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Please use the e-mail function in D2L to contact me!

IMPORTANT!!!
I EXPECT STUDENTS TO READ THE SYLLABUS IN ITS ENTIRETY!

Syllabus
SOC 3300/02, CRN# 80305
Foundations of Social Theory
Kennesaw State University
Fall 2014
11:00am-1:45pm - SS Bldg 3007

This course provides an introduction to social theory by discussing the main ideas of 19th century influential social thinkers in historical context and by explaining how these are relevant to contemporary social realities. The first two parts of the course covers the major ideas of classic social thinkers such as Emile Durkheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber exploring how they viewed society's grand transition from the agricultural stage to the industrial-modern times. The latter part of the course presents the main sociological perspectives of the 20th century and how they relate to the ideas of the founding fathers of Sociology. Fundamental questions in this course include: "How is society possible?" and "What are the consequences of social organization for individuals and groups?" The readings may include language and ideas that you might find challenging at times. However, keep in mind that the critical thinking skills you will develop by accepting this challenge will serve you well not only in college or your future career but also in understanding and successfully managing life itself.

Required Text:

📖 Randall Collins, Michael Makowski. *The Discovery of Society, 8th edition*. McGraw Hill.

📖 Other articles/hand-outs listed will be available online, in D2L.

📖 OPTIONAL: William R. Catton, Jr. *Bottleneck: Humanity's Impending Impasse*

Course Objectives:

- Examine the development of main ideas in social theory.
- Summarize the importance of studying and understanding social theory.
- Critically examine and interpret the original writings of major social theorists.

* The best way to reach me is via the e-mail function in D2L.

- Analyze contemporary social phenomena using social theory.
- Identify at least eight classical and contemporary leading social theorists and a prominent theory of each.

Course Guidelines

D2L. This course requires use of D2L. You will begin by logging in here:

<https://kennesaw.view.usg.edu/>

Learning how to effectively use this tool will be addressed during the first week of class.

D2L may be used for announcements, assignments, etc. You will also be able to check grades, communicate with fellow classmates, access additional links to articles and communicate with me through e-mail. You should be checking D2L at least twice a week to stay current. I do not recommend using my university e-mail as your message may get mixed with those of students in other classes I teach!

Readings. You are responsible for reading all of the assigned material each week, BEFORE class discussion. I strongly encourage all students to have ALL readings for the week completely covered before Tuesday's class. Most of your readings will come from Randall Collins's book which has relatively dense, intellectually demanding chapters. Other hands-outs, often excerpts from a theorist's original works, may be uploaded in D2L as PDF files for some chapters - so make sure you check under Content to cover all readings for the week. Because these are not necessarily easy, light reads, I recommend you do not rush through them and take your time with every line. When reading the assigned chapters and material, per schedule below, ask yourself:

- What are the main issue(s), main conclusion(s), and reason(s) for these conclusions?
- What was the social, political, and cultural climate of the time? What are the historical links/connections?
- What do I know about the author? Are there any fallacies in the author's reasoning?
- How strong is the evidence? Any significant gaps?
- Are there any other reasonable conclusions? What should I ask the instructor or the discussion leaders on the board?

Taking notes during class.

During class, I expect all students to **take notes** based on lectures and/or class dialogue. This is because some of the concepts discussed, though not directly related to the readings, may not be specifically or explicitly mentioned in the book. Therefore you need to pay attention to what is being presented in class, all while jotting down key information.

I will upload my Ppt lecture notes in D2L for you as well.

Course Requirements

1. Exams (Midterm 35% and Final 40%).

There will be two take-home exams in this course which students will take in D2L. Exams will be essentially open book and students will be able to take them wherever they can log on to a high-speed computer. However, study, preparation and prior class attendance will be absolutely necessary because the exams are *timed* and the clock starts as soon as you begin, so there will not be time to look up answers. You must be prepared in advance to do well on the tests.

The exams will have approximately 40-50 questions (multiple-choice format and short answer) with an allotted time of 75 minutes (the usual class time). The questions asked in exams will primarily cover the major issues and concepts covered in the text and in class.

2. “Real World” Group Discussions (20%)

Each student will be assigned to a discussion group no later than the time when the Drop/Add period ends. Watch for an updated Syllabus in D2L within the next week!

Each week discussion groups will have the task of choosing a relatively current article or video (short documentary/ news piece / article etc.) from a reputable news source. Good choices can be New York Times, Newsweek, Time Magazine, US News, World Report, etc. Avoid sources such as Yahoo or other sites that typically have simplistic, poorly written pieces. This piece will have to reflect in some ways the main ideas of a theorist or theory we covered the previous week. There are two components to this assignment:

- 1) The paper. As a group (co-authors) you will write a response paper that will address the following:
 - A brief summary of your article or newspiece.
 - An explanation of how the theories / ideas we learned last week are relevant to the topic of the article.
 - How you can use the theories we covered to make sense of what is reflected in the piece you chose; include any connections you were able to make between the theory and the “real world” situation you are addressing.
 - A commentary of how you think the theorist(s) in question would have reacted to the social phenomena described in the article, had they been alive today.
 - Any other analytical and critical insight you may care to bring.

