Course Syllabus: Sociology 702/425 – Fall 2010
Thursday 7:35 – 9:25 pm
Room: HW 1631

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Office Hours: HW 1604-A, Mondays, 3:30 – 5:15 p.m. or by appointment

Course Description:

This course will provide an advanced introduction to various classical and contemporary sociological theories that have shaped and continue to shape the field of sociology. The theory you will read in this course is relevant to a huge range of topics – from war and international politics to interpersonal behavior and communication, from socially durable power relations to the social organization of privacy, from the social logic of taste to the politics of memory in group settings, from the social construction of the body to the technologies and risks associated with the rapidly changing modern world, and much more.

One purpose of this course is to introduce you to the sociological theorists who, from a variety of different perspectives, continue to inspire a wide array of sociological thought and research today. However, the primary purpose of this course is to provide you with a set of intellectual tools that you can use to theorize about contemporary questions, situations, events, and social problems in the world. The emphasis in this course is not on memorizing what other theorists have written. Instead, we will focus on applying their different styles of thought to current social issues in order to better understand those issues. We will explore several theoretical frameworks and concepts that have been developed to answer a variety of sociological questions about the world. You are expected to think critically about modern issues and problems through the eyes of the theorists we read and discuss. In this way you can develop your own research by expanding on foundational concepts and applying established theories to new questions. In other words, you will be learning sociological theories by reading them, discussing the main questions or problems they address, studying the approaches and concepts they employ, and then applying the theory to shape your current research agenda and develop your intellectual interests.

This course is divided into four main topic areas. In addition to an short introductory section, these are I) Conflict, Power, and Social Reproduction, II) Structures, Functions, and the Sociology of Mind, III) The Self and Social Interaction, and IV) Modernity, Post-Modernism, and Cultural Pluralism. In each section, we will start by covering foundational sociological theories (classical theory) and move on to more current sociological thought.
Requirements:

You must keep up with the readings and you must attend lecture. The theory we are reading in this course is very difficult (especially at first). Attending lecture and participating in class discussions will help you grasp the theory and learn how to use it effectively.

REQUIRED READINGS:

This course is designed to give you a broad and thorough overview of some of the most significant theoretical work in the field of sociology. To this end, I believe it is more important for you to survey many different, relatively short readings (selections that contain core theoretical perspectives and concepts) rather than read a limited number of longer books. In an effort to provide such a theoretical highlight reel, I have tried to limit and focus the number of pages assigned each week.

Books:


Electronic Reserves:

Most readings are available via the library’s electronic reserve system or Blackboard.

LIBRARY INSTRUCTIONS: Go to [http://hunter.docutek.com/eres/](http://hunter.docutek.com/eres/), CLICK “Electronic Reserves & Reserve Pages,” set the search field to “Instructor” and search for “DeGloma.” Select the correct course, then enter the password “DeGloma702” and CLICK “Accept.” NOTE that the readings are labeled correctly, but they are not necessarily in the correct order. Make sure you have the correct reading(s) for the week. (I suggest that you download and save all the readings early in the semester.) All of the readings available via the library reserve page are marked as “E. Reserve” in the class schedule below. All of the readings available via the course’s Blackboard site are labeled “Blackboard.”

GRADING REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance and class participation: Attendance is required. You will not do well if you miss this class on a regular basis. Class participation is required. This class is lecture-heavy, but I have an interactive teaching style and I expect you to ask questions, attempt to answer my questions, make comments, offer examples, or challenge the perspective of a particular theorist when I am lecturing. This makes the class more interesting and entertaining for all of us.

Theoretical Papers (Four papers, each counts for 25% of your final grade): These assignments will require you to analyze a social issue, relationship, event, object, institution, or other appropriate subject matter using the theoretical perspectives of the theorists we discuss in each section of the course. I expect you to write about topics that interest you. In other words,
these assignments are intended to help you expand your perceptive on your own intellectual interests and develop the quality of your research. Each paper is expected to be around 10 double-spaced pages in length (this is a guide... I do not grade by number of pages but rather by the quality of the work). You are allowed, but not required, to use outside sources provided that you **cite them appropriately** (see plagiarism policy below). I will give detailed instructions about formatting and style as the first assignment approaches.

**Final Evaluation:**
- A+ = 97.5% to 100%
- A = 90% to 97.4%
- B+ = 87.5% to 89.9%
- B = 80% to 87.4%
- C+ = 77.5% to 79.9%
- C = 70% to 77.4%
- D = 60% to 69.9%
- F = below 60%

**PLAGIARISM POLICY:** Do not use **ANY** material written by someone other than yourself without clearly identifying the source of that material. If you use someone else’s words, enclose them in quotation marks and identify the source. If you use someone else’s idea, identify the source the first time you introduce that idea. If you plagiarize any part of any paper, you will not receive credit for the assignment. I will also report all cases of plagiarism to the college Dean’s office.

**Class Schedule:**


**REQUIRED READING:**


SECTION I: CONFLICT, POWER, AND SOCIAL REPRODUCTION

• WEEK 2 (9/2). Foundations: The Sociology of Karl Marx.

REQUIRED READING:

- Marx. The German Ideology Available Online in TWO SECTIONS at http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01a.htm Read from the beginning of the page through the end of the first paragraph of the section titled “Production and Intercourse. Division of Labour and Forms of Property – Tribal, Ancient, Feudal.” THEN SKIP TO PART 4, “The Essence of the Materialist Conception of History Social Being and Social Consciousness” AND THEN READ from here UNTIL THE END of this webpage…

  … Then go to http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/german-ideology/ch01b.htm AND READ from the BEGINNING until the end of the paragraph that begins “This whole conception of history, together with its dissolution…”

  ~14 pages

- Marx. The German Ideology (E. Reserve) Pp. 172-175. ~4 pages


- Marx. The Coming Upheaval. (E. Reserve: Attached to Wage Labor and Capital.) ~1 page


**NO CLASS Thursday, 9/9. College is closed.**
• WEEK 3 (9/16). Modern Conflict Theory.

REQUIRED READING:


• WEEK 4 (9/23). Class, Culture, the Body, and Social Reproduction.

REQUIRED READING:


**PAPER 1 DUE by 5:00 p.m. MONDAY 9/27 either in my mailbox or via email**
SECTION II:  STRUCTURES, FUNCTIONS, AND THE
SOCIology OF MIND


REQUIRED READING:


- Durkheim. Suicide. Pp. 46 (Section II) –53, 171-173 (stop at end of first paragraph), 179-189 (stop at III), (Section IV) 197-202, 208 (starting with “these facts”) -216, 241-257, 321-325 (difficult but interesting), 378 (start with III)-384. (E. Reserve) ~54 pages

• WEEK 6 (10/7). Modern Structural Functionalism.

REQUIRED READING:


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**WEEK 7 (10/14). The Sociology of the Mind.**

**REQUIRED READING:**


**PAPER 2 DUE by 5:00 p.m. MONDAY 10/18 either in my mailbox or via email**

**SECTION III: THE SELF AND SOCIAL INTERACTION**

**WEEK 8 (10/21). Foundations: The Individual and Society.**

**REQUIRED READING:**


- Simmel. Excerpt from *The Stranger*. (E. Reserve) Pp. 184-188. ~5 pages

**Instruction:** Scroll down and click the link that reads “Chapter V. The Social Self – I. The Meaning of ‘I’.” The page numbers are conveniently listed in parentheses with the text on the web page. ~10 pages

- Mead, George Herbert. *Mind, Self and Society*. Selections online at http://www.brocku.ca/MeadProject/Mead/pubs2/mindself/Mead_1934_toc.html


**WEEK 9 (10/28). Symbolic Interaction.**

**REQUIRED READING:**


**RECOMMENDED:**


**WEEK 10 (11/4). Narrative Theory and Analysis.**

REQUIRED READING:


- Thomas DeGloma. “The Awakener as a Social Type of Storyteller.” Excerpt from *Awakenings: Autobiography, Memory, and the Social Logic of Personal Discovery*. [This piece will how formal theory can guide narrative analysis] (Blackboard) ~XX pages

**PAPER 3 DUE by 5:00 p.m. MONDAY 11/8 either in my mailbox or via email**
SECTION IV: MODERNITY, POST-MODERNISM, AND CULTURAL PLURALISM


REQUIRED READING:


• WEEK 12 (11/18). Theories of Modernity.

REQUIRED READING:


**NO CLASS on THURSDAY 11/25 – Thanksgiving Recess**
• WEEK 13 (12/2). Post-modern theory.

REQUIRED READING:

  ~8 pages

  ~20 pages

  ~16 pages

  ~13 pages

  ~4 pages

• WEEK 14 (12/9). Wrap up.

**PAPER 4 DUE** by 5:00 p.m. MONDAY 12/13 either in my mailbox or via email**

Have a great break! Don’t hesitate to stay in touch!