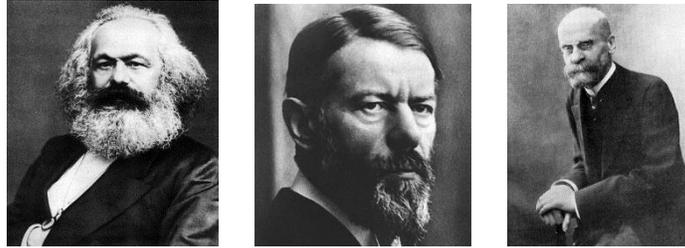


Graduate Seminar in Classical Social Theory
SOC401 (CRN: 42846)
Lehigh University, Fall 2017
Tuesdays 4:10-7:00 (Credits: 3)
Linderman Library, Room 300

Professor: Danielle Lindemann
Email: djl315@lehigh.edu
Office: 223 Williams Hall
Office Hours: By Appointment



Course Description:

This class is a graduate-level introduction to some of the “classical” texts that have forged the foundation of sociology as we know it today. Over the course of the semester, we will read, analyze, synthesize, and contrast a variety of sociological theories, with major emphases on the works of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. We will also attend to some of the intellectual conversations that these scholars have inspired, tracing their theoretical traditions to contemporary debates and modern social problems—and to our own work as sociologists. We will conclude the semester by looking critically at some of the major themes that are absent from, or not adequately explored within, these texts and the ways in which our senses of what is “canonical” and “classical” are themselves socially constructed.

Important note: This is a graduate-level seminar. Accordingly, I expect students in this class to take active roles in their own learning. While I will act as a facilitator, *this is not a lecture-based course*. Thus, it is crucial that students come to class fully prepared to engage in lively discussions, having done the readings and having thought critically about their content. You will not be successful in this course—and the course itself will not be successful—unless you approach the semester in this way. Finally, if you are ever lost or struggling, or simply need clarification about any of the course material, I urge you to voice your concerns in class or in one of your individual conferences. One of the intended aims for this course is to help prepare you for the Master’s comprehensive exam that we will administer in the spring.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to...

- ...identify the key theoretical traditions in sociology and the central contributions of individual theorists.
- ...analyze, synthesize, and contrast the major theoretical contributions of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim, and discuss and debate the strengths and weaknesses of each theory.
- ...understand how subsequent theorists have drawn upon these writings to make their own contributions to sociological scholarship; *and*
- ...think critically about how to apply these classical theories to contemporary social issues and empirical research.

Required Books:

- Collins, Randall (Ed.). (1994). *Four Sociological Traditions: Selected Readings*. New York: Oxford University Press. This book is available from a variety of sellers, including Amazon, here: https://www.amazon.com/Four-Sociological-Traditions-Selected-Readings/dp/019508702X/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1496697281&sr=8-1&keywords=four+sociological+traditions

Note: Make sure you purchase the “Selected Readings” version of this book!

- Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. You may use any edition. I’ll be using the Penguin Classics edition translated by Peter Baehr and Gordon C. Wells and published in 2002.
- PDFs of all other required readings are available on Coursesite.

Course Requirements:

*Note: All papers and “mini-comp” exams should be submitted via Coursesite as **Word or PDF documents only**—otherwise, I will not be able to open your document and it will be marked late. You are responsible for making sure your papers have been submitted. Do not assume a paper has been submitted unless you receive electronic confirmation.*

- **Essay #1: 20% of final grade**

Each student will write a 5-7 page paper (typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font), due to Coursesite before the start of class on Tuesday, September 19th.

Essay #1 Topic:

Select one contemporary social problem, and compare and contrast how Karl Marx, Max Weber, and/or Emile Durkheim (You must discuss at least two of the three) might view, interpret, or propose to remedy the issue. Which scholar’s theories do you find most fitting for understanding this particular issue? Why? Be sure to draw upon our course readings directly in your response.

- **Essay #2: 20% of final grade**

Each student will write a second 5-7 page paper (typed, double-spaced, in 12-point font), due to Coursesite before the start of class on Tuesday, November 28th.

Essay #2 Topic:

Choose one theme or concept and compare and contrast the ways in which three separate theorists from our syllabus have interpreted that one concept or theme. (At least one of the scholars must be Marx, Weber, or Durkheim.) Using these theories as a base, briefly explain how you might design a study (or studies) to empirically test the concept. Be sure to draw upon our course readings directly in your response.

- **“Mini-Comp” #1: 15% of final grade**

Each student will take two “mini” versions of the Master’s comprehensive exam that will be administered by the Sociology department this spring. Our in-class exam will consist of a single essay question similar to the type you will find on your comprehensive exam this spring. Exams must be completed within the class period. One week before the test, I will distribute a list of potential exam questions, and we will have an in-class review session.

- **“Mini-Comp” #2: 15% of final grade**

See description above.

