

SOCI-3410-FDE Early Sociological Theory

Course duration: September 5-December 4, 2023

Location: <https://lakeheadu.desire2learn.com>

Instructor: Dr. Dalibor Mišina

email: Desire2Learn email environment
(for more details, please see General Policies, Email section, below)

on-line office hours: Tuesday & Thursday, 11:00 AM-12:00 PM, through ZOOM, or by appointment
(for more details, please see General Policies, Office Hours section, below)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The aim of SOCI 3410 is to take a comprehensive first-hand 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 problematize 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 primary 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.

A fair number of SOCI 3410 themes will ring familiar; however, we will engage with them more directly, by reading the original theoretical texts written by social theorists under consideration rather than through their second-hand interpretations. Although 'second-hand interpretations' resource(s) will be provided, they should be treated as optional and consulted only as 'emergency aid(s)' when contexts for/clarifications of specific theoretical ideas are required. Otherwise, the principal method of learning should be a deep engagement with the primary readings.

Please note: As this is an online course delivered *asynchronously*, *no on-line lectures are offered*, and the primary method of learning is self-initiative and individual study. Instructor's role is to monitor an on-line learning environment and provide necessary resources for facilitating students' independent mastering of the course material. By signing up for the course, you are committing yourself to following the course schedule and the pace of required work, as well as to keeping up with all course deadlines. There will be no extensions given (other than for exceptional reasons supported by proper official documentation), and you will not be able to hand in your work past the specified time/date.

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 YouTube (and other select streaming platforms: *Antz* (DreamWorks Animated, 1998).

All other course materials, information and resources will be posted on our **Desire2Learn** course website.

STUDYING & LEARNING STRATEGY

In addition to your textbooks, the on-line course environment contains several aids to help you master the course material and get the most out of your learning experience. You should embrace the following as your studying and learning strategy:

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- On **Week 1**, you should take time to thoroughly familiarize yourself with the course outline, the Desire2Learn course platform, and the course textbook. To ease into the course material, you should also do all Week 1 readings indicated in the Course Schedule section (please see below). In addition, you should do a mock Reflective Commentary based on the introductory readings. You will not be handing in this Commentary, but it will be a good practice that will prepare you for doing the 'real' Commentaries.

II

- On **all other weeks**, you should start by reading through the primary readings (i.e. original theoretical texts from *Classical Sociological Theory: A Reader*), while keeping in mind the week's particular Theoretical Focus (indicated in Course Schedule). The latter will help you identify and understand the overall 'intent' behind the readings under consideration and will give you a point of focus for working through the material. It will also provide you with a 'grounding point' for reflective commentary that you will write on the primary readings you are working through.
- If you run into difficulties with the primary readings, you have several tools to help you deal with this: **Background Readings**, **Reference Resources**, on-line **Discussion Forum**, and **email**.
 - **Background Readings** are the sections from *Marx, Durkheim, Weber: Formations of Modern Social Thought*, and additional readings available on our D2L course platform, that provide 'second-hand interpretations' of specific theoretical ideas/themes from the primary readings. Consulting them should be the first step in you 'get stuck' with the original theoretical texts. **Please note:** reading Background Readings only is not a substitute for working through the primary readings, as you are required to write your commentaries on the primary readings and use them in constructing your theoretical papers.
 - Library section of our D2L course platform contain a valuable list of/links to some of the key sociology/social sciences **Reference Resources** (such as *A Dictionary of Sociology*, *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, *Sage Knowledge*, etc.). They are all fully available—and searchable—on-line and contain a wealth of reference information that will

help you with deepening your understanding of a general context and/or specific aspects of the primary readings you are working through. You should consult Reference Resources after first having consulted Background Readings.

