

Sociological Theory
Fall 2015

SOCI 3370-001
M/W/F 1:25-2:20 PM
Business Building (BUS) 210

Professor: Dr. Rachel Head
Email: rhead@uttyler.edu (my preferred method of contact)
Office: BUS 204
Phone: (903) 565-5680
Office Hours: M/W 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. or by appointment

DESCRIPTION
Neither the life of an individual nor the history of a society can be understood without understanding both. –C. Wright Mills

Some people see things that are and ask, Why? Some people dream of things that never were and ask, Why not? Some people have to go to work and don’t have time for all that. –George Carlin

This course is designed to introduce students to the development of sociological theory with an emphasis on contemporary ideas and trends. We will cover the major sociological theoretical paradigms (i.e., functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism) as well as recent developments in sociological theory.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES
SOCI 3370 is designed to:

1. provide an opportunity for critical reflection and open discussion on the causes and consequences of human behavior.
2. use sociological theories and concepts to analyze and explain social problems, including the underlying origins of such problems;
3. help students move from memorizing concepts to making critically reasoned judgments grounded in the academic content of the course.

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

1. distinguish between facts, ideas, and theories.
2. compare and contrast the major sociological theoretical paradigms.
3. apply sociological theories to current issues.
4. demonstrate one’s ability to comprehend, compare, evaluate, and synthesize current developments in sociological theory both orally and in writing.
5. demonstrate the link between sociological theory and research.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND BLACKBOARD
There are two required books for this course:


Cost at UTT Bookstore:
New: $96.65
Used: $72.50
Rent New: $62.80  
Rent Used: $43.50


Cost at UTT Bookstore:
New: $75.95  
Used: $56.95  
Rent New: $49.35  
Rent Used: $34.20

The course website can be found at: [https://blackboard.uttyler.edu/webapps/login/](https://blackboard.uttyler.edu/webapps/login/) Use your UTT Username and Password to login. If you are officially enrolled in the course, you should have access to the course on Blackboard after you login. Contact IT Support if you encounter any problems with Blackboard (itsupport@patriots.uttyler.edu). In addition to required course readings, the course website contains instructions and submission links for the course assignments, grades for the course, various announcements, and other useful information.

---

**GRADING**

Grades in this course will be based on attendance (5%), section drafts (30%), a term paper (20%), and two exams (45%).

**Attendance (5 points):** Students are expected to attend classes regularly and to complete reading assignments. The lectures will integrate the readings with complementary material. Doing well on the exams, critical thinking exercises, and the term paper will depend on consistently attending lectures and keeping up with the course readings. After 3 unexcused absences, I will begin to dock students ½ a point for each additional absence.

**Term Paper (50 points):** There is a term paper due Sunday, November 22nd, worth 20 points. To help you through the process of writing a theory-driven paper, you will have section drafts due throughout the semester, **worth a total of 30 points**. My intention is to provide you guidance and/or feedback on each section of your paper so your final paper is of high quality. I have provided a handout for the term paper in Appendix A of the syllabus that details (1) the term paper instructions, (2) each section draft’s instructions, due date, and point value, and (3) grading criteria for the final paper.

**Exams (45 points):** There will be two exams in this course. The first exam will cover units I & II and is worth **20 points**. The second exam will cover units III through VIII and is worth **25 points**. Both exams will cover the assigned readings, class discussions/activities, and lecture material and consist of multiple choice questions and take-home essays.

**Extra Credit:** These are the only mechanisms through which you can earn points in this course. **There will be no extra credit opportunities or projects.**

**Incomplete Grades:** No grades of “I” (Incomplete) will be assigned in this course.
There are a total of 100 points in this class—5 points for attendance, 20 points for the term paper, 30 points for the paper section drafts, 20 points for exam 1, and 25 points for exam 2. Grades will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Points Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 – 100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 89.9 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 79.9 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>50 – 69.9 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>49 or fewer points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

UNIVERSITY & INSTRUCTOR POLICIES

Attendance and Make-up Work
I will take attendance for each class period. To receive consideration for make-up work you must either have a sanctioned anticipated situation (e.g., participation in official University functions, court attendance, religious observances, or military duty) or a documented emergency situation (e.g., student illness, injury or death of immediate family member).

- Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.
- If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.
- Students with documented emergency situations must notify the instructor before the missed assignment date by email. The assignment must be made up within one week of the assignment due date. Failure to do so will result in a grade of 0 on the missed assignment.

Make-up work will be allowed only in situations where absences are excused.

Academic Integrity
Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this course. When you place your name on an assignment the instructor will interpret this as your statement that “I have received no unauthorized assistance on this assignment.” Unauthorized assistance includes, but is not limited to: cheating; submitting others’ work as your own work when it is not; submitting work that you submitted in another class, and plagiarism. Violations will be handled according to the UT Tyler Code of Student Conduct and may result in a grade of F. [http://www.uttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8Student%20Conduct%20and%20Discipline.pdf](http://www.uttyler.edu/mopp/documents/8Student%20Conduct%20and%20Discipline.pdf)

Mutual Respect
It is important that we treat one another with respect in this course. Although this class is designed to foster open debate, an atmosphere of mutual respect must also be maintained. Disrespectful behaviors include talking on one’s cell phone during class, arriving late or leaving class early on a consistent basis, text messaging during class, reading newspapers or materials from other courses, using laptops during class, etc. Such behavior will not be tolerated. Students may be asked to leave the class for engaging in such behaviors.

Harassment
Each of us deserves to be treated, and is obligated to treat others, with dignity and respect, regardless of our sex, race, lifestyle, or the beliefs and values that we hold. If anyone (including the professor or your peers) says or does anything in this class that you consider harassment, please contact me (in person or anonymously) or contact the Department of Social Sciences.
Reasonable Accommodations/Disability Services
In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible disability diagnosis such as a chronic disease, learning disorder, head injury or ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment you are encouraged to contact the Student Accessibility and Resources office and schedule an interview with an Accessibility Case Manager. If you are unsure if the above criteria applies to you, but have questions or concerns please contact the SAR office. For more information or to set up an appointment please visit the SAR webpage (http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices/) or the SAR office located in the University Center, Room 3150 or call (903) 566-7079. You may also send an email to saroffice@uttyler.edu

Students’ Rights and Responsibilities
To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies
Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar. Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-mandated Course Drop Policy
Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date). Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Social Security and FERPA Statement
It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

**Emergency Exits and Evacuation**
Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

### TENTATIVE COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>UNIT I. WHAT IS SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aug 24 – 28 (Week 1)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Introduction to the Course and Distinguishing between Facts, Ideas, and Theories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The course syllabus on the class website</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>UNIT II. HOW DO WE CREATE A BETTER SOCIETY?</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aug 31 – Sep 4 (Week 2)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Emile Durkheim and Thorstein Veblen</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Durkheim. 1895. “What is a Social Fact?” Pp. 44-49 in R&amp;B.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Durkheim. 1897. “Anomic Suicide.” Pp. 50-56 in R&amp;B.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Sep 7 (Week 3)** | **No Class: Labor Day Holiday** |

| **Sep 9 & 11 (Week 3)** | **Karl Marx** |
|  | **Readings:** |
|  | Ritzer and Stepnisky. “Karl Marx: From Capitalism to Communism.” Pp. 21-30 in CST. |
|  | Marx. 1844. “Alienated Labor.” Pp. 3-10 in R&B. |

| **Sep 14 – 18 (Week 4)** | **Max Weber** |
|  | **Readings:** |
|  | **Assignment:** |
|  | Assignment 1 due via Blackboard on Thursday, September 17th, by 11:59 p.m. |

| **Sep 21 – 25 (Week 5)** | **Talcott Parsons, Robert Merton, C. Wright Mills, and Ralf Dahrendorf** |
|  | **Readings:** |
|  | Ritzer and Stepnisky. “Contemporary Grand Theories I.” Pp. 72-107 in CST. |
|  | Merton, Robert K. “The Unanticipated Consequences of Social Action.” Pp. 197-204 in R&B. |
|  | Mills, C. Wright. “Culture and Politics.” Pp. 221-226 in R&B. |

| **Sep 28 – Oct 2** | **Marcuse, Harvey, Elias, Habermas, and Giddens** |
### (Week 6)

**Readings:**

**Assignment:**
- Assignment 2 due via Blackboard on Tuesday, September 29th by 11:59 p.m.

- Take home essays for Exam One distributed in-class Wednesday, September 30th

### Oct 5 (Week 7)

- Catch-up and Review for Exam One

### Oct 7 (Week 7)

- Exam One

### UNIT III. WHO ARE YOU AND HOW DO YOU KNOW?

#### Oct 9, 12, & 14 (Weeks 7 - 8)

**Readings:**
- Simmel and Mead
- Ritzer and Stepnisky. “George Herbert Mead: Social Behaviorism.” Pp. 57-64 in CST.

### Oct 16 & 19 (Week 8 - 9)

**Readings:**
- Goffman and Garfinkel
- Ritzer and Stepnisky. “Contemporary Theories of Everyday Life.” Pp. 139-172 in CST.

### Oct 21 & 23 (Week 9)

- No Classes: Dr. Head Out of Town; use this time to work on your theory section draft due October 25th

