**Sociology 3900 -- Sociological Theory**

Spring 2019

Prof. Malcolm Holmes

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Office Hours: Monday 11:00 -12:00, Wednesday 3:15 - 4:15, Friday 11:00 - 12:00 and by appt.

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***Overview***:

This course focuses primarily on the classical tradition of sociological theory. Sociological theorists and theories come and go, and comparatively few are influential for more than a few decades. Among the early sociologists, the contributions of Spencer, Marx, Weber, Simmel, Durkheim, and Mead remain critical to the discipline. These classical theorists identified and developed ideas that define the scope of sociology today. We will discuss the historical development of sociology in the context of these theoretical perspectives, as well as examining the structure of the theories with respect to their logical forms, strengths and limitations.

***Textbook***:

Jonathan A. Turner, Leonard Beeghley, and Charles H. Powers, *The Emergence of Sociological Theory* (7th edition), Sage Publications.

***Course Requirements****:*

*General requirements -* Assigned reading must be done *before* class. Lectures

and discussions will build on the assigned reading, and I expect that you will be familiar with the material covered in it. You cannot expect to succeed in this course

unless you read carefully and take good lecture notes. If you miss a class, be sure to get

the lecture notes from another student.

*Exams* -- Students are required to complete four (4) essay exams (total of 350 points). Each will require that you answer two of three short essay questions and one of two longer essay questions.

Students may use their reading and lecture notes during the exam. You will be required to maintain ***a separate notebook for this course, which must contain only your handwritten notes***. You may not use typed notes, and you may not copy any material from the text or any other source to include in the notebook. You must turn in the notebook with your exam. If there is any material other than your handwritten notes in the notebook, you may receive a significant grade reduction for the exam. ***If any section of an exam answer is written verbatim from the textbook, the student may receive a grade of zero for that exam.***

*Attendance* - There is an attendance component to your grade (50 points). Class attendance is ***mandatory*** (see University attendance policy below). You may be counted as absent if you arrive late, leave early, or leave for part of a class for any non-emergency. Each student is permitted three attendance violations without penalty; the fourth will result in a 10-point reduction in the participation grade, and the fifth and sixth will each result in a 20-point reduction.

Students with *unexcused* absences will receive a grade of zero on missed exams

(see University attendance policy below). Students with *excused* absences for a missed

exam will be given the opportunity to take an essay makeup exam of comparable

difficulty.

*Classroom deportment -* It is the responsibility of the individual student to behave appropriately for the intellectual environment of the class. Disruptive behavior (e.g. talking, cell phone activity, Internet use, arriving late, leaving early, packing up before the end of class, and/or other inappropriate behavior) is a violation of University regulations and will not be tolerated. I expect all students to be familiar with the University’s *Code of Conduct* (<http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct/>).In my experience, cell phone activity is particularly distracting. Not only does it detract from the individual student’s learning, but it distracts one’s neighbors.

*Electronics use* - **Any use of electronic devices of any kind is strictly prohibited.** These devices (including cell phones and tape recorders) ***must*** be kept in your backpack, purse, etc. ***Inappropriate or prohibited use of electronic devices will be sanctioned as a violation of the classroom deportment policy.***

***The use of electronic devices (including but not limited to cellular telephones, computers, digital cameras, stand-alone video cameras, Internet-accessible webcams, video recorders, audio recorders) to transmit/record images and/or lecture/discussions/conversations during class without explicit permission and acknowledgement of all parties is prohibited.***

***Grade Determination***:

Your final grade will be decided by your performance on the various requirements as

follows:

Exam 1 – 50 points

Exams 2 thru 4 – 100 points each

Attendance – 50 points

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Total Points = 400

***Grade Scale****:*

Final grades will be determined using the following scale:

A = 93 – 100% B- = 80 – 82 F = < 60

1. = 90 – 92 C+ = 77 – 79

B+ = 87 – 89 C = 70 – 76

B = 83 – 86 D = 60 – 69

***Course Schedule:****\**

**Date Topics and Assigned Readings**

1/28 Introduction to course

1/30 - 1/1 European roots of classical theory – Ch. 1

2/4 - 2/6 The Enlightenment & Comte – Ch. 2 pp. 19-22, 34-36; Ch. 3

2/8 – 2/13 Herbert Spencer’s scientific vision – Ch. 4; Ch. 5 pp. 67-88,

102-109

2/15 Exam 1

2/18 – 2/27 Marx’s confrontation with early capitalism – Ch. 6 pp. 111-118,

127-140; ch. 7

3/1 – 3/11 Weber on social science and social order – Ch. 8 pp. 181-190;

Ch. 9

3/13 Exam 2

3/15 TBD

3/18 – 3/22 Spring break

3/25 – 4/1 Simmel on the nature of social groups – Ch. 10 pp. 247-254, 257-

260; Ch.11

3/3 – 4/15 Durkheim’s functional analysis of societies – Ch. 12 pp. 297-302,

313-325; Ch. 13

4/17 Exam 3

4/19 – 4/22 Emergence of American sociology – Ritzer & Stepnisky, Ch. 2 pp.

41-54 (WyoCourses file)

4/24 – 5/3 Mead on human interaction – Ch. 14 pp. 369-379, 386-393; Ch. 15

pp. 395-423

5/ 6 – 5/10 Varieties of contemporary theory – Ritzer & Stepnisky, Ch. 2 pp.

54-78 (WyoCourses file)

5/13, 10:15 – 12:15 Final exam

\*Although every effort will be made to conform to the course schedule, it is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and on WyoCourses.

***Course Policies and Procedures:***

This course will be conducted and governed in accordance with all applicable University of Wyoming regulations.

***University Attendance Policy:***

Students are required to attend class by University Regulation. Generally, students who miss a class and wish to be excused must present either an excuse from the Dean of Students (http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/studentassistance/authorized-absence.html) or a medical excuse. Medical excuses must be issued by the Student Health Service or a private physician and indicate that the student was directed to stay at her or his place of residence because of illness or injury.

***Academic Policy:***

The University of Wyoming is built upon a strong foundation of integrity, respect and trust. All members of the university community have a responsibility to be honest and the right to expect honesty from others. Any form of academic dishonesty is unacceptable to our community and will not be tolerated. Suspected violations of standards of academic honesty should be reported to the instructor, department head, or dean. Cases of academic dishonesty will be treated in accordance with UW Regulation 2-114. ***Students will, at a minimum, receive a grade of zero (0) on any assignment in which academic dishonesty has occurred.***

***Diversity Policy:***

The University of Wyoming values an educational environment that is diverse, equitable, and inclusive. The diversity that students and faculty bring to class, including age, country of origin, culture, disability, economic class, ethnicity, gender identity, immigration status, linguistic, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, veteran status, worldview, and other social and cultural diversity is valued, respected, and considered a resource for learning.

***Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination Policy:***

UW faculty are committed to supporting students and upholding the University’s non-discrimination policy. Under Title IX, discrimination based upon sex and gender is prohibited. If you experience an incident of sex- or gender-based discrimination, we encourage you to report it. While you may talk to a faculty member, understand that as a "Responsible Employee" of the University, the faculty member MUST report information you share about the incident to the university’s Title IX Coordinator (you may choose whether you or anyone involved is identified by name). If you would like to speak with someone who may be able to afford you privacy or confidentiality, there are people who can meet with you. Faculty can help direct you or you may find info about UW policy and resources at <http://www.uwyo.edu/reportit>

***Disability Support Policy:***

The University of Wyoming is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you have a disability, including but not limited to physical, learning, sensory or psychological disabilities, and would like to request accommodations in this course due to your disability, please register with and provide documentation of your disability as soon as possible to Disability Support Services (DSS), Room 128 Knight Hall. You may also contact DSS at (307) 766-3073 or [udss@uwyo.edu.](mailto:udss@uwyo.edu) It is in the student’s best interest to request accommodations within the first week of classes, given that accommodations are not retroactive. Visit the DSS website for more information at: [www.uwyo.edu/udss](http://www.uwyo.edu/udss)