

Social Theory & Structure

Last Updated: Tue, 12/16/2025

Course prefix: HTS

Course number: 3102

Section: a

CRN (you may add up to five):
35005

Instructor First Name: Yaqi

Instructor Last Name: Yuan

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

This class introduces students to both classical and contemporary sociological theories. It focuses on several theorists who have had a profound impact on contemporary sociological research – their lives, times, and ideas. The course thus introduces many enduring themes of sociology: alienation and anomie; social structure and disorganization; group conflict and solidarity; secularization and individualism; bureaucracy and institutions, the division of labor, capitalism, and the nature of authority. Students will learn the key concepts of major theoretical approaches in sociology and will consider questions such as the relationship between theory and research, and the relationship of social conditions to the production of knowledge.

Course learning outcomes:

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

...demonstrate a basic understanding of the main concepts of the major classical sociological theorists and some from the contemporary era.

... demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence social behavior.

...interpret and develop an understanding of theoretical texts and arguments, and to articulate and communicate these ideas in simple and effective ways.

... think critically and creatively about sociological theories. For instance, students should be able to use, apply, assess, and evaluate the concepts of sociological theorists from both the classical and contemporary era to think about and inquire into contemporary social life.

Required course materials:

Edles, Laura Desfor and Scott Appelrouth. 2021. Sociological Theory in the Classical Era: Text and Readings. Edition 4. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Grading policy:

1. Class Preparation and Participation (20%)
2. Exams (Exam1-25%; Exam2-25%)
3. Tour Guide for Theorists Project (30%) Total: 100%

Attendance policy:

Regular attendance is essential for your success in this course. Much of our learning will take place through in-class discussion, group activities, case analyses, and applied exercises that cannot be replicated outside of class.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area. Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals. This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question: How do I understand human experiences and connections? Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome: • Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change. Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies: • Intercultural Competence • Perspective-Taking • Persuasion