

**Department of Sociology
Sociology 2111 WB
Perspectives in Social Thought**

**Jan-April 2017
Wednesday & Friday 10 - 11:30 am
Room: RB 2026**

Dr. Barbara Parker

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Office Hours: Wednesday 11:45-12:45

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to SOC 2111 Perspectives in Social Thought. In this course, we will explore social theory as a means to analyze and explain the complexity of 'everyday' life. Sociological theory is concerned with power at both the macro and micro levels of social life and the questions of agency versus structure. Macro sociological theory focuses on social structures, which can shape the social actions of individuals (for example: capitalism, labour, bureaucracy, migration, education, gender, etc.) whereas micro sociological theory focuses on the individual and interpersonal actions, experiences and behaviours. We will contextualize social theory through the lens of culture and begin from the position that individuals are shaped and constrained by social structures.

This course will introduce you to classical and contemporary sociological theory, and key theorists who have influenced and continue to shape the discipline of Sociology. We begin with classical social theory and investigate the macro theories of functional theorists Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber and Talcott Parsons. This will follow with a close examination of some of the contemporary key micro sociological theories including symbolic interactionism, phenomenology and ethnomethodology. We will cover the ideas of George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer and Erving Goffman, all of whom were concerned with social meanings and social behaviours. Finally, we will examine the contemporary feminist sociological theories of Dorothy Smith and Patricia Hill Collins, and explore the work of Michel Foucault and postmodernism.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Formulate an understanding of foundational sociological theory;
- Explore the development of Sociology as an Academic Discipline and Social Science;

- Develop a critical understanding of key macro and micro social theories;
- Recognize and use social theory to explain everyday life; and
- Expand and develop university-level analytical and writing skills.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Introduction to Sociological Theory: Theorists, Concepts and their Applicability to the Twenty-First Century, 2nd Edition, (2014) by Michele Dillon

* Available in the Bookstore: bookstore.lakeheadu.ca

HOW THE COURSE IS ORGANIZED

This course is offered twice a week on Wednesday and Friday, and requires a total of **3 hours class time per week**. In addition, you can expect to spend a **minimum of 6 hours of study time per week** preparing for class lectures for a **total of 9 hours per week** on this course. Course material will scaffold each week and it is essential you attend each lecture and do not miss class. You are required to independently complete the weekly readings **prior** to the weekly lectures and be prepared to discuss what you have read.

If you have questions, at any time during this course, please visit me in my Office Hours (as listed above) or contact me through email at: barbara.parker@lakeheadu.ca

Please note: I will only respond to emails sent from a Lakehead university email account. When emailing me, please put **SOC 2111 WB** in the Subject Heading. I will do my best to reply to your emails within 24 hours.

CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE: As a courtesy to your peers and the instructor, please turn off or mute all phones and be advised that tablets and laptops are only to be used in the classroom for note-taking purposes.

LEARNING ACCOMODATIONS: Lakehead University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) and register as early as possible. For more information, please visit: <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with what it means to plagiarize the words or ideas of others and your responsibilities as a student at Lakehead University. From the Course Calendar:

<http://navigator.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid=viewcatalog&catalogid=21&c>

Plagiarism shall be deemed to include:

1. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
2. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.
3. Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

(a) The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.

(b) A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

If you have questions, consult the professor.

COURSE EVALUATION

Participation	15%
Response Papers (2 x 10%)	20% (1 due on/before Feb 15; 1 due on/before April 5)
Group Presentation	15%
Mid-term Exam	25% (Friday, February 17 th)
Final Exam	25% (Date set by Registrar)

Please Note: All assignments must be double-spaced using 12 font with 2.54 cm margins.

Please include a title page with the course number/name, title of the assignment, your name, the due date, and the Instructor's name. All written work will be evaluated on content, or your ability to demonstrate your understanding of the material *and* organization, presentation, grammar and clarity. For your own protection, keep a hard copy of all work submitted for this course.

EVALUATION INFORMATION

All assignments and tests will be discussed in class and you will have the opportunity to ask questions about expectations. It is expected that you will reference in ASA style.

1. Participation – 15%

The class participation mark will be based on your attendance, your engagement in class discussions & with group presentations, and your completion of various in-class activities, quizzes, and group work.

2. Response Papers 20% (2 x 10%)

You are required to write two **(2)** Response Papers over the course of the Term. Each Response Paper will cover one chapter from the weekly readings (see the following Weekly Reading Schedule). The paper will be 2-3 pages, double-spaced.

For the first paper, you will select a week (chapter) to respond to from Week 2-5.

For the second paper, you will select a week (chapter) to respond to from Week 8-12.

Due: Each Response Paper is due at the beginning of class on the Wednesday for the week that you are responding too. For example, if you choose to write a paper for Week 3, it will be due on Wednesday Jan 25th. If you choose to write a paper for Week 10, it will be due on Wednesday March 15th.

Please note: The first paper can be handed in any week between Week 2-5, but no later than Wednesday February 15th. The second paper can be handed in any week between 8-12, but no later than Wednesday April 5th.

How to Write a Response Paper

The Response Paper is an opportunity for you to respond to the theory or concept covered in one of the weekly readings. In the first half of the Response Paper, you will briefly synthesize the main points of the theory or concept under focus. In the second half of the Response Paper, you will provide a critical response to the theory or concept by providing an example of the theory or concept at it relates to your own everyday life (your experience, or to something you have read or viewed in the media). The point of the paper is to demonstrate how the theory makes sense to you!

Remember to reference properly, and include a References page in ASA format.

3. Group Presentation – 15%

The Group Presentation will require that you work with your group members (2-3 students per group) to develop and deliver a 12-15 minute presentation based on the chapter for one of the weekly readings between Week 3-12 (see the following weekly Reading Schedule). You are required to hand in a copy of your presentation (ppt slides) and 2-3 page summary paper, double-spaced. Please ensure that group members names are all listed on the paper title page.

Group presentations will be scheduled for the Wednesday class and will begin in Week 3. A presentation sign-up sheet will be available in Week 2.

For the Presentation, group members should aim to:

- 1) Discuss the theorist and their theory, or concepts covered in the Chapter,
- 2) Provide examples from everyday life to describe / explain the theory or concepts,
- 3) Develop a critical response to the theory or concepts (i.e. does the theory explain the aspect of social life under question; what is overlooked or missed by the theory; is the theory still relevant),
- 4) Consider how the theory, concepts or ideas connect with theories from other chapters that we have covered; and
- 5) Develop a minimum of three creative, thought-provoking questions to engage the class in discussion.

Please note: The week you choose for your presentation must be different from the week(s) that you have handed in a Response Paper.

4. Mid-term Exam - 25% **IN-CLASS Friday Feb 17th**

The Mid-term exam will cover all Readings, lectures and course material covered Week 1 through Week 5. Details will be covered in-class before the exam.

5. Final Exam – 25% **Date TBA by the Registrar – Check Exam Schedule**

The Final Exam will cover all Readings, lectures and course material covered from Week 8 onwards, or content covered after the mid-term exam. Details will be discussed in-class prior the exam.

NOTE: The exam will be scheduled by the Registrar and cannot be changed for your personal plans. Do NOT make holiday, travel or departure plans from Thunder Bay until the exam schedule is posted.

READINGS BY WEEK

* Please note that all readings are in the textbook unless otherwise noted

(This schedule of readings may be amended from time to time depending on the pace of the course.)

Week 1 – Jan 11 & 13

Welcome to Sociology 2111

Overview of Course Syllabus

Week 2 – Jan 18 & 20

Introduction: Classical and Contemporary Social Theory with a Timeline and Introduction to Macro and Micro Sociological Theoretical Perspectives

Read: *pages 1-28* Introduction: Welcome to Sociological Theory

Week 3 - Jan 25 & 27

Classical Macro Sociological Theory

Conflict Theory: The Historical and Theoretical Works of Karl Marx

Capitalism as Structured Inequality, Commodification of labour, Ideology and Power

Read: Chapter 1: *pages 31-75*

Week 4 – Feb 1 & 3

Classical Macro Sociological Theory

Emile Durkheim and the Development of Sociology as a Modern Social Science

What knits society together? Social Order and Interdependence, Social Cohesion

Read: Chapter 2: *pages 77-116*

Week 5 – Feb 8 & 10

Classical Macro Sociological Theory

Max Weber: Functionalism & Social Action and Interpretative Sociology

Ideal Types, Rationalization, *Verstehen*: 'Sympathetic Understanding'

Read: Chapter 3: *pages 117-153*

Week 6 – Feb 15 & 17
Mid-term Exam Review
Mid-term Exam (Thursday Feb 17th)

Week 7 - Feb 22 & 24
READING WEEK – NO CLASSES

Week 8 – March 1 & 3
Contemporary Macro Sociological Theory
Structural Functionalism: Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton

The question of order in society, Social Action

Read: Chapter 4: *pages 155-186*

Week 9 - March 8 & 10
Contemporary Micro Sociological Theory
Symbolic Interactionism: The Development of the Self through Social Interaction

George Herbert Mead, Herbert Blumer, Erving Goffman

Read: Chapter 8: *pages 273-299*

Week 10 – March 15 & 17
Contemporary Micro Sociological Theory
Phenomenology & Ethnomethodology: A Case for Interpretive Sociology

Development of human consciousness & self-awareness, Social Constructivism

Read: Chapter 9: *pages 301-325*

Week 11 – March 22 & 24
Feminist Sociology: the Development of Feminist Thought

Dorothy Smith and Patricia Hill Collins on Standpoint Feminist Theory: Importance of Women's Epistemology

Read: Chapter 10: *pages 327-367*

Week 12 – March 29 & 31

Critique of Modernity: The Unleashing of Postmodernity

Michel Foucault: Bodies & Disciplinary Power

Read: Chapter 11: *pages 369-391*

Week 13 – April 5 & 7

Wrap Up & Exam Review