

SYA4110
Sections 17GH, 188M
Mon. periods 3,4, Tues. 4, Thurs 4-5
Rolfs Hall Room 205

Dr. Charles Gattone
3352 Turlington Hall
Department of Sociology
University of Florida

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT

FALL 2023

This course offers the opportunity to critically examine some of the major theoretical orientations in classical and contemporary sociological thought. We will explore the ways these ideas have changed in relation to the transformations taking place in the western world throughout the course of modernity. The focus will be on the connections between the underlying assumptions of key theorists and their conclusions about the nature of social life. The major questions to be addressed as a part of the course are: How can these theories inform and enhance our understanding of contemporary society? What are some of the strengths and weaknesses in each of these positions? How have the foundations of each of these views changed over time? To what extent do these perspectives offer insight into ongoing social issues?

The class will be organized to allow time for lecture, review of the reading material, and discussion. Course requirements include: reading assigned articles and chapters, completing and submitting study guides, attending and participating in discussion sections and lectures, taking quizzes and exams as scheduled, creating original critiques, and responding thoughtfully to small group questions.

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

email address: cgattone@ufl.edu

The Teaching Assistant for the course is Tayana Malewschik.
Her office hours are held on Mondays from 8 to 9 am in room 3349 Turlington Hall.

Her email address is: tayanamalewschik@ufl.edu

Discussion Meeting Times and Locations

Section 17GH (18666) meets in 2305 Turlington on Mondays – 9:35 am to 10:25 am.
Section 188M (23364) meets in 2305 Turlington on Mondays – 10:40 am to 11:30 am.

Required Readings

George Ritzer, *Sociological Theory* (eighth edition) McGraw-Hill. (ISBN: 0078111676)
There are additional required readings on Canvas.

Study Guides

It is crucial for each student to do the assigned readings and complete the corresponding weekly study guides in preparation for the reading quiz, which will be given every Tuesday at the start of class. The study guides can be found on Canvas in the “Files” section. Students are required to develop their own written responses to the study guide questions and submit these online before the Sunday evening deadline using Canvas. No late study guides will be accepted.

Discussion Sections

All students are required to attend and participate in their assigned discussion section on Monday. This is an opportunity for you to strengthen your understanding of the material and engage in critical discussion regarding the main ideas of the course. Attendance and participation in this section constitutes the largest percentage of your overall grade for the semester.

Reading Quizzes

On Tuesday at the start of class (or at the start of each new section), there will be a brief quiz on the readings for that section. Each quiz consists of four questions. The quizzes will focus on reading material marked as required (R) in the schedule below.

Critique

Every student is required to present to the class one critique of the readings together with the selected members of a small group. This involves working together with your group to develop your collective responses to the readings. Preparing for this assignment requires that the group meet in advance to arrange the substance of the critique and put together a written version of it (approximately five pages) due the class period of the presentation.

Exam #1

This exam will cover the main points of the readings as well as those presented and discussed in class. It focuses on classical sociological theory and includes material from the first week of class through the section entitled “Social Structure and Human Interaction” (Max Weber).

Essay Exam

The goal of the essay exam is to provide you with the opportunity to critically evaluate some of the theories we will be discussing throughout the semester. It involves selecting one theme in an author's work and assessing it in a critical manner. A list of acceptable topics will be made available in class on the day of the exam. The suggested approach is to devote the first portion of the essay to conveying the author's position on this theme and then devote the second portion to presenting your critique of this view.

Small Group Sessions

Small group sessions will be held several times throughout the semester to offer you the opportunity to discuss and evaluate the works of these theorists. Normally, we will do this during the second half of class on Thursdays. A few questions will be distributed to each group at the beginning of each session to provide a focus to these discussions and offer a means through which to develop your responses. Grades for these responses will be included in the evaluation of your class participation, which will then be factored into the final grade for the class.

Final Exam

The final exam will be on the material covered from our discussion of Structural Functionalism, (Parsons and Merton) through the end of the semester. It will consist of two parts – a multiple-choice portion and an essay portion. The grades for each of these two portions will be weighed evenly.

COURSE OUTLINE

Readings preceded by an (R) are required. Material from these readings will be on the quizzes and exams.

