

SOC 168: Development of Sociological Theory
AKA Classical Sociological Theory
Spring 2019
Class meets in Bourns Hall Room B118
1:10pm-2pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

Contact Information

Victoria Reyes, Assistant Professor
1204 Watkins Hall, Department of Sociology, University of California, Riverside
Office Hours: 2:30-3:30pm Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays

What are office hours? They are hours I, and each of the TAs, set aside each week to talk to you about any questions you have regarding lecture, readings, exams, and the class in general. We encourage you to come to office hours, so we can get a chance to know you better!

Email

The best way to reach me is via email at vreyes@ucr.edu. Please include **“SOC 168” and the topic of your email in the email’s subject line** (for example, your subject line could be: SOC 168: Question about exam 1). I frequently check my email; however, I cannot guarantee an instant response. As a rule, I will try my best to respond **within 48 hours**. However, I do not generally respond to email on weekends or after 7pm on weeknights. Please do not wait until the last second to email me – the sooner you contact me, the sooner we can figure out a solution to the issue at hand! I also encourage you to ask questions during lecture, discussion section, and to your TA, and to first check the syllabus to see if your question(s) are answered here.

Teaching Assistants (TAs):

Your discussion section will be led by a TA. Below is information about the TAs for the class, including their email addresses and office hours:

Justen Hamilton
Office hours: Wednesdays, 10am to 1pm
Office location: Watkins 2110
Email: jhami008@ucr.edu

Joel Winegar
Office hours: TBD
Office location: Watkins 2116
Email: jwine001@ucr.edu

Learning goals

The goal of this 10-week course is to introduce you to classical sociological theory. We’ll discuss what is theory and why it’s important, as well as the distinction about what makes a theory “classical.”

It’s important to note that the things we’ll talk about ***are not politically or culturally neutral***. They have very real ramifications for individuals, organizations, and societies. Given that this is a theory course, this can be a bit frustrating, particularly since the vast majority of theorists we’ll discuss are of a particular demographic (old, white, men). Another course on the sociology of science or sociology of knowledge would deconstruct why it is we have the canon we do (see for example, Aldon Morris’ *The Scholar Denied* about how WEB Du Bois, a Black scholar, was systematically erased from the canon).

For this course, we take the canon for granted. However, one goal of this course is to see research as a conversation and theory as a way to make sense of the world. In that respect, you are encouraged--nay, required--to critically engage in the theories we discuss. Theories are not just abstract principles that arose in a vacuum; rather, they were created by particular people, in a particular place and time, who themselves occupied particular social positions and studied particular things in social life.

As you learn classical theory, you should first understand the historical context in which the theorist is writing, and then seek to understand importance of their contributions/pieces, and why they've persisted over time. Finally, you need to think about whether and/or how these theories are applicable for today and their limitations (e.g., what are the ways they do and do not hold up; think about both the strengths *and* weaknesses of arguments).

More specifically, after this course, you will be able to:

- Explain what classical theory is and why it's important
- Compare and contrast major figures in sociology and their contributions
- See research, and theory, as scholarly conversations
- Apply your knowledge of classical sociological theory to current events

Our expectations of you:

- Attend and *participate* in both lecture and discussion sections
- Read assigned materials before class and bring readings to your discussion section
- Study: that is, do not just skim materials; rather grapple with what the authors are trying to say and why, what is important about what they are saying, and critically thinking about how these theories may or may not apply today
- Ask any questions you have→ if you are unsure of something, it's likely others are too!
- Be an active agent in your own learning; that is, you will get as much out of this class as you put in. We are here to help you grapple with sociological thinking, and need you to be engaged with the class readings, lecture, discussion sections, and activities

What you can expect from us:

- Be prepared for lