

SOCI-3410-FA Early Sociological Theory

Classes (days/times): September 6-December 5, 2016; Tuesday & Thursday, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM

Location: RB-1021

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office hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 1:00 PM–2:00 PM, or by appointment

Course website: <http://misina.ca/sociology> (file password: sociology)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of SOCI 3410 is to take a comprehensive look at the theoretical foundations of sociology by way of dealing with the principal streams of the 19th and early-20th c. social thought. The focus of the course, thus, is on the foundational forms of sociological theorizing and their contributions to understanding the bases of a distinctly modern form of societal organization. Of particular importance, in this context, is an exploration of the ways in which classical sociological theorists problematized economic, political, and socio-cultural foundations of the Western capitalist society.

The principal themes of SOCI 3410 are: (1) historical roots of classical sociology, (2) sociological precursors, (3) revolutionary sociology of Karl Marx, (4) academic sociology of Emile Durkheim, and (5) interpretive sociology of Max Weber. These will be considered through in-depth examinations of original theoretical texts. As this is an intermediary-level course, familiarity with and competence in the foundational sociological categories and principles is assumed. Students taking SOCI 3410 should have SOCI 1100 and SOCI 2111 successfully completed.

Early Sociological Theory is conducted as a series of lectures and class discussions. The aim of the lectures is to situate specific theoretical ideas of early sociologists within the overall body of their theoretical projects, and contextualize these within the theorists' general aim of understanding the essence of modern Western society. The purpose of class discussions is to tease out the practical implications of particular theoretical ideas, reflect on constructive/problematic aspects of specific theoretical claims, and assess their overall relevance for dealing with the realities of 'contemporary human condition'. A good part of the course is dialogical in nature and relies on your active interest in the subject-matter and thoughtful participation in class discussions. Expect to think, talk, and debate.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In offering an in-depth exploration of the classical sociological ideas, the course focuses on explaining the principal conceptual foundations for sociological theorizing about the structures and problems of our present-day society. Thus the central learning objective of SOCI 3410 is to have students gain a thorough understanding of the most important classical sociological theorists and an appreciation of their respective contributions to how and why today's sociologists think about society the way they do.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

We will be using the following required texts:

- *Marx, Durkheim, Weber: Formations of Modern Social Thought* (2nd ed.), by Ken Morrison. SAGE Publications, 2006. ISBN: 9780761970569.

- *Classical Sociological Theory: A Reader*, by Ian McIntosh. New York University Press, 1997. ISBN: 9780814755747

You will also need the following movie, available at Netflix: *Antz* (DreamWorks Animated, 1998).

Additionally, there is also a recommended research and writing handbook:

Making Sense in the Social Sciences: A Student's Guide to Research and Writing (5th ed), by Margot Northey et al. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 2012.

As the course in great measure relies on your active interest and participation, you are expected to have read your reading assignments *before* coming to class.

All additional course resources will be available at: <http://misina.ca/sociology>.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

Your performance in the course will be evaluated on the basis of three term papers, reflective commentaries, and class participation:

- Paper 1** (25%): due Tuesday, October 25
- Paper 2** (25%): due Tuesday, November 15
- Paper 3** (25%): due Tuesday, December 6
- Reflective commentaries** (15%)
- Class participation** (10%)

All three **papers** involve practical application of the ideas of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber to an analysis of the 'real-life situation', as depicted in the film *Antz*. Each paper will cover one theorist respectively. Essentially, your task is to take on a role of Marx, Durkheim and Weber, and interpret the social world presented in *Antz* through their 'theoretical spectacles'. In working on your papers, you are expected to consult the primary sociological texts and back up your analysis with the relevant passages from the readings. The main body of your paper should not exceed 4,000 words (plus footnotes and a list of references), or be shorter than 3,500 words. Please use 1.5 line spacing and 12 pt Times New Roman font.

The papers submitted have to be your own new and original work rather than being copied from other texts/resources or written for another course. This, of course, does not mean that you cannot consult other resources in completing your work (you are, in fact, required to do so), but these need to be clearly recognized and referenced within your own writing. Using other people's work without acknowledging it, or claiming someone else's work for your own, constitutes an act of plagiarism and is taken for the most serious academic offence (for details, see your *Lakehead University 2016-2017 Academic Calendar*, section IX – *Academic Misconduct*). **Committing plagiarism in this class carries the penalty of automatic course failure.**

Reflective commentaries are written reflections *on the primary readings*. Only five of these reflections will be submitted for marks. Submission dates will be selected randomly and students will not know beforehand which week a commentary will be due. The commentaries will be collected at the **beginning of randomly selected Tuesday class** (this is **not negotiable**). **Late submissions will not be accepted.** It is therefore in your best interest to prepare your commentary for each week and to bring it with you to a Thursday class, just in case it is due. Absolutely no make-up commentaries will be allowed. If you anticipate missing a class, you may wish to ask a fellow student to bring in a hard copy of your reflection for potential submission. Under extraordinary circumstances (for which you need to provide appropriate documentation), you can make a *prior* arrangement for emailing the commentary before the lecture.

The purpose of the commentary is to (1) offer your own thoughts about sociological claims presented in the original theoretical texts, and (2) to formulate three discussion questions about what you find to be the most constructive, or problematic, aspects of the theoretical claims made in the readings. In formulating your

questions you have to explain how and why they are important for understanding of, and dealing with, ideas/theories/theorists under consideration. Each commentary has to reflect the nature of a specific discussion theme assigned for a given week of the class.

The length of each commentary should not exceed three pages of typed text, using 1.5 line spacing and 12 pt Times New Roman font. Please corner-staple your assignments and do not use paper clips, plastic covers or binders. In the interest of environmental responsibility, avoid using a cover page for your assignments and put your name and your student ID number in the top left corner of page 1.

Participation mark is a reflection of your *active and meaningful* input in our class discussions and debates. *Passive classroom presence does not warrant any participation marks.*

EVALUATION CONTENT

The following grading scale will be applied in evaluating your course work:

90-100% (A+)

Outstanding Performance: superb mastery of the principles and materials treated in the course; exceptional fluency in communicating that mastery and a high degree of originality and independence in applying material and principles.

80-89% (A)

Excellent Performance: comprehensive in-depth knowledge of the principles and materials treated in the course; fluency in communicating that knowledge and originality and independence in applying material and principles.

70-79% (B)

Good Performance: thorough understanding of the breadth of materials and principles treated in the course and ability to apply and communicate that understanding effectively.

60-69% (C)

Satisfactory Performance: basic understanding of the breadth of principles and material treated in the course and an ability to apply and communicate that understanding competently.

50-59% (D)

Marginal Performance: adequate understanding of most principles and material treated in the course, but significant weakness in some areas and in the ability to apply and communicate that understanding.

40-49% (E)

Failure: inadequate or fragmentary knowledge of the principles and material treated in the in the course, or failure to complete the work required in the course.

1-39% (F)

Failure: inadequate or fragmentary knowledge of the principles and material treated in the in the course, or failure to complete the work required in the course.

0% (F)

Academic Dishonesty: demonstrable violation of the academic rules of conduct as defined by Lakehead University academic standards.

Your grade is a reflection of your performance in the course, which is the only criterion for your final course mark. *There will be no rescaling of grades at the end of the course* and no adjustments except for legitimate clerical errors. Please take note of that.

According to Lakehead University defined standards, grade 0-49% constitutes unsatisfactory academic performance and means failing the course; 50-59% is a minimally accepted level of performance for passing the course, while 90-100% constitutes outstanding performance. For details on evaluation and

grading see your Lakehead *University 2016-2017 Academic Calendar*, section University Regulations (V Standing).

If you wish to review your course work you can do so within *one week from the day your marks* have been posted.

GENERAL POLICIES

Academic Statement: Students is asked to submit a brief statement about their academic background as it relates to the Sociology program in general and this course in particular. The statement should be accompanied by a recent photograph, or a copy of Lakehead University student ID card.

Email: Emailing is to be regarded as an official form of communication. Only emails sent through Lakehead University account will be read and replied to. All other email messages will be ignored.

Cell phones: Cell phones are to be turned off during lectures (except under exceptional circumstances in which approval has been granted by the instructor).

Notebooks/portables: Use of notebook computers and/or portable devices during lectures is **not allowed** (except under exceptional circumstances in which approval has been granted by the instructor).

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance is not mandatory but is highly recommended. If you decide to attend, you are expected to arrive on time and be respectful to other students in class. Disruptive and otherwise inappropriate behaviour in the classroom will not be tolerated. Students engaged in such behaviour will be dealt with accordingly.

Disclaimer: The information in this Course Outline is subject to change; any changes will be announced in class.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change; any changes will be announced in class)

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| <p>Week 1 (Sept 6-9)</p> <p>Theme 1: Historical Roots of Classical Sociological Theory</p> | <p align="center">Course introduction; syllabus walk-through</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Society and Illusion" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "Introduction" (pp. 1-34 in Morrison) |
| <p>Week 2 (Sept 12-16)</p> <p>Theme 2: Sociological Precursors</p> | <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>The Enlightenment: 'Negative' Philosophy/Science</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The Spirit of the Laws (selections)" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "The Social Contract" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The Enlightenment: The Philosophical Foundations" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "Montesquieu" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 3. "Rousseau" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) |
| <p>Week 3 (Sept 19-23)</p> | <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>The Enlightenment: 'Positive' Philosophy/Science</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Saint-Simon (selections)" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "On the Positivistic Approach to Society" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Saint-Simon" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "August Comte" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) |
| <p>Week 4 (Sept 26-30)</p> <p>Theme 3: Revolutionary Sociology of Karl Marx</p> | <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>Karl Marx: Philosophy, Society, History</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.2 "The Theses on Feuerbach" (pp. 24-25 in McIntosh) 2. 1.6 "The Preface to <i>A Critique of Political Economy</i>" (pp. 66-67 in McIntosh) 3. 1.9 "Selected Correspondence" (pp. 106-108 in McIntosh) 4. 1.3 "The German Ideology" (pp. 26-38 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Karl Marx – The Historical Context; Dialectical View of History" (pp. 35-42; 138-147 in Morrison) 2. "<i>The German Ideology</i>" (pp. 42-76 in Morrison) |
| <p>Week 5 (Oct 3-7)</p> | <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>Society according to Marx I: Capitalist Culture, Politics, Economy</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1.4 "The Communist Manifesto" (pp. 39-47 in McIntosh) 2. 1.8 "The So-called Primitive Accumulation" (pp. 72-96 in McIntosh) 3. 1.5 "Wage Labour and Capital" (pp. 48-65 in McIntosh) 4. 1.7 "The Fetishism of Commodities" (pp. 68-71 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Marx's Political Writings" (pp. 127-138 in Morrison) 2. "Marx's Economic Works" (pp. 76-116 in Morrison) |

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| Week 6 (Oct 10-14) | <p align="center">Fall Study Break (no classes)</p> |
| Week 7 (Oct 17-21) | <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>Society according to Marx II: The Human Cost of Capitalism</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Real, living individuals" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. 1.1 "Alienated Labour" (pp. 15-23 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Human Nature: Marx's Anthropological Assumptions" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "Theory of Alienation" (pp. 116-127 in Morrison) |
| Week 8 (Oct 24-28) Theme 4: Academic Sociology of Emile Durkheim | <p align="center">Tuesday (October 25): Paper 1 due</p> <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>Emile Durkheim: Sociology and (Modern) Society</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3.4 "The Rules of Sociological Method" (pp. 207-211 in McIntosh) 2. 3.1 "The Division of Labour in Society: Introduction" (pp. 181-184 in McIntosh) 3. 3.3 "The Division of Labour: Causes and Abnormal Forms" (pp. 194-206 in McIntosh) 4. 3.2 "Sanctions and Mechanical and Organic Solidarity" (pp. 185-193 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Emile Durkheim – The Historical Context" (pp. 148-158 in Morrison) 2. "The Rules of Sociological Method" (pp. 185-199 in Morrison) 3. "The Division of Labor in Society" (pp. 158-185 in Morrison) |
| Week 9 (Oct 31-Nov 4) | <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>Society according to Durkheim I: Foundations & Pathologies</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 3.5 "Suicide: A Study in Sociology" (pp. 212-231 in McIntosh) 2. 3.6 "Religion and Society" (pp. 232-247 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Durkheim's Study of Suicide" (pp. 199-231 in Morrison) 2. "The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life" (pp. 231-245 in Morrison) |
| Week 10 (Nov 7-11) | <p align="center">Discussion Theme: <i>Society according to Durkheim II: Problems and Consequences</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The Evolution of Educational Thought" & "Moral Education" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "Professional Ethics and Civic Morals" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The Theory and Practice of Education" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) 2. "Durkheim's Contribution to the Reconstruction of Political Theory" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) |

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| <p>Week 11 (Nov 14-18)</p> <p>Theme 5: Interpretive Sociology of Max Weber</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday (November 15): Paper 2 due</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Discussion Theme: <i>Max Weber: Sociology and Social Action</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.4 "Science as a Vocation" (pp. 154-156 in McIntosh) 2.5 "Definitions of Sociology and Social Action" (pp. 157-164 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "Max Weber – The Historical Context" (pp. 273-287 in Morrison) "Weber's Methodology and Theory of Knowledge" (pp. 330-348 in Morrison) "Weber's Theory of Social Action" (pp. 348-361 in Morrison) |
| <p>Week 12 (Nov 21-Dec 25)</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Discussion Theme: <i>Society according to Weber: Stratification, Authority, Domination</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.6 "Legitimacy and Authority" (pp. 165-174 in McIntosh) 2.2 "Class, Status and Party" (pp. 132-141 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "Weber's Theory of Class, Status and Party" (pp. 295-313 in Morrison) "Legitimate Domination" (pp. 361-374 in Morrison) |
| <p>Week 13 (Nov 28-Dec 2)</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Discussion Theme: <i>Western Capitalism: Causes & Consequences</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "The Uniqueness of Western Capitalism" & "The Nature of Modern Capitalism" (available at http://misina.ca/sociology) "Max Weber – The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" (pp. 115-131 in McIntosh) 2.3 "Bureaucracy" (pp. 142-153 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> "Max Weber – Capitalism" (pp. 287-295 in Morrison) "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" (pp. 313-329 in Morrison) "Weber's Study of Bureaucracy" (pp. 374-386 in Morrison) |
| <p>Week 14 (Dec 5)</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday (December 6): Paper 3 due</p> |