Formatting:

Approximately 5-7 pages.

Double-spaced

1 inch margins
Times New Roman 12 pt size font
Include ALL your names in the header of the document.
Include a reference page if you include in your paper and scholarly references.

Submission: You will submit this paper in D2L via Dropbox.

- 2) The in-class presentation. As a group you will present in class the piece you chose and the ideas in your paper. You will also designate one student in your group who will post the article in D2L via an electronic link or an uploaded document, so that your classmates will have the time to read it in advance, before class. Your article should be posted at least one day prior to the presentation date.

The in-class discussion will take the form of a panel in which you will be expected to engage in dialogue with your group mates, take questions from the class and provide answers. Groups that show an ability to engage in critical dialogue will be especially likely to receive a high grade on this assessment.

By critical dialogue I mean the ability to engage in a conversation in which you might disagree with your conversation partner without attacking the person in question. When critiquing a certain point of view, the arguments must be sound, well-reasoned (or based on evidence) and respectful.

You will have around 20 minutes to present as a group.

Responsibilities of group members:

- Contact your classmates in advance to decide on the article/piece to choose.
- Meet in person to establish authorship responsibilities.
- Edit THE ENTIRE paper (not just your own section) to ensure the paper is cohesive and has an overall message, as opposed to disparate pieces that each student wrote on his/her own without signs of collaboration. Submit any edits to your colleagues for approval.
- AVOID being the group slacker or “free rider” by letting the others do most of the substantive work. These things have a way of leaking out. While there will be one grade for the overall paper, itself, each student will receive an individual grade for this assignment which will be a combination of the paper and how they presented in class.

3. Class Participation (5%) Participation represents a significant portion of your grade. This can only be accomplished by reading the assigned material BEFORE class to become familiar with the topic for discussion.

During lectures, I will often ask questions in order to draw your attention to key concepts. The purpose of these questions will not be to test you, but rather to engage the class in

dialogue and make you think through the theoretical concepts in the lecture in “real world” terms.

Those who volunteer to answer questions in class or add comments - regardless of whether the answers or comments are “correct” or “incorrect” - will be more likely to receive the maximum participation grade. Likewise, interacting in class with the discussions panels (see above class requirement), will contribute to class discussions in a meaningful way and will help to maximize your participation grade.

Because instructors often teach many relatively large classes, they may have a hard time associating all names with the correct faces during the semester. Therefore, I would appreciate it if everyone could upload a picture of themselves (any sort of picture) in D2L, under Profile. More instructions about the actual place to upload will be provided during the first week of class. The picture will help the instructor make the correct decision on the Participation grade at the end of the semester.

OPTIONAL Extra-Credit (maximum of 4 points added to your Final Grade)

I will offer only one extra-credit opportunity for those of you who will want to excel in this class. The assignment will consist of reading a book titled “**Bottleneck: Humanity’s Impending Impasse**” by **William R. Catton, Jr.**, which is highly relevant to our topic The Ecological Perspective. At the end of the semester (see schedule for due date) you will post on the Discussion board in D2L a 2-3 page response paper for Catton’s book. You will also use the conclusions you drew from reading the book to participate in class when we cover the Ecological Perspective topic. You will have to demonstrate in your response paper and your class participation that you both read and understood the book and its overall message.

You are strongly advised to start reading this book from the mid part of the semester so you will have enough time to digest it over the next 15 weeks. Realizing that you need extra points to your Final Grade at the last minute and starting to read the book a night before the extra-credit assignment is due will not work in this case. I warn you that this is not an easy, “fluffy”, intuitive read but rather a sociological masterpiece, highly relevant to what is happening to all of us around the globe today!.

Although the entire class will have a small portion of this book as mandatory reading for Nov 22 (PDF file will be uploaded in D2L), this book in its entirety is an **optional** assignment and it will be the only extra-credit opportunity available in this class. It will add a maximum of 5 points to your final grade.