8/24 Introduction to the Course – Defining Sociological Theory
(R) Robert Jackall and Arthur Vidich - Series Preface
Main Trends of the Modern World (PDF)

8/28 – 8/31 Origins of Sociological Theory
(R) Auguste Comte – Excerpt from *The Positive Philosophy* (PDF)
Herbert Spencer – "The Scope of Sociology", *The Principles of Sociology* (PDF)

(Labor Day – Monday, September 4th – No classes)

9/5 – 9/7 The Emergence of the Conflict Perspective
(R) Ritzer – Chapter 2 – "Karl Marx" in *Sociological Theory*
(R) Karl Marx – Preface and "Opposition of The Materialist and Idealist Outlook" *The German Ideology* (PDF)

9/11 – 9/14 The Development of Sociology as a Discipline
(R) Ritzer - Chapter 3 – "Emile Durkheim" in *Sociological Theory*
Emile Durkheim – Preface I and II – *The Rules of Sociological Method* (pp. 31-47) (PDF)
Charlotte Perkins Gilman – Preface and Chapter I, *Women and Economics* (PDF)

9/18 – 9/21 Social Structure and Human Interaction
(R) Ritzer – Chapter 4 – "Max Weber" in *Sociological Theory*
Max Weber – "Science as a Vocation" in *From Max Weber* (PDF)
Jane Addams – "Charitable Effort", *Democracy and Social Ethics* (PDF)

9/25 – 9/26 Review for Exam #1

(Exam #1 – Thursday 9/28)

10/2 – 10/5 Structural Functionalism
(R) Ritzer – Chapter 7 - "Structural Functionalism" – in *Sociological Theory*
Talcott Parsons - "The Place of Sociological Theory" in *The Social System* (PDF)
(R) Robert Merton - "Manifest and Latent Functions"
in *Social Theory and Social Structure* (pp. 73-91) (PDF)

10/9 – 10/12 Conflict Theory
(R) C. Wright Mills - "The Promise", "On Politics"
The Sociological Imagination (PDF)

- 10/16 – 10/19 Symbolic Interactionism
 (R) Ritzer - Chapter 10 - "Symbolic Interaction" in *Sociological Theory*
 Herbert Blumer - "Society as Symbolic Interaction" and "Sociological Analysis and the Variable" in *Symbolic Interactionism* (PDF)
 Erving Goffman - Introduction to *Frame Analysis* (pp. 1-20) (PDF)
- 10/23 – 10/24 Postmodernism / Poststructuralism
 (R) E.C. Cuff – pp. 233-241 on poststructuralism in *Perspectives in Sociology* (PDF)
 (R) E.C. Cuff – pp. 286 – 289 – on Lyotard in *Perspectives in Sociology* (PDF)
 (R) Ritzer – pp. 611 – 621 Foucault and postmodernism in *Sociological Theory*
 Michel Foucault – "What is Enlightenment" *Ethics: Subjectivity and Truth* (PDF)

(In Class Essay Exam – Thursday, 10/26)

- 10/30 – 11/2 Gender Theory
 (R) Ritzer – Chapter 13 – "Contemporary Feminist Theory" in *Sociological Theory*
 (R) Dorothy Smith – "Sociological Theory: Methods of Writing Patriarchy" in *Feminism and Sociological Theory* (Ruth Wallace editor, pp. 34-64) (PDF)
 (R) bell hooks - "Black Women Shaping Feminist Theory" in *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (PDF)
- 11/6 – 11/9 Theories of Race and Ethnicity
 (R) Ashley Crossman – "The Sociology of Race and Ethnicity" (with Dubois Section) (PDF)
 (R) Sandra Soo-Jin Lee – "Race and the Science of Difference in the Age of Genomics" in *Theories of Race and Ethnicity* (PDF)
 (R) Stephen Steinberg - "Dilemmas and Contradictions of Ethnic Pluralism in America", in *The Ethnic Myth: Race, Ethnicity and Class in America* (PDF)
- 11/13 – 11/16 Critical Theory
 (R) Ritzer – pp. 282-293 and pp. 537-542 – in *Sociological Theory*
 (R) Douglas Kellner -"Critical Theory Today: Revisiting the Classics" in *Theory, Culture, and Society*, Vol. 10: pp. 43-60. (PDF)
 Jürgen Habermas - "The Tasks of a Critical Theory of Society" in *The Theory of Communicative Action II* (pp. 374-403) (PDF)

(Thanksgiving Break – November 22-25)

- 11/27 – 11/30 Agency Structure Integration
 (R) Anthony Giddens – in Ritzer – *Sociological Theory*, pp. 520-525
 (R) Pierre Bourdieu – in Ritzer – *Sociological Theory*, pp. 526-537
- 12/4 – 12/5 Review for Final Exam

(Final Exam – Date and time to be announced)

Grading Information

Exams – All students are required without exception to take the exams during the scheduled times listed in the syllabus. Make-up exams will not be offered for this course except under very limited circumstances.

