

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

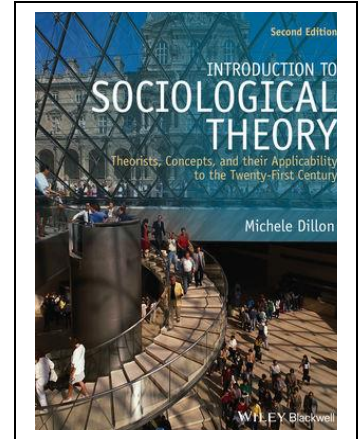
SOCI 3411 WAO
Contemporary Theory

January 6 to April 3, 2020

Course Facilitator: **Kevin Willison**, B.A., M.A., Ph.D.
Instructor's e-mail address: kdwillis@lakeheadu.ca
Credit Weight: 0.5

Room: OA 2019 (500 University Av., Simcoe Hall Building, Orillia campus)

Time: **Tuesdays and Thursdays: 11:30 to 12:50 PM**



Instructor's Office Hours: by appointment (mutually arranged in class and/or by e-mail). Note: it is best not to wait until near the end of term to visit your course instructor.

- Refer to the Instructor's e-mail address above and Dr. Willison's teaching schedule, as posted in D2L for this course.
- Note: for this course there are no bonus assignments nor added tests (for such purposes as enhancing grades).
- This course is cumulative in nature. Regular class attendance is strongly urged.

Instructor's Course Description: This course encourages reflection, engagement and debate on the broad topic of contemporary social and sociological theory, and its relation to modern / post-modern society. We will draw / learn from such theorists as: Alfred Schutz, Peter Berger, Thomas Luckmann, Harold Garfinkel, Talcott Parsons, George H. Mead, Erving Goffman, C.H. Cooley, H. Blumer, Pierre Bourdieu, Viktor Frankl, Robert Merton, Thomas Kuhn, and Jürgen Habermas. How theory is developed and the dynamic (versus static) nature of theory is also considered. Highlighted throughout this course will be a focus on how theories / theorists may help answer "so what" and "now what" questions. We will do so by considering both theoretical as well as practical applications of theory, including consideration of the importance of theory when conducting research.

Course Aims: This course serves as an introduction to contemporary sociological theory. It will place a strong emphasis on what is known as *engaged scholarship*. Overall, we will strive to: [1] draw from varied theories as a way to explain "reality"; [2] think critically about the way in which social structures and social forces determine the way in which the world is perceived and represented; [3] introduce sociology as both an academic as well as practical discipline; and [4] introduce theories as tools / constructs which can help us expand upon our logical thinking and critical reasoning skills. To help reach these course aims class participation / engagement is both expected and encouraged.

Course Organization: This course is organized around classroom discussion, lectures and reflection of the readings and other materials presented. Classroom activities such as group work and student oral presentations are used. All are encouraged to provide input, ask questions and respect the right of others to do so through active listening.

Caution: The term goes quickly! Be sure to keep up with your required readings.

Problems? Don't understand the material? Be sure to ask questions in class and/or talk with the instructor if at any time during the course you feel you need extra help. Don't wait till near the mid-term test or final exam.

Courses Requirements:

Class Participation

Your active participation will be sought in this course as we review the dynamic nature of contemporary sociological theory and how such can help us frame or better understand the world around us. Asking questions, answering questions, and thinking about / reflecting upon what your textbook is conveying will be sought out from the course instructor. To get the most out of this course it is important to come to class prepared. Note: for each one hour of lecture it is strongly recommended that students take one hour to review material on your own. **Regular class attendance is highly recommended as theoretical discussions tend to be cumulative in nature.**

Required Text:

Dillon, Michele (Editor). Introduction to Sociological Theory: Theorists, Concepts, and their Applicability to the Twenty-First Century. Second Edition. Oxford University Press. 2014 - ISBN: 978-1-118-47191-3

- See picture of required text at the top of page one of this course syllabus.
- The required text is available at the Orillia campus bookstore (near cafeteria).
- Be sure to obtain the Canadian edition of your required text.
- **This course will focus primarily on six chapters: 1 / 4 / 5 / 8 / 9 / and 14**

Text Description – from Publisher:

The extensively revised and updated second edition combines carefully chosen primary quotes with wide-ranging discussion and everyday illustrative examples to provide an in-depth introduction to classical and contemporary sociological theory.

TERM - Important Dates: WINTER TERM (2020)

- **Note: As dates may change. please check yourself on the LU website.**

Term TWO at LU - Start Date	Monday January 6
Family Day (No classes)	Monday February 17
Break	No classes Feb. 18-21
Winter Term – Final Class at LU	Friday April 3

SOCI 3411 WAO - Evaluation Strategy:

(Jan. - April 2020)	Grading:	Due / Held:
Test One	15 percent	Jan. 30
Oral Presentation (10 minutes)	5 percent	Feb. 13
Test Two	20 percent	Feb. 27
Academic Essay	15 percent	March 19
Test Three	20 percent	March 26
April 2020 Exam (set by Registrar)	25 percent	TBD
Total:	100 %	100 %

TBD = To Be Determined

Oral Presentation: Each individual student must prepare an in-class ten-minute oral (lecture) presentation (which will be timed). No visual aids / Power-points are allowed. **Purpose:** to help you build skills to verbally articulate social theory. Sample topics: (1) Why you believe “x” theorist is the best (or “out to lunch”); (2) A practical application of “x” theorist’s work; (3) Your essay findings, etc. Note: a grading rubric for this task will be posted / provided in advance.

Academic Paper – Details: * Research and write an original (new) essay. Select a topic relevant to the course and of interest to you. For topic ideas, review your textbook.

* The purpose of this assignment is to determine your understanding of engaged scholarship by bridging this perspective with a (one) real-world (practical) problem and/or application. Make this link clear to your reader using a one-sentence and precise thesis statement (that captures the reader’s attention). Make your thesis known in the first as well as last paragraph. Support your thesis throughout your essay by using relevant literature.

* Discuss your topic and thesis statement *in advance* with the Instructor to help make sure you are on the right track.

* Use APA format. Guidelines for this will be posted in your course shell on Desire2Learn.

* As a useful resource, Lakehead University (Orillia) has a Writing Centre to assist you further if needed.

* Your **essay text** must be **six (full) pages** in length, 12 cpi font, and double-spaced. Use a one-inch page margin. **Not included** as part of the required six pages is: your cover page and cited references (**therefore, a total of 8 pages**).

* Further, cite at least **six different** consulted sources particularly by using scholarly books and/or journal articles for your reference material. Cite the full journal or book reference (**do not** cite the http / https web address).

* Consider using Goggle Scholar to help you find relevant journal articles on your topic.

* Your paper **must** be handed in during the start of the class on the due date – by you, not someone else. Late submissions will be penalized at the rate of **8** marks per day.

* Note: Do not e-mail me your completed assignment. Electronic files or e-mail attachments will not be accepted. Discuss your topic with me in person (not by e-mail).

* Be sure to use your text and other course material to argue/discuss the relevance of a given (one) idea and/or strategy pertinent to your topic. Such material does NOT count as one or more of your required six sources of information.

* Start early on your assignment as good writing usually requires extensive editing. Be sure not to procrastinate as editing done properly is time consuming.

Accommodations / Special Needs:

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 academic activities. If you think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) first. Register as early as possible. For more information, please visit: <http://studentaccessibility.lakeheadu.ca>

Your instructor - Dr. Kevin Willison - has received (on-going) specialized training in AODA (the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Training Act).

Emergency? Know the Number to Call

In case of emergency Security can be reached through any phone on campus, through emergency intercoms in Simcoe Hall and, also in the parking lot. Their direct extension is 2009.

Paramedics, firefighters and police officers do not always know where to find certain buildings or locations on our campuses. By calling ext. 2009 Lakehead Security will quickly dispatch a security guard to your location and contact 911 services. Lakehead Security will then meet and escort emergency services to your location to save valuable time.

Parking: There is a flat fee/day for parking in the Lakehead Orillia lot, \$5/day (there is a kiosk at the entrance of the parking lot in which you would pay (by cash or a credit card) to get a day pass. Parking spaces are on a first come/first served basis, and the lot is monitored by security throughout the day (they do ticket!) Parking is free in the evenings (from 5 PM through to 8 AM).

IT Issues - LU E-mail Accounts and Accessing "Desire2Learn" - D2L

IT (at Lakehead this is called TSC) can be reached through any campus phone by pushing the Helpdesk button. Should TSC related problems arise you may also contact "Help Desk" at **ext. 7777** (on campus) – or tel. 705-330-4008 (then the extension). Only **Help Desk** can assist you with your specific TSC issues and concerns.

General E-mail and Classroom Conduct Guidelines:

[1] Within all e-mail correspondence (not just for this course) it is advisable to follow "the ten commandments of **e-mail netiquette.**"

Please review: <http://www.studygs.net/netiquette.htm>

[2] All e-mail communication sent from students to the instructor for this class must originate from the student's own Lakehead University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a Lakehead University account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply.

[3] Please be sure to identify yourself in your e-mail (not only your name but also what course you are in, as your Instructor teaches more than one course, and has many students). This will help speed up a response. Thank you in advance.

