

CLASSICAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY	
SOC 210 – 11362- Spring 2024 Thursday 5:00 – 7:00 PM Room: SJH 109A (447)	Professor: Roberta Villalón, Ph.D. Email: villalor@stjohns.edu Student hours: MON & THU 1:45 -3:15 PM Office: St. John Hall 444I Webex Personal Room: https://sju.webex.com/meet/villalor

COURSE DESCRIPTION

As a social science, the discipline of sociology has had a responsibility to the academy and, most importantly, to the world: to create explanations to bring us closer to understanding how individuals, institutions, structures, and societies are related to one another with the goal of improving the living conditions of all human beings. From its formal inception as a social science in Western Europe, to its current breadth and depth in both the Global South and Global North, sociology has kept the development of theory at its core. Contemporary scholars have built on what became labeled as classical theories as well as other early writings and created new frameworks to address social issues that had been left unattended because they had not yet emerged or been identified as significant in the past.

In this course, we will take a journey through the origins of sociological theorizing, including the traditionally identified work of “the classics” as well as the writings from authors who did not make it to the classical canon but contributed greatly to the development of our sociological understanding of the world. While we will pay attention to the theories, we will also think about the contexts in which they were developed and how ideologies, paradigms and worldviews shaped their epistemology and applicability.

Designed as a graduate seminar, this course requires its students to be highly responsible readers and writers, critical thinkers, and active participants throughout the semester. The depth of our learning will depend on each of our individual as well as collective engagement with the material and assignments. I count on you, and trust that by the end of this course, you will have a solid grasp of the essential pillars of sociology as a discipline and be able to fully appreciate the value that theory has as the foundation of all social research.

GOALS

This is one of the required courses for the completion of your MA in Sociology. This course contributes to the goals and outcomes of your graduate education as students are expected to meet Goal I of the MA program, that is, to “demonstrate advanced knowledge of key theorists and concepts in the discipline of sociology;” with the objective of “applying sociological concepts and theories to analyze social issues.”

ASSESSMENT

Your performance in this seminar will be evaluated and will contribute to your final grade as follows:

Journal entries & class participation (<i>5 each</i>)	45
Book club project	
In-class workshop participation (<i>5 per session</i>)	15
Final paper	35
Oral presentation	5
Total	100

*** Late submissions will be penalized**

Final Letter Grade Breakdown

100–96 = A
95-91 = A-
90-86 = B+
86-81 = B
80-76 = B-
75-71 = C+
70-66 = C
65 or less = F

STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All students are expected to respect the **Academic Honor Pledge** (<http://www.stjohns.edu/academics/provost/excellence/integrity>) of St. John’s University.

Students who violate these rules will be subject to the **Judicial Process for Violations of the Academic Honor Code** (<http://www.stjohns.edu/campus/handbook/chapter6/regulations/discipline.sju>).

ACCOMMODATIONS

Academic accommodations will be made to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to succeed in this class.

Any student requiring academic accommodations should contact the Department of Student Life Services.

For further reference, visit <http://www.stjohns.edu/campus/handbook/chapter6/disabilities.sju>

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Calhoun, C., Gerteis, J., Moody J., Pfaff, S. and Indermohan, V. (Eds.) 2012. *Classical Sociological Theory*. 3rd Edition. West Sussex, United Kingdom: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Lengermann, P. and Niebrugge, G. 1998. *The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory 1830-1930 A Text/Reader*. Long Grove, Illinois: Waveland Press.
- Journal of Classical Sociology – Special Issue: Symposium on Colonialism and Modern Social Theory (November 2022) – available through St. John’s University Libraries (<https://journals-sagepub-com.jerome.stjohns.edu/toc/jcsa/22/4>).
- Connell, R. W. (1997). Why Is Classical Theory Classical? *American Journal of Sociology*, 102(6), 1511–1557. <https://doi.org/10.1086/231125> [available through St. John’s University Libraries]
- *And additional required readings that will be available on Canvas and/or SJU Libraries*

UNITS OF INSTRUCTION, READINGS, ASSIGNMENTS

Date	Unit of Instruction	Readings	Assignment
1/18 & 1/25*	Unit 1 - Introduction to the course: What is theory to sociology and how to put it in practice? Unit 2 - The creation of sociology as a social science and the making of the classical cannon	Syllabus Calhoun, Introduction Connell – Southern Theories (Ch. 1) [CANVAS] Bhambra & Holmwood– Editorial Special Issue Edwards – Special Issue Lengermann & Niebrugge (L&N) – Ch. 1	Journal entry # 1 (1/25)
2/1	Unit 3 – Marx & Engels	In Calhoun – Part III Smith – Special Issue	Journal entry # 2
2/8	Unit 4 – Martineau & Addams	In L&N – Ch. 2 & Ch. 3	Journal entry # 3
2/15	Unit 5 – Durkheim	In Calhoun – Part IV Dawson – Special Issue	Journal entry # 4
2/22	Unit 6 – Max Weber	In Calhoun – Part V Farris – Special Issue	Journal entry # 5
2/29	<i>No class</i>		
3/7	Unit 7 – Gilman & Marianne Weber & the Chicago Women’s School of Sociology	In L&N – Ch. 4 & Ch. 6 & Ch. 7	Journal entry # 6
3/14	Unit 8 – Du Bois, Cooper & Wells-Barnett	Du Bois in Calhoun (pp. 404-410) and in [CANVAS] L&N – Ch. 5	Journal entry # 7

		Meer – Special Issue	
3/21	Unit 9 – Lukacs, Gramsci, Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse	<i>Marcuse in Calhoun – Part VII</i> <i>Lukacs and Gramsci in [Canvas]</i>	Journal entry # 8
<i>3/28</i>	<i>No class</i>		
4/4, 4/11, 4/18	Unit 10 – Going in depth	Full texts selected by “book clubs” to be workshopped in class	Book club participation
4/25	Unit 11 – Synthesis of early sociological writings and a look ahead into contemporary theories	L&N – Epilogue Connell – Decolonizing Sociology & Ch. 10 [CANVAS] Ehrmann – Special Issue Go – Postcolonial thought and social theory – Introduction [CANVAS] Patel – Anticolonial thought & global social theory [CANVAS]	Journal entry # 9
5/2	Final book club project and oral presentation due		

***Students may opt to swap the first date of Unit 10 for:**

<i>Unit 10* – Cooley, Mead, Dewey, Simmel, Freud, Husserl, Schutz</i>	<i>Mead, Simmel, and Freud in Calhoun – Part VI</i> <i>Dewey, Cooley, Freud, Schutz in [CANVAS]</i>
---	--

Decisions to swap will be made on 1/18