In-Class Essay Exam – The goal of the essay exam is to give you the opportunity to develop your own critique of a specific concept covered in class. A list of concepts or “themes” will be presented in class on the day of the essay exam. Your assignment will be to select one of these themes, describe it, and offer your evaluation of it.

Critique – This is a group project, so it must be done collectively. Students should contact the other members of their group as soon as possible to arrange meeting times well in advance and to avoid scheduling conflicts. Your task in this project is **not** to summarize the main points of the readings, but to **think critically** about them and present **your collective critique** to the class and in writing. Please see the more extensive description of the project on Canvas, entitled “Critique Guidelines” in the “Files” section.

Reading Quizzes – Students are required to do the readings for this class in advance of each meeting and will be quizzed at the start of each new section (typically at the start of class on Tuesdays). The quizzes will focus on the main points of each reading rather than minor details. Make-up quizzes will not be given, however the lowest quiz score will be dropped at the end of the semester.

Attendance – Students are required to be present and on time for each class session. Absences will only be considered excused if the professor is notified prior to the class session involved and the request is approved. This is also true of the discussion section. Please notify the teaching assistant prior to the absence in order to have it be recorded as excused. The attendance grade will be calculated on the basis of the total number of unexcused absences and factored into the overall grade at the end of the semester.

Class Participation – In a class of this nature, it is crucial for students to speak out to develop their own ideas and criticisms about the material. It is for this reason that everyone is required to participate in the class discussions as well as those of the discussion section. This includes participation in the small group sessions each week. These responses and class participation grades will be factored into the final grade as listed below.

Discussion Section – The discussion section is an integral component of the course because it provides students with the opportunity to discuss and debate the concepts of sociological theory. This grade will be based on your completed study guides, attendance, and participation in the discussion section. In order to develop a working knowledge of theory, students must communicate their views and be willing to consider alternative positions expressed by others. For this reason, the discussion section grade constitutes the most significant percentage of the overall grade for the course.

Grade Breakdown

Reading Quizzes – 12%
Group Critique – 12%
Exam #1 – 12%
Essay Exam – 12%
Attendance – 12%
Class Participation – 12%
Discussion Section Grade – 16%
Final Exam – 12%

Grading Scale

94-100 A
90-93.99 A-
87-89.99 B+
83-86.99 B
80-82.99 B-
77-79.99 C+
73-76.99 C
70-72.99 C-
67-69.99 D+
63-66.99 D
60-62.99 D-
Less than 60 E

University of Florida Academic Honesty Guidelines: All students are required to abide by the Academic Honesty Guidelines, which have been established by the University.

(1) Each student is required to subscribe to the Guidelines upon registration each semester by signing the following pledge contained on the "Course Request Registration Form":

I understand that the University of Florida expects its students to be honest in all of their academic work. I agree to adhere to this commitment to academic honesty and understand that my failure to comply with this commitment may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the University.

A copy of this form can be obtained at the Office of the Registrar.

(2) The conduct set forth hereinafter constitutes a violation of the Academic Honesty Guidelines. Those adjudged to have committed such conduct shall be subject to the sanctions provided in 6C1-4.016.

(a) Cheating -- the improper taking or tendering of any information or material which shall be used to determine academic credit. Taking of information includes, but is not limited to, copying graded homework assignments from another student; working together with another individual(s) on a take-home test or homework when not specifically permitted by the teacher; looking or attempting to look at another student's paper during an examination; looking or attempting to look at text or notes during an examination when not permitted. Tendering of

information includes, but is not limited to, giving your work to another student to be used or copied; giving someone answers to exam questions either when the exam is being given or after having taken an exam; giving or selling a term paper or other written materials to another student; sharing information on a graded assignment.

(b) Plagiarism -- The attempt to represent the work of another as the product of one's own thought, whether the other's work is published or unpublished, or simply the work of a fellow student. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, quoting oral or written materials without citation on an exam, term paper, homework, or other written materials or oral presentations for an academic requirement; submitting a paper which was purchased from a term paper service as your own work; submitting anyone else's paper as your own work.

University of Florida Policy Regarding Students With Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Office coordinates the accessibility of all areas of campus to persons with disabilities. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Disability Resource Center. The Disability Resource Center will then provide documentation to the student who must provide this documentation to the professor when requesting accommodation.

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

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. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. 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 <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.