Queen’s University Department of Sociology

SOCY226: Central Concepts in Sociological Theory

Fall 2016

Class Times: Friday 9.30am-11.30am
Lecture Room: Stirling Auditorium
Tutorials: Check Solus
Instructor: Dr. Martin Hand
Office: Mac-Corry D529
Office Hours: Mondays 1 - 3.00pm
Email: handm@queensu.ca
Phone: 533-6000 ext. 74494
TAs
  Michelle Gorea (14mg21@queensu.ca)
  Kyle Curlew (15kjc1@queensu.ca)
  Sylvia Grills (14sdg2@queensu.ca)
  Ciara Bracken-Roche (12rcb2@queensu.ca)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course builds upon the foundations established in SOCY122 by examining and explaining key concepts in sociological theory. Course content focuses upon key concepts in relation to their historical context, theoretical traditions, and contemporary issues. In encouraging students to be critical and comparative in their application of theory, the course is organized around responses to the following questions:

- What are concepts and what can we do with them?
- Which concepts have been dominant in social thought and why?
- How and in what ways have sociological concepts changed over time?
- How does sociological theory relate to social change?

AIMS

The aim of this course is to provide students with a solid understanding of key concepts, ideas and debates in sociological theory in the modern period, emphasizing their distinctive character and explanatory power.
LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge

By the end of this course, students will have an appreciation and understanding of:

- The internal connections between classical and modern approaches to social theory
- The transformations in social theory during the 20th century in Europe and North America
- The similarities and differences between a plurality of approaches in modern social theory
- The key theoretical debates about social transformations in the 20th Century

Skills

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate theoretical arguments and evidence
- Use abstract sociological concepts with confidence
- Apply theoretical knowledge to an appropriate sociological question
- Clearly communicate the meaning of abstract theoretical concepts verbally and in writing
- Demonstrate the ability to evaluate and synthesize information obtained from a variety of written sources, and communicate relevant information in different ways.

ORGANIZATION AND ASSESSMENT

- The course will be taught through a combination of lectures and tutorials.
- Lectures will explain the scope, context, substance and detail of the theoretical ideas and concepts under consideration.
- Tutorials will involve participatory small group work focused upon the required readings.
- It is essential that students are familiar with the readings prior to each tutorial, in order to participate effectively and be graded accordingly. This is crucial for success.

Assessment:

- **Effective Tutorial Participation**: students will be evaluated on their attendance and effective participation in tutorials during the whole course.
- **Paper 1**: (5 pages). Due 20th October
- **Paper 2**: (5 pages). Due 11th November
- **Take home exam**: (10 pages). Due 14th December

More details on all assignments will be provided in OnQ. Students are also advised to begin preparation well in advance of the deadlines.

MARK DISTRIBUTION

- Effective Participation 20%
- Paper 1 25%
- Paper 2 25%
- Take Home Examination 30%
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas" essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1), on the Arts and Science website (see http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/artsci/Regulation_1____Academic_Integrity.html), and from the instructors.

Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen's. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

Also you may wish to review the information on the Arts/Sci website for students: http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/about/academic-integrity

GRADING

Late assignments will receive a penalty of 5% per day after the submission time.

All the assignments will receive a numerical percentage mark. The final grade you receive for the course will be delivered by converting your numerical course average to a letter grade according to the Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale:

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<th>Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range (Range)</th>
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OnQ, READING AND OTHER RESOURCES

This course uses OnQ to provide all the required resources, including course outline, basic lecture slides for the purposes of note taking, links to the required readings, and TA information.

The material on the website is copyrighted and is for the sole use of students registered in SOCY226 during the Fall 2016 semester. The material on this website may be downloaded for a registered student’s personal use, but shall not be distributed or disseminated to anyone other than students registered in SOCY226. Failure to abide by these conditions is a breach of copyright, and may also constitute a breach of academic integrity under the University Senate’s Academic Integrity Policy Statement.

The required reading in the course outline is exactly what it says it is – you will need to engage with this material in order to succeed in participating satisfactorily and producing successful assignments. Readings usually involve a mixture of primary and secondary sources. Additional readings will be helpful throughout and suggestions will be provided. Use all the resources at your disposal – your lecture and tutorial notes from class, required and additional readings, and other appropriate source material.

Recent Textbooks


Relevant Journals

Theory, Culture & Society
European Journal of Social Theory
Sociological Theory
Theory & Society
British Journal of Sociology
Economy & Society
Acta Sociologica
Sociology
Sociological Review
Media, Culture & Society
Body & Society
Cultural Sociology
Gender & Society
Feminist Theory
COURSE STRUCTURE AND READINGS

Tutorials will be based on the previous week’s readings.

[1] 16th September  
Lecture: introduction to sociological theory and concepts
Tutorials: No tutorials in the first week

Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:

Bilton T. et al. (2002) Introductory Sociology, Palgrave, Ch.1

[2] 23rd September  
Lecture: Revolution, Reification, and Hegemony
Tutorials: introduction and what’s the point of theory

Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:


[3] 30th September Lecture: Functionalism and Social Order
Tutorials: revolution and reification

Required Tutorial Reading:

Further Reading:
Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:


Tutorials: culture industry and instrumental rationality

Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:


Tutorials: white collar and black power

Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:


Tutorials: rational choice and exchange

Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:

Integration. Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall.


[8] 4th Nov Lecture: Existentialism, Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology
Tutorials: everyday life and self-presentation

Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:


[9] 11th November  No class
Tutorials: no class

[10] 18th November  Lecture: Patriarchy and Equality
Tutorials: existentialism, phenomenology and ethnomethodology

Required Tutorial Reading:


Further Reading:

Abbott, P. and Wallace, C. (1990) An Introduction to Sociology: Feminist Perspectives, see especially chapter 1


**[11] 25th November**

**Lecture: Structures of Power**

**Tutorials: patriarchy and equality**

**Required Tutorial Reading:**


**Further Reading:**


[12] 2\textsuperscript{nd} December

Office Hours 9.30 – 3pm

Tutorials: *structures of power*