### UNIT IV. HOW DO SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND INSTITUTIONS AFFECT EVERYDAY LIFE?

#### Oct 26 – 30 (Week 10)

**Readings:**
- Emerson, Giddens, and Bourdieu

**Assignment:**
- Assignment 3 due via Blackboard on Sunday, October 25th by 11:59 p.m.

### UNIT V. AND WHAT ABOUT RACE?

#### Nov 2 – 6 (Week 11)

**Readings:**
- W.E.B. Du Bois and Omi & Winant

### UNIT VI. AND WHAT ABOUT WOMEN?

#### Nov 9 – 13 (Week 12)

**Readings:**
- West & Zimmerman and Connell

**Assignment:**
- Assignment 4 due via Blackboard on Monday, November 9th by 11:59 p.m.

### UNIT VII. WHAT IS A POSTMODERN SOCIETY?

#### Nov 16 – 20 (Week 13)

**Readings:**
- Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard
- Ritzer and Stepnisky. “Postmodern Grand Theories.” Pp. 231-270 in CST.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Events</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 23 – 27</td>
<td>No Classes: Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Week 14)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 30 – Dec 4</td>
<td>Giddens, Beck, Bauman, Huntington, Ritzer, Wallerstein, and Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Week 15)</td>
<td>Readings:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assignment:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Take home essays for Exam Two distributed in-class Monday, November 30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 9 or 11</td>
<td>Exam Two from # – # in our regularly scheduled classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Week 16)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TERM PAPER INSTRUCTIONS

Write an essay of 10-15 pages on any social problem that is important to you. Start generating paper ideas now by keeping an eye on world events and your life and applying sociological concepts and theories to what you observe. Examples of general paper topics include racism on campus or in sports or the media’s portrayal of women. The problem that you choose to analyze needs to be fairly specific and well-defined. “The environment,” for example, would not make a good paper topic because it is too general. “Recycling on campus” is better.

Your paper should include the following sections. Each section should have a clear heading in the body of your paper.

- **Introduction and Background.** Use the introduction of your essay to engage your reader’s interest in the problem or question that you have selected. Show your reader what makes the problem or question both significant and problematic.

- **Theory.** The body of your essay should analyze the problem or question using sociological theories and concepts. Summarize the theoretical approach you will use, including its key concepts.

- **Findings.** Present research findings from at least one scholarly source that addresses your topic using the theory you have selected.

- **Conclusion.** Write a conclusion for your paper that proposes a solution to the problem based on sociological theory and evidence. Your task is to be as persuasive as possible through appropriate analysis and argumentation.

- **References.** It is absolutely essential that you acknowledge ideas, specific figures, and dates that are taken from other sources. Be sure that in addition to citing your sources in the text, you **include a references page with your paper.** Follow the American Sociological Association style guidelines described at [THIS](#) website. Your essay must cite a minimum of five scholarly readings.
  - 1-2 of your citations must come from *Social Theory: Roots & Branches.*
  - 1 source must be a scholarly chapter or article providing background information on your topic.
  - 1 source should be a peer-reviewed journal article that includes a methods and results section.
  - The other 1-2 sources should be scholarly articles or book chapters as well.

Scholarly journal articles are articles that have been through a peer review process. Scholarly books are typically published by university publishers. If you are unsure if your sources are scholarly, check with me. Your textbook (*Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots*) will not count as a scholarly citation. **The references page will not be included in your total page count.**

Your essay should be 10-15 pages, with 12 point Times New Roman font or something similar and 1-inch margins.
To help you through the process of writing a theory-driven paper, you will have section drafts due throughout the semester. My intention is to provide you guidance and/or feedback on each section of your paper so your final paper is of high quality. Taken together, these assignments count for 30% of your grade. Assignment instructions, due dates, and point values are detailed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Instructions</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1: Topic Paragraph</td>
<td>Turn in a brief write-up that includes: (1) the problem you have selected (i.e., your research question), (2) the theory you have selected to help you answer the question, and (3) your 1-2 sentence answer to your research question (i.e., your thesis statement).</td>
<td>9/17/15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2: Findings Draft</td>
<td>Find one article that addresses your research question using the theory you have selected. Write a summary of the findings from this article, including the data used, measures, analytic strategy, and the findings. Include a reference page with a complete citation for the article.</td>
<td>9/29/15</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 3: Theory Draft</td>
<td>Write a draft of the theory section of your paper. You should begin by summarizing the key concepts of the theory. Next, discuss how you think these concepts are relevant to your research question. Be sure to use in-text citations and provide a reference page with complete citations.</td>
<td>10/25/15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 4: Conclusion Draft</td>
<td>Turn in a rough draft of your conclusion section. The conclusion should revisit the problem and why it is important. It should also outline the key concepts of the theory and how it applies to the problem. Finally, propose a solution to the problem based on sociological theory and the evidence you discuss in the findings section.</td>
<td>11/09/15</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: All assignments are due on the date listed via Blackboard by 11:59 p.m.
GRADING RUBRIC

Quality of Ideas (7.5 points)
- Range and depth of argument
- Logic of argument
- Quality of research or original thought
- Appropriate sense of complexity of the topic
- Appropriate awareness of opposing views

Organization and Development (7.5 points)
- Effective title
- Clarity of thesis statement
- Logical and clear arrangement of ideas
- Effective use of transitions
- Unity and coherence of paragraphs
- Good development of ideas through supporting details and evidence

Clarity, Style, Sentence Structure and Mechanics (5 points)
- Ease of readability
- Appropriate voice, tone and style for assignment
- Clarity of sentence structure
- Gracefulness of sentence structure
- Absence of run-ons and fragments
- Absence of grammatical errors
- Accurate spelling
- Careful proofreading