

SYA6018
Section 2F87 (17783)
Tuesday 3 - 6 pm

Dr. Charles F. Gattone
Dept. of Soc, Crim & Law
University of Florida

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY FALL 2023

The primary goal of this seminar is to develop a deeper understanding of the main theoretical orientations in classical sociological thought and explore the ways these ideas have changed in relation to the transformations taking place in the western world from the early years of modernity to World War II. Our emphasis will be the connections between the underlying assumptions of key theorists and their conclusions about the nature of social life. The main questions we will address in the course are: What were the fundamental concerns of these authors and how did these concerns relate to the kinds of ideas they developed? What were their core contributions to sociological thought? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses in each of their positions? How do they compare to one another? Which of their ideas have managed to withstand the test of time and remain relevant in the face of subsequent social changes? Which have not survived these changes and why? The overriding approach of the course will be to view these positions critically while also drawing on their collective insight in an effort to inform our understanding of contemporary theory and society broadly.

The seminar will be organized on the basis of class discussion, lecture, and review of the reading material. Course requirements include: weekly reading responses, class participation, one facilitation, and a final paper.

Dr. Gattone's office hours are Thursdays from 3 to 5 pm in room 3352 Turlington Hall.

Email: cgattone@ufl.edu

Required Readings

Classical Sociological Theory, edited by Craig Calhoun, et. al., Wiley-Blackwell, Third edition, 2012, ISBN: 978-0470655672.

The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory 1830-1930, edited by Patricia Madoo Lengermann and Gillian Niebrugge, Waveland Press, 2007, ISBN: 978-1-57766-509-0.

There are also required readings available in the Files section of Canvas.

Grades for the course will be determined on the basis of the following four requirements:

Reading Responses

One of the key responsibilities of seminar participants is to develop a brief written response to the assigned readings each week. This can be in the form of a narrative, an analytical critique, or an essay illustrating the connections between a theme raised by an author and a corresponding social issue. These should be submitted online the night

before each session and will be discussed in class. The goal of the response paper is not to summarize the main points of the readings, but to focus on one or two themes in the author's theoretical framework and respond to them on the basis of your own concerns and criticisms. Since these responses will provide the grounding for our discussions each week, late responses will not be accepted.

Facilitation

During each session, one student will be responsible for facilitating the discussion of the readings for that week. The goal of the facilitation is **not** to present an overview of the readings, but to develop a brief introductory assessment of them and raise questions to the class as a way to initiate and sustain informed discussion. Facilitators should prepare their comments and questions in advance of the session and put together a written version of their evaluation in the form of a paper (approximately five pages), which should then be submitted in lieu of the individual reading response for that week. This paper should be written in a scholarly manner and present an overarching argument with respect to the readings for that week. This is due the evening prior to the class period of the facilitation.

Class Participation

One of the major goals of the seminar is to encourage participants to develop a working understanding of the concepts discussed in class and in the readings. The responsibility of each student in this regard is to become familiar with the main ideas outlined in the readings and raise evaluative comments in our weekly discussions. This is a crucial component of the seminar.

Final Paper

The final paper can be organized on the basis of several possible approaches. One is to develop an assessment and critique of a theme in an author's work and form a critical appraisal of it. Another is to build on an existing theoretical framework that you feel is lacking in its original form. Other approaches may be acceptable provided they are approved by the professor prior to writing. The subject matter and basic argument of the paper should be submitted as a written abstract consisting of one or two paragraphs. Dr. Gattone will then provide feedback and suggestions to each of you before you write the paper.

COURSE OUTLINE

- 8/29 Introducing and Defining Sociological Theory
Arthur Vidich and Robert Jackall - Series Preface (pp. vii-xi)
Main Trends of the Modern World (handout)
- 9/5 The Origins of Sociological Thought I
August Comte – excerpt from *The Positive Philosophy*
Harriet Martineau – excerpt from *How to Observe Morals and Manners*
Herbert Spencer – “The Scope of Sociology” in *The Principles of Sociology*
- 9/12 Karl Marx

“Preface” and “Feuerbach” *The German Ideology*
Chapter 2 – “Karl Marx” in Cuff, et. al. *Perspectives in Sociology*

- 9/19 Karl Marx
Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 (in reader)
“Wage-Labour and Capital” and “Classes” (in Calhoun reader)
- 9/26 Emile Durkheim
The Division of Labor in Society (in Calhoun reader)
The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (in Calhoun reader)
- 10/3 Emile Durkheim
The Rules of Sociological Method (in Calhoun reader)
Suicide (in Calhoun reader)
- 10/10 Max Weber
The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (in Calhoun reader)
“Bureaucracy” (in Calhoun reader)
- 10/17 Max Weber
“Science as a Vocation” in *From Max Weber*
“Politics as a Vocation” in *From Max Weber*
- 10/24 Thorstein Veblen
“Thorstein Veblen – The Social Scientist as Innovative Thinker”
Veblen – “The Place of Science in Modern Civilization”
- 10/31 Phenomenology
“Overview of Phenomenology – Edmund Husserl and Alfred Schutz”
Edmund Husserl – Introduction to *Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology
and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*
Alfred Schutz – “Common Sense and Scientific Interpretation of Human Action”
- 11/7 Pragmatism
“John Dewey – Brief Overview”
John Dewey – excerpt from “Search for the Public,”
in *The Public and Its Problems*
- 11/14 Gender
Jane Addams – excerpt from *Democracy and Social Ethics*
Charlotte Perkins Gilman – excerpt from *Women and Economics*
Anna Julia Cooper – excerpt from *A Voice from the South*
in: *The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory 1830-1930*

(Abstract of final paper due 11/21)

- 11/28 Race and Ethnicity

W. E. B. Du Bois – Chapter 1 “On the Meaning of Race,”
from *The Social Theory of W.E. B. DuBois*

12/5 Classical Critical Theory

Max Horkheimer and Theodore Adorno – “The Culture Industry”
from *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (in Calhoun reader)

Herbert Marcuse, excerpt from *One-Dimensional Man* (in Calhoun Reader)

(Final paper due 12/12)

Statement of University Policies: All students are required to sign a statement at registration acknowledging that they understand and agree to abide by the academic honesty guidelines of the university.

Disability Policy: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Disability Resource Center, which will then provide documentation for the student to present to the professor.

UF Grading Policies: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

Information Regarding Class Recordings: Our class sessions may be audio visually recorded. Students who participate with their camera engaged or utilize a profile image are agreeing to have their video or image recorded. If you are unwilling to consent to have your profile or video image recorded, be sure to keep your camera off and do not use a profile image. Also students who un-mute during class and participate orally are agreeing to have their voices recorded. If you are not willing to consent to have your voice recorded during class, you will need to keep your mute button activated and communicate exclusively using the "chat" feature, which allows students to type questions and comments live. The chat will not be recorded or shared. As in all courses, unauthorized recording and unauthorized sharing of recorded materials is prohibited.

UF Evaluation Process: Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner.](#) Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. [Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here.](#)