Summary of Course Requirements

- **Midterm (35%): – Take-home in D2L**
- **Final (40%): Take-home, in D2L**
- **“Real World” Assignment 20%**

- **Participation (5%)**
- **Extra-Credit Paper (max 4 points)**

Final Grade Formula:

FINAL GRADE = 35% x Midterm + 40% x Final + 20% x “Real World” Discussion Group + 5% x Participation + Optional Extra Credit = FINAL

Grading Scale: 100-90 = A; 89-80 = B; 79-70 = C; 69-60 = D; 59 and below = F

Academic Citizenship and Classroom Behavior

I expect students to take responsibility for their own learning and their own learning environments. I expect students to come to class prepared to take part in and facilitate class discussion and to support assertions and theories with evidence from reading and research. Most of you already know and adhere to the basic rules of civility below, but for those of you who have managed to get by without following these basic rules to date:

- Laptops are welcome for note taking, however, instant messaging and web surfing while in class are not. Please do not be rude to the instructor and your fellow classmates by engaging in these activities while class is in session. Violation will result in the banning of all laptops in class.
- Profanity, degradation of specific individuals or groups, and a hostile tone of voice are not acceptable. DO differentiate between critiquing an idea, which is not only fine but encouraged, and ad-hominem attacks - which means attacking the person who expressed the point of view you disagree with.
- No writing assignment or post in D2L should contain overly colloquial speech, grammar errors or generally sloppy language. For example, I consider language along the lines of “I have this 4 U” to be a perfectly legitimate reason to subtract points from your Final Grade. In general, I expect students to attempt to speak and write clearly, correctly, cohesively and eloquently (no, this does not mean “being pretentious”) and to behave in a respectful and dignified manner.
- **Academic Honesty Policy.** I expect you to conform to the rules listed in the undergraduate catalog related to the Student Code of Conduct, which includes the University’s policy on academic honesty and more specifically plagiarism and cheating. Please familiarize yourself with this section of the Undergraduate Catalog. Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an “F” on the assignment – no exceptions! It is your responsibility to know and understand what constitutes plagiarism. Check out: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gC2ew6qLa8U> .

The KSU Writing Center - is a free service offered to all KSU students. Experienced, friendly writing assistants work with you on thesis development, organization, research documentation, grammar, mechanics, and more. They help you improve your papers AND teach you strategies to become a better writer on your own. For more information

or to make an appointment, visit <http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter>, or stop by Room 242 in the English Building.

Special Accommodations Notice - In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for an accommodation. It is imperative that YOU take the initiative to bring such needs to my attention, as I am not legally permitted to inquire about such particular needs of students.

SUGGESTED SCHEDULE
SOCI 3300
Fall 2013

W #	Date	Topic	Readings
MODULE A: CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: The Founding Fathers			
01	Aug 19 Aug 21	Introduction to Course, Syllabus, D2L The Sociological Imagination	Introduction Society and Illusion pag. 1-14
02	Aug 26 - Aug 28 wk	Saint-Simon and Comte - The Prophets of Paris Enlightenment - Class Activity	Chapter 1 Ppt in D2L
03	Sep 2-4 wk Sep 2	Emile Durkheim: Solidarity “Real World” Group Discussion: Group 1 (Enlightenment, Prophets)	Chapter 6
04	Sep 9-11 wk Sep 9	Karl Marx: Class Struggle Real World” Group Discussion: Group 2 (Durkheim)	Chapter 2
05	Sep 16-18 wk Sep 16	Max Weber: The Disenchantment of the World “Real World” Group Discussion: Group 3 (Marx)	Chapter 7
06	Sep 23-25 Sep 23	Module Review: Transition to Modernity “Real World” Group Discussion: Group 4 (Weber)	PDF file - hand-out

	Sep 25	Take-home MID-TERM (to be taken in D2L)	
MODULE B: CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY: Expanding the Foundation			
07	Sept 30-Oct 2 wk	The Evolutionary Perspective Spencer, Darwin and Sociobiology	Chapter 5
08	Oct 7-9 wk Oct 7	The Political Perspective: Democracy and Individualism Tocqueville “Real World” Group Discussion: Group 5 (Evolutionary Perspective)	Chapter 3 Chapter 4
9	Oct 14-16 wk Oct 14	The Psychological Perspective: Freud “Real World” Group Discussion: Group 6 (Toqueville)	Chapter 8
MODULE C: 20th CENTURY SOCIOLOGICAL TRADITIONS			
MACRO SOCIOLOGY			
10	Oct 21-23 wk Oct 21	STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONALIST THEORY: Life is With People! From Durkheim to Parsons “Real World” Group Discussion: Group 7 (Freud)	Chapter 12

	Nov 24-28wk	Fall Break	
	Dec 2	SUMMARY OF THEORETICAL PARADIGMS / Recap Course Evaluations	
	Dec. 5	Take home FINAL EXAM (In D2L)	
	Dec 8	Extra-Credit Assignment due in D2L	Hand-out
Under no circumstances will Final Exam “Make-Ups” be allowed after Dec 5th.			

THE INSTRUCTOR RESERVES THE RIGHT TO BRING ANY NECESSARY MODIFICATIONS TO THIS SYLLABUS AT ANY POINT DURING THE SEMESTER.