- **Weekly Response Memos: 10% of final grade**

Each student is responsible for completing nine (9) response memos over the course of the semester. Memos are due to Coursesite by 5 pm on Mondays (see syllabus for specific dates). *In addition to submitting your weekly response memos via Coursesite, you should also have them accessible in class (either as hard copies or on your computer).* Each memo should be short (approximately 1 page) and should contain the following:

- ➔ For *each* of that week's readings, 2-3 bullet points describing the main takeaways of the reading.
- ➔ For *each* of that week's readings, 1-2 questions for the class. The most successful questions will be those that have the potential to provoke lively discussion/debate.

Your overall memo grade will be the average of your *highest eight (8)* memo grades (*i.e.* I will drop your lowest memo grade.)

- **Active and Engaged Class Participation: 20% of final grade**

As discussed, because this is a graduate-level seminar, I will not be lecturing “at” you in this class. This is a student-centered class, and it only works if students have done the reading, thought critically about what they have read, and come to class prepared for discussion. To receive a high participation grade, you must not only attend class consistently but also participate actively and regularly in seminar.

Grading Scale:

93%-100% = A
90%-92% = A-
87%-89% = B+
83%-86% = B
80%-82% = B-
77%-79% = C+
73%-76% = C
70%-72% = C-
67%-69% = D+
63%-66% = D
60%-62% = D-
0%-59% = F

Late Papers:

Barring extreme circumstances, I will not accept late assignments.

Policy on Laptops/Cell Phones:

As this is a graduate-level course, I permit the use of laptops, *for note-taking only*.

Cell phone use is never permitted. Please turn off your cell phone and put it away before class. Each class session will be divided into two parts, with a brief break in between, during which you will have the opportunity to stretch your legs, eat a snack, or make short phone calls as needed.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting accommodations, please contact both your instructor and the Office of Academic Support Services, Williams Hall, Suite 301 (610-758-4152) as early as possible in the semester. You must have documentation from the Academic Support Services

office before accommodations can be granted.

The Principles of Our Equitable Community:

Lehigh University endorses The Principles of Our Equitable Community [http://www.lehigh.edu/~inprv/initiatives/PrinciplesEquity_Sheet_v2_032212.pdf]. We expect each member of this class to acknowledge and practice these Principles. Respect for each other and for differing viewpoints is a vital component of the learning environment inside and outside the classroom.

Schedule of Assignments:

WEEK 1:

Tuesday, August 29th: Course Introduction and Administration

In-class reading:

- C. Wright Mills. "Chapter One: The Promise" in *The Sociological Imagination* [1959] [**PDF on Coursesite**]

WEEK 2:

Tuesday, September 5th: The Sociology of Karl Marx

➔ *Response memo #1 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Sept. 4th)*

Read for this class:

First Half: Selected Writings:

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "History as Class Struggle," [1848] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 3-12.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "Materialism and the Theory of Ideology," [1846] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 13-17.
- Karl Marx, "The Class Basis of Politics and Revolution," [1852] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 17-35.

Second Half: "Deep Dive" into Marx: *Capital*

- Karl Marx, Selections from *Capital* [**PDF on Coursesite**]

WEEK 3:

Tuesday, September 12th: The Sociology of Max Weber

➔ *Response memo #2 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Sept. 11th)*

Read for this class:

First Half: Selected Writings:

- Max Weber, "The Origin of Modern Capitalism," [1920] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 36-57.
- Max Weber, "The Distribution of Power within the Political Community: Class, Status, Party," pp. 926-940 in *Economy and Society*. [**PDF on Coursesite**]

Second Half: "Deep Dive" into Weber: *The Protestant Ethic*

- Max Weber, "Part I: The Problem," in *The Protestant Ethic and the "Spirit" of Capitalism* [pp. 43-127 in Penguin edition]

WEEK 4:

Tuesday, September 19th: The Sociology of Emile Durkheim

- ➔ *Response memo #3 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Sept. 18th)*
- ➔ *Essay #1 due (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today*

Read for this class:

First Half: Selected Writings

- Emile Durkheim, “Precontractual Solidarity” [1893] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 193-206.
- Emile Durkheim, “Social Rituals and Sacred Objects” [1912] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 206-218.
- Emile Durkheim, “Chapter One: What Is a Social Fact?” in *The Rules of the Sociological Method*, pp. 50-59. **[PDF on Coursesite]**

Second Half: “Deep Dive” into Durkheim: *Suicide*

- Selections from *Suicide* **[PDF on Coursesite]**

WEEK 5:

Tuesday, September 26th: Riffing on Marx: The Marxist Tradition

- ➔ *Response memo #4 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Sept. 25th)*
- ➔ *Review for “mini-comp” in class today – question bank distributed*
- ➔ *Individual meetings to discuss Essay #1 grades at the end of class today*

Read for this class:

First Half: Selected Writings

- Ralf Dahrendorf, “Power Divisions as the Basis of Class Conflict,” [1959] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 58-80.
- Randall Collins, “A Conflict Theory of Stratification,” [1975] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 109-132.
- Heidi Hartmann. 1979. “The Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism: Towards a More Progressive Union.” *Capital & Class* 3(2): 1-33. **[PDF on Coursesite]**

Second Half: “Mini-Comp” Review and Individual Conferences

WEEK 6:

Tuesday, October 3rd: “MINI-COMP” #1

WEEK 7:

Tuesday, October 10th: Riffing on Weber: The Weberian Tradition

- ➔ *Response memo #5 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Oct. 9th)*
- ➔ *Individual meetings to discuss “mini-comp” #1 grades at the end of class today*

Read for this class:

First Half: Selected Writings

- Benjamin H. Snyder (2013). “From Vigilance to Busyness A Neo-Weberian Approach to Clock Time.” *Sociological Theory* 31(3): 243-266. **[PDF on Coursesite]**
- Renato Rosaldo (1989). “Subjectivity in Social Analysis,” pp. 168-195 in *Culture and Truth: The Remaking of Social Analysis*. Boston: Beacon. **[PDF on Coursesite]**

Second Half: Individual Conferences

WEEK 8:

Tuesday, October 17th – NO CLASS: PACING BREAK

WEEK 9:

Tuesday, October 24th: Riffing on Durkheim: The Durkheimian Tradition

- ➔ *Response memo #6 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Oct. 23rd)*
- ➔ *Review for “mini-comp” – question bank distributed in class today*

Read for this class:

First Half: Selected Writings

- Henri Hubert and Marcel Mauss, “The Social Circulation of Sentiments, Magic, and Money [1906-34] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 219-226.
- Claude Levi-Strauss, “Kinship as Sexual Property Exchange” [1949] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 227-243.
- Gayle Rubin. 1975. “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex.” In Reiter, Rayna R (Ed.). *Toward an Anthropology of Women*: 157-210. **[PDF on Coursesite]**

Second Half: Review for “Mini-Comp”

WEEK 10:

Tuesday, October 31st (spooky!): “MINI-COMP” #2

WEEK 11:

Tuesday, November 7th: Other Sociological Traditions: Microinteractionism

- ➔ *Response memo #7 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Nov. 6th)*
- ➔ *Individual meetings to discuss “mini-comp” #2 grades at the end of class*

Read for this class:

First Half: Selected Writings

- Charles Horton Cooley, “Society Is in the Mind” [1902] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 283-289.
- George Herbert Mead, “Thought as Internalized Conversation” [1934] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 290-303.
- Herbert Blumer, “Symbolic Interactionism” [1969] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 304-321.
- Erving Goffman, “Frame Analysis” [1974] in *Four Sociological Traditions*: pp. 341-357.

Second Half: Individual Conferences

WEEK 12:

Tuesday, November 14th: Other Sociological Traditions: From Classical to Modern

- ➔ *Response memo #8 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Nov. 13th)*

Read for this class:

First Half: Georg Simmel’s Sociology

- Georg Simmel. (1950). “Part One: The Field of Sociology,” pp. 3-25 in K. Wolff (ed.), *Sociology of Georg Simmel*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press. **[PDF on Coursesite]**
- Georg Simmel. (1903). “The Metropolis and Mental Life” (1903) in *On Individuality and Social Forms* (University of Chicago, 1971), pp. 324-339. **[PDF on Coursesite]**

Continued...

Second Half: Scholars with Hard-to-Pronounce French Names: Bourdieu and Foucault

- Rogers Brubaker. (1985). "Rethinking Classical Theory: The Sociological Vision of Pierre Bourdieu." *Theory and Society*, 14(6): 745-775. [PDF on Coursesite]
- Michel Foucault. (1979). *The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage, 1-49. [PDF on Coursesite]

WEEK 13: (Thanksgiving week)

Tuesday, November 21st:

- Screening of *La sociologie est un sport de combat* ["Sociology is a Martial Art"]
- *There are no readings assigned for this class session.*

WEEK 14:

Tuesday, November 28th: The Social Construction of "Classical Theory"/ What's Missing?

- *Response memo #9 due by 5 pm Monday evening (Nov. 27th)*
- *Essay #2 due (submitted to Coursesite) before the start of class today*
- *We will begin this class with a discussion of La sociologie est un sport de combat*

Read for this class:

First Half: "Classical Theory" as a Social Construction

- Connell, Robert William. (1997). "Why Is Classical Theory Classical?" *American Journal of Sociology* 102(6): 1511-1557. [PDF on Coursesite]

Second Half: What's Missing?

- Bert Adams and R.A. Sydie. (2002). "Sociological Theory and Race (DuBois)," pp. 291-309 in *Classical Sociological Theory*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge. [PDF on Coursesite]
- Stacey, Judith and Barrie Thorne (1985) "The Missing Feminist Revolution in Sociology." *Social Problems*, 32(4): 301-316. [PDF on Coursesite]
- Stein, Arlene, and Ken Plummer. 1994. "I Can't Even Think Straight': 'Queer' Theory and the Missing Sexual Revolution in Sociology." *Sociological Theory* 12(2): 178-87. [PDF on Coursesite]

WEEK 15:

Tuesday, December 5th: Course Wrap-Up, Evaluations, Individual Meetings

- *There are no readings assigned for this class session.*
- *Individual meetings to discuss Essay #2 grades at the end of today's class*

HAVE A GREAT WINTER BREAK!

