grenier

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Wed. 5:00-7:40

Office: DM 331

Off. Hrs: Wed. 3:30-4:30 or by appointment

Course Description: This course examines the history of ideas – and criticisms of the ideas - that inform the Western tradition of secular thought about society and its relation to history, politics, and culture. The various theoretical paradigms we will examine form the foundations of the contemporary disciplines of sociology and anthropology. Three paradigms of social thought will be discussed in detail, represented by the figures Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber. We will also scan the most significant ideas of contemporary social theories that simultaneously rely on and diverge from these traditions.

Expectations: You are responsible for completing the reading, turning in assignments on time, and participating in class discussion. Having a poor attendance record, cheating, turning in late assignments, disrupting or disrespecting the classroom (talking during lecture or discussion, PMing, sleeping, or otherwise just being rude), are all grounds for adjusting your grade downward. I reserve the right to adjust your final grade by as much as 1 full letter grade if you fail to comply with these basic expectations. Late assignments and made up exams will NOT be allowed except under extreme circumstances and regardless of the circumstances will automatically result in a penalty of a full letter grade deduction. Also, I take plagiarism very seriously. The university wide policy on plagiarism will be enforced.

****NOTE:** I will not accept emailed or handwritten assignments. You must type your work and print out a hard copy to be turned in on the day it is due.

Readings:

Text: George Ritzer. **Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots: The Basics**. McGraw-Hill. Second Edition.

Reading Packet: Available at the Department of Sociology/Anthropology. \$30.00

Other Resources: www.fiu.edu/~grenierg.

An extremely useful website about all things sociological can be found at

<http://www.trinity.edu/%7Emkearl/>. Read the theory section liberally during the semester.

Course Requirements:

- 1) One in-class exams will measure each student's comprehension of the basic ideas, arguments, and material covered in the readings and lectures up to that point. Study questions for the exams will be given at least a week prior to the due date. Bring a pencil. Bubble time.
- 2) As we tackle the reading in the packet during the second part of the course, each student will select at least one of the readings per week on which to base a 10 minute presentation and a one page summary on the theorist or theoretical perspective covered in the reading. The minimum expectation is that the key ideas of the readings are covered succinctly. **Each student will turn in one summary per week but you will only be expected to do one presentation during the entire semester.** Before beginning the packet readings, I will pass-out a sheet with the readings to so that you can sign up. You will turn in a one page summary of your presentation.
- 3) One final writing assignment, based on a prompt question, that integrates the first half of the course with the last half will measure each student's ability to write a concise, well-focused, and well-written essay. The student must also show his/her ability to think critically and abstractly about social theory for the writing assignment.
- 4) Attendance is required. I expect you to take notes on what is presented in the class and on the discussions that take place. I hope to see evidence of this in your class participation and your final essay. If you attend every class and complete your assignments on time, you will ace the course. Perfect attendance will gain you 100 points. You will receive 90 points for up to 2 absences. Four absences will gain you no more than 80 points. More than four absences and your fate is entirely in my hands. To be excused, an absence must be explained in writing, with the reason clearly laid out. Medical reasons must have doctor's explanation.

NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED. REPITO—NO LATE WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED

Grading

- The exam is worth 1/4 of your grade.
- The presentation/discussion/summary is worth 1/4 of your grade.
- A final (6-7 pages, 12 point, double-spaced) essay based on a question to be distributed by the instructor makes up 1/4 of your final grade. It's due on the last day of the regularly scheduled class.
- Your attendance score makes up 1/4 of your grade.
- There are **400 points** possible for the course. To calculate your final grade, divide your total number of points by 400 and find the percentage on this scale:

Grading Scale:

93-100% - A	80-82% - B-	67-69% - D+
90-92% - A-	77-79% - C+	63-66% - D
87-89% - B+	73-76% - C	60-62% - D-
83-86% - B	70-72% - C-	Below 60% - E

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Jan. 9 Introduction to Course: What is Sociological Theory?

