

Sociology 3001-100

Classical Social Theory

Spring 2015

Instructor: Dr. Mike Haffey
Office hours: T&R 5-6pm

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Welcome. I consider this course one of the most important you will take during your sociology undergraduate career. Sociological theory - a logical explanation of how a given empirical phenomenon works - serves as the ideational foundation for all sociological investigation past, present, future, and across all areas of substantive interest. As sociologists, theories provide us the necessary interpretive schema's by which to make sense of the empirical world.

Social theory encourages us to look beyond individual psychology and unique events to the predictable, broad patterns and regular occurrences of social life that influence individual destinies. It frames our understanding and conceptualization of human nature, human behavior, and human organization. Social theory enables us to see. It is an unusual form of vision.

I hope to encourage you to see the evolution of ideas, questions, and explanations that stand at the center of our discipline. What is society? What are its constituent parts and how are they related? How is the individual and society linked? How do societies retain their unity and continuity while undergoing change? What is the cause of social change? Why and how do vast social, political, and economic inequalities endure? In what ways do class, gender, and race intersect? How and where is culture created? To what ends? Such grand questions are the essence of classical sociological theory.

What is so exciting about these types of questions is that they are the very ones we need to grasp in order to interpret the complex and dynamic features of contemporary social life. Looking across the social landscape today - economic recession, the process of globalization, religious fundamentalism, computers and mediated communication, spectacle and consumerism, terrorism, climate disruption, and entrenched economic inequality - it seems most appropriate that we pursue our discipline's most fundamental concerns. The many sociological concepts and theories that we will study this semester provide us powerful thinking tools to comprehend today's most vital, contemporary issues.

The textbook I have chosen for this course were written and designed to facilitate your understanding of a broad range of classical social thought. I think you will find this text quite engaging. The author has worked hard to make a number of complex ideas as understandable as possible. You must do a little work as well. You will be expected to have read and assimilated the required readings each week. The reading assignments should be done before the topic is discussed in class. The one required text for this course is:

Explorations in Classical Sociological Theory: Seeing the Social World (3rd ed.)
by Kenneth Allen (2013).

Exams and Grading. Your final grade for this course is composed of both a lecture grade (70%) and a recitation grade (30%). (Note: you must be enrolled in one of the scheduled recitations for this course in order to receive a final grade.)

lecture grade (70%): There will be seven (7) exams for the lecture portion of your final grade. The dates of these exams are: 1/27; 2/10; 2/24; 3/10; 4/2; 4/21 and a cumulative, final exam (date TBA). Each of these seven exams (consisting of both objective and essay questions) will account for 10% of your final grade (70% total). These multiple-format exams will require a strong grasp of key concepts and theoretical frameworks, and the capacity to display some of the higher levels of thinking: synthesis, analysis, criticism, and creative application. If you are going to miss an exam, it is vital that you notify me prior to that exam.

recitation grade (30%): Your once-weekly recitation meeting led by Ms. Lisa Santosa, the teaching assistant for this course, will account for the remaining 30% of your final grade. Recitation grade requirements and expectations will be provided to you by Ms. Santosa.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide me notification from Disability Services and discuss specific needs with me, preferably during the first two weeks of class. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard Hall, room 322.)

Classroom Behavior Policy: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set re limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities.

Student Honor Code: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and nonacademic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion).

Policy on Discrimination and Harassment: The University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships applies to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550.

Religious Observances: Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. In this class, please inform me as to any classes you expect to miss due to religious observance.