- If, after having consulted Background Readings and Reference Resources, you are still unclear about specific aspects of the primary readings, use our on-line **Discussion Forum** to seek help from your classmates. Start a thread in the relevant Course Themes section of the Forum, and you will most likely get a clarification from another student (**please note**: Do not expect others to provide you with full answers to all of your questions and do your homework for you. Use the Forum after you have made a genuine attempt to understand the material on your own). *Think of the Discussion Forum as an on-line substitute for in-class discussions and use it accordingly.* The Forum will be semi-monitored, and I will make occasional posts when/if I see it fit.
- Finally, if all else fails, you can **email** me with your specific questions. Please send your emails through Desire2Learn emailing environment, as all other messages will be ignored. Restrict your questions to specific issues/concerns for which you cannot get help through the Forum. If you have general course questions, post them on the Forum, under General Course Issues, and the replies will be provided there. **Please note**: Do not expect immediate response to your email inquiries. Treat emailing as an on-line equivalent to in-office consultations. If you need urgent response, post your question on the Forum and discuss it with your classmates first.
- Once you are comfortable with the weekly primary readings, proceed with writing your reflective commentary (for commentary details, please see Method of Evaluation section below). Think of the commentary as a 'proof' that you understand the original theoretical texts, and that you can engage with them on your own terms through critical reflections and by way of posing sociologically relevant reflection questions. You can also think of it as a self-assessment tool, helping you evaluate your material comprehension. Finally, you should take your commentaries as weekly 'building blocks' for getting you ready to write your term papers.

III

- Since your term papers are sociological 'theoretical takes' on a 'real-life situation' depicted in the film *Antz*, and since you will be using the primary readings to 'build' them, a useful strategy to embrace would be to watch *Antz* at your earliest convenience and keep it in mind as you work through the original theoretical texts. This way, you can start thinking about the ways in which you can use the ideas from the primary readings as 'building blocks' for constructing your sociological analyses of *Antz* and—effectively—start shaping your term papers step by step, one week at the time.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

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

Paper 1 (25%): due Monday, October 23

Paper 2 (25%): due Monday, November 13

Paper 3 (25%): due Monday, December 4

Reflective commentaries (25%) due Weekly every Friday, by 10PM (*except* Week 1, 6, and 14)

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 *A Note on Plagiarism* below; also, see *Assignment/Exam Integrity* note below).

Reflective commentaries are written reflections *on the primary readings*. The commentaries are due every week on Friday, by 10:00 PM (*except* Week 1, Week 6, and Week 14), when you do not have to hand them in). All commentaries are to be submitted *via* Dropbox, through our Desire2Learn course platform, as either Word or PDF files. **All submissions are time sensitive and late submissions will not be accepted.** Absolutely no make-up commentaries will be allowed. Under extraordinary circumstances (for which you need to provide appropriate documentation), you can make a *prior* arrangement for submitting the commentary before the due date.

The purpose of the commentary is not to summarize the weekly readings. Rather, it is to (1) offer your own thoughts about sociological claims presented in the original theoretical texts, and (2) 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 provide sociological rationales for posing them—i.e. explain how and why they are important for understanding of, and dealing with, ideas/theories/theorists under consideration. The best commentaries are usually those that are more analytical than descriptive and that raise some interesting points and questions that can spark a good discussion/debate and/or offer some constructive 'food for thought'. Each commentary has to reflect the nature of a specific theoretical focus (indicated in the Course Schedule section below) 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. Do not use a cover page for your assignments: put your name and your student ID number in the top left corner of page 1.

Assignment/Exam Integrity: I understand and agree that:

1. Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must complete the assignments in this course without the assistance of anyone else.
2. Unless otherwise allowed by the course instructor, I must not access any sources or materials (in print, online, or in any other way) to complete any course exam.

I further understand and agree that, if I violate either of these two rules, or if I provide any false or misleading information about my completion of course assignments or exams, I may be prosecuted under the *Lakehead University Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity*, which requires students to act ethically and with integrity in academic matters and to demonstrate behaviours that support the University's academic values.

Please note: the penalty for violating *Assignment/Exam Integrity* policy on a reflective commentary is failing the commentary in question; the penalty for violating *Exam/Assignment Integrity* policy on a paper is failing the course. For more details, please see **A Note on Plagiarism** below.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

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. This 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 2023-2024 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 mark* has been posted.

A Note on Plagiarism: Lakehead University defines plagiarism as follows:

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 end noting.

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 end noting 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 end noting is given.

Penalties for plagiarism are strictly enforced and are as follows:

1. 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.
2. 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.

For more details, see your Lakehead *University 2023-2024 Academic Calendar*, section University Regulations (IX Academic Misconduct). Also, see the "Student Code of Conduct – Academic Integrity".

GENERAL POLICIES

Academic Statement: Students are asked to consider submitting, via our D2L course platform (under Assignments), a brief statement about their academic background as it relates to the Sociology program in general and this course in particular. The statement will help me get a better sense of you as a student. All the information provided in the academic statement will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Email: Emailing is to be regarded as an official form of communication, requiring appropriate language and tone. Only emails sent through SOCI 3410 Desire2Learn email environment will be read and replied to. All other messages will be ignored. Please use the Discussion Forum to post your questions about the course in general or the course material. **Email communication is to be used for dealing with the matters that do not qualify as Forum posts.**

Office Hours: In addition to regular office hours/ways of conducting them, students can set up on-line office hours appointment. To set up an appointment, please email me and let me know your availability and a preferred way of meeting (D2L Chat, Zoom, or phone). I shall get back to you to confirm your appointment, once all the necessary arrangements have been made. **Please note:** A request for an on-line appointment should be made at least 24 hours in advance.

Discussion Forum: This is an on-line substitute for an in-class interaction, and it should be treated as such. Please use appropriate language and tone when participating on the Forum. Crude, disrespectful, inflammatory, offensive and/or confrontational Forum participation will not be tolerated and will result in the ban from the Forum.

DISCLAIMERS

Disclaimer I: The information in this syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be communicated through Desire2Learn course website, in the Announcements & News section.

Disclaimer II: By taking SOCI 3410 you acknowledge that you have read and understood—and are in agreement with—the course contents and policies, as outlined and explained in this syllabus.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(subject to change; any changes will be announced through D2L website)

<p>Week 1 (Sept 5-8)</p> <p>Theme 1: Historical Roots of Classical Sociological Theory</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Course introduction</p> <p>Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Society and Illusion" (available at D2L course platform) 2. "Introduction" (pp. 1-34 in Morrison)
<p>Week 2 (Sept 11-15)</p> <p>Theme 2: Sociological Precursors</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <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 D2L course platform) 2. "The Social Contract" (available at D2L course platform) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The Enlightenment: The Philosophical Foundations" (available at D2L course platform) 2. "Montesquieu" (available at D2L course platform) 3. "Rousseau" (available at D2L course platform)
<p>Week 3 (Sept 18-22)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <i>The Enlightenment: 'Positive' Philosophy/Science</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Saint-Simon (selections)" (available at D2L course platform) 2. "On the Positivistic Approach to Society" (available at D2L course platform) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Saint-Simon" (available at D2L course platform) 2. "August Comte" (available at D2L course platform)
<p>Week 4 (Sept 25-29)</p> <p>Theme 3: Revolutionary Sociology of Karl Marx</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <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 2-6)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <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)
<p>Week 6 (Oct 9-13)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FALL STUDY BREAK: NO CLASSES</p>
<p>Week 7 (Oct 16-20)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <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 D2L course platform) 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 D2L course platform) 2. “Theory of Alienation” (pp. 116-127 in Morrison)
<p>Week 8 (Oct 23-27)</p> <p>Theme 4: Academic Sociology of Emile Durkheim</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAPER 1 DUE: MONDAY, OCTOBER 23</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <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)

<p>Week 9 (Oct 30-Nov 3)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <i>Society according to Durkheim I: Foundations & Pathologies</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3.5 “Suicide: A Study in Sociology” (pp. 212-231 in McIntosh) 3.6 “Religion and Society” (pp. 232-247 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> “Durkheim’s Study of Suicide” (pp. 199-231 in Morrison) “The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life” (pp. 231-245 in Morrison)
<p>Week 10 (Nov 6-10)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <i>Society according to Durkheim II: Problems and Consequences</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> “The Evolution of Educational Thought” & “Moral Education” (available at D2L course platform) “Professional Ethics and Civic Morals” (available at D2L course platform) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> “The Theory and Practice of Education” (available at D2L course platform) “Durkheim’s Contribution to the Reconstruction of Political Theory” (available at D2L course platform)
<p>Week 11 (Nov 13-17)</p> <p>Theme 5: Interpretive Sociology of Max Weber</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAPER 2 DUE: MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <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 20-24)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <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 27-Dec 1)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Theoretical Focus: <i>Western Capitalism: Causes & Consequences</i></p> <p>Primary Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "The Uniqueness of Western Civilisation" & "The Nature of Modern Capitalism" (available at D2L course platform) 2. "Max Weber – The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" (pp. 115-131 in McIntosh) 3. 2.3 "Bureaucracy" (pp. 142-153 in McIntosh) <p>Background Readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Max Weber – Capitalism" (pp. 287-295 in Morrison) 2. "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism" (pp. 313-329 in Morrison) 3. "Weber's Study of Bureaucracy" (pp. 374-386 in Morrison)
<p>Week 14 (Dec 4-8)</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PAPER 3 DUE: MONDAY, DECEMBER 4</p>