Jan. 16 The Rise of the Social Sciences

- **Reading: Grenier Notes on "The Day the Universe Changed"**
www.fiu.edu/~grenierg. Chapters 1-6.
- 1) Ritzer: Chapter 1 Introduction to Sociological Theory
- 2) From Four Sociological Traditions: Prologue (Collins)
- 3) From Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory: The Enlightenment (Zeitlin)
- 4) From Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory: The Romantic-Conservative Reaction (PAGES MISSING) (Zeitlin)

Jan. 23 The Purpose and Structure of Sociological Theory

- 5) From The Sociological Imagination: The Promise (Mills)
- 6) "The Structure of Scientific Revolutions: Outline" (Kuhn/Pajares)
- 7) From A Primer in Theory Construction: Introduction (Reynolds)
- 8) From Sociological Theory Construction: Chapter 1 (Gibbs)
- 9) The Structure of Sociological Theory: Sociological Theorizing (Turner)

Jan. 30 Classical Theories

- 10) Ritzer: Chapter 2 Classical Theories I
- 11) Ritzer: Chapter 3--Classical Theory II
- 12) "Classical Social Theory and the Origins of Modern Sociology" (Giddens)
- 13) "Why is Classical Theory Classical?" Connell

Feb. 6 Contemporary Theories: Grand Theories

- 14) Ritzer: Chapter 4-Contemporary Grand Theories I
- 15) Ritzer: Chapter 5-Contemporary Grand Theories II

Feb. 13 Contemporary Theories of Everyday Life and Integrated Perspectives

- 16) Ritzer: Chapter 6-Contemporary Theories of Everyday Life
- 17) Ritzer: Chapter 7-Contemporary Integrative Theories
- 18) Ritzer: Chapter 8-Contemporary Feminist Theories

Feb. 20 Globalization and Its Discontents

- 19) Ritzer: Chapter 9-Postmodern Grand Theories
- 20) Ritzer: Chapter 10-Globalization Theories

Feb. 27 EXAM

- March 5 Marx and His Legacy
- 21) From Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory: The Philosophical Orientation of Karl Marx (Zeitlin, Chapter 13)
 - 22) From Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory: Marx's Relation to Hegel and Feurbach (Zeitlin, Chapter 14)
 - 23) From Thinking the Unthinkable: Chapter 5-Revolutionary Reasons (Lemert)
 - 24) Manifesto of the Communist Party (Marx)
 - 25) From the Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy (Grenier Notes and Commentary)

- March 12 Weber and Durkheim
- 26) From Thinking the Unthinkable: Chapter 6-Rationality's Double-Bind (Lemert)
 - 27) "Weber: Class, Status and Party"
 - 28) Chapter 11: Bureaucracy
 - 29) From Thinking the Unthinkable: Chapter 7-The Reasonable Hope of a Social Bond (Lemert)
 - 30) Fragment: "Suicide and Social Cohesion" (Durkheim)
 - 31) Fragment: "Anomie and Suicide" (Durkheim)
 - 32) Fragment: "Social Structure and Anomie" (Merton)

March 19 *Spring Break*

- March 26 Into the Contemporary Period: DuBois and the Chicago School
- 33) From The Social Theory of W.E.B. DuBois: Introduction
 - 34) From The Social Theory of W.E.B. DuBois: Chapter 1-On the Meaning of Race
 - 35) "Sociological Theory From the Chicago School Dominance to 1965" (Coser)
 - 36) "A Belated Industry" (Addams)
 - 37) From The Unadjusted Girl (Thomas)
 - 38) "The Social Self" (Mead)
 - 39) "The City: Suggestions for the Investigation of Human Behavior in the City Environment" (Parks)

FINAL ESSAY QUESTIONS DISTRIBUTED

- April 2 Parsons, Functionalism and the Reactions
- 40) "The Structure of Social Action" (Parsons)
 - 41) "Social Structure and Anomie" (Merton)
 - 42) "The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern Sociology" (Wrong)
 - 43) "Social Behavior as Exchange" (Homans)
 - 44) "Origin Myth in the Social Sciences: Fromm, the Frankfurt School and the Emergence of Critical Theory" (McLaughlin)
 - 45) From One Dimensional Man (Marcuse)
 - 46) From Conflict Theory; "The Basics of Conflict Theory" (Collins)
 - 47) "The American Business Elite" (Mills)

- April 9 Modernity and Its Discontents
- 48) From The Modern World System (Wallerstein)
 - 49) From The Consequences of Modernity: Chapter 1 (Giddens)
 - 50) "Modernity" (Venn and Featherstone)
 - 51) "Social Space and Symbolic Power" (Bourdieu)
 - 52) "Making the Economic Habitus: Algerian Workers Revisited" (Bourdieu)

- April 16** **Postmodernism: Compared to What?**
- **53) “Modern and Postmodern” (Featherstone)**
 - **54) From A Survey of Modern Social Theory: Chapter 7-Structuralism, Semiotics, and Post-Structuralism. (Mann)**
 - **55) From A Survey of Modern Social Theory: Chapter 8-Postmodernism: Political Economy and Communications (Mann)**
 - **56) From A Survey of Modern Social Theory: Chapter 9-Postmodernism: Time, Space, and Culture**

FINAL ESSAY DUE

April 21 **Finals Week Begins**