[4] The course instructor may best be reached at: kdwillis@lakeheadu.ca. I will do my best to respond to your e-mail within 8 hours (or less) of receipt (based on e-mails received between 9am – 5 pm, Monday to Friday). Due to teaching, meetings and research related activities please do not expect your instructor to provide an instant / immediate response. * Note: Dr. Kevin Willison's course teaching schedule is posted in your course D2L.

[5] Please be advised that you will may *not* get a response e-mailing the Instructor the night before a test or exam. Please plan ahead.

[6] Please do not expect a quick e-mail response if sending an e-mail to an Instructor on a Saturday or Sunday. On weekends your Instructor may have other obligations.

[7] As per LU policy, your specific grades/marks will not be discussed over the internet / e-mail. Please talk to your instructor directly on such matters. Individual course marks (when ready) can be accessed using your unique course D2L account.

[8] Please refrain from sending e-mails / texting / watching movies etc. during class time. Make use of your class time and computer wisely. Not only is it best to focus on the course material during class, texting or viewing inappropriate material on your computer may bother / disturb others around you, particularly those sitting behind you and/or beside you.

[9] Unless in a group work session, please refrain from talking to others when the instructor is talking, as others around you may have difficulty hearing and/or be disturbed. **Have a question? Please raise your hand until I see you and I will try to respond quickly.**

Missed Tests and/or Exams:

Make-up examinations will only be given with written documentation from a healthcare practitioner using the official Student Health Certificate, available at: <http://registrar.lakeheadu.ca/uploads/docs/F.HealthCertificate.pdf>.

Religious Observance Policy: If you require religious accommodation(s), you must make your request to the instructor preferably within the first two weeks of class.

Course Suggestions or Concerns? Students are asked to speak with their Instructor should there be a suggestion, problem or concern regarding the course which you feel may benefit yourself and/or the class. Feel free at any time to speak to your class Instructor (as he or she may simply be unaware). Further, you are encouraged to ask questions and be engaged (as this often helps the learning process).

Weather: The *Weather Network* is a good site:

<http://www.theweathernetwork.com/weather/caon0506>

- **It is best** to refer to the Lakehead University (Orillia) home page website to check for class cancellations. <http://www.lakeheadu.ca/>

** As a university-level course, **regular class attendance is strongly recommended.**

- Within each section/module as described below, focus on key terms and their interconnections with other terms. For improved comprehension and memory, be sure to review your required text and/or assigned reading(s) regularly (prior to and after attending each class).
- Classroom discussion is encouraged, as will critical thinking and problem-based learning. Review assigned readings (made known in class) in advance.

Section/Module	<u>Sample Topic(s):</u>
Module ONE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Course Requirements & Course Outline. • D2L essentials. <p>Chapter ONE The Dynamic Nature and Purpose of Theory Introduction: Welcome to Sociological Theory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does a discipline acquire theory? (see Appendix 1) • Theory as a social construction • Example approach to utilizing theory (see Appendix 2) • Review of key concepts (see page one of required text) • Text reading: pages 1 to 27
Module TWO	<p>Chapter FOUR – Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added consideration (beyond text): the work of Thomas Kuhn • Review of key concepts (see page 155 of required text) • Text reading: pages 155 to 185 • Primary focus: functionalism and modernization
Module THREE	<p>Chapter FIVE – Jürgen Habermas (and other theorists)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of key concepts (see page 187 of required text) • Text reading: pages 187 to 219. • Primary focus: critical theory
Module FOUR	<p>Chapter Eight – George H. Mead</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erving Goffman / C.H. Cooley / H. Blumer • Link to ethnographic research • Review of key concepts (see page 273 of required text) • Text reading: pages 273 to 299. • Primary focus: symbolic interactionism

Module FIVE	<p>Chapter <u>Nine</u> – Experience, Meaning and Social Action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alfred Schutz / Peter Berger / Thomas Luckmann / Harold Garfinkel • Added consideration (beyond text): the work of Viktor Frankl • Review of key concepts (see page 301 of required text) • Text reading: pages 273 to 299. • Primary focus: phenomenology and ethnomethodology
Module SIX	<p>Chapter <u>Fourteen</u> – Globalization</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anthony Giddens / Immanuel Wallerstein / Leslie Sklair • Review of key concepts (see page 451 of required text) • Text reading: pages 451 to 488. • Primary focus: economic and political globalization

- **Your final exam (valued at 25% of your final grade) will cover material from: (i) class lecture notes; (ii) required textbook readings; (iii) material as posted in D2L and, (iv) class handouts - since Monday January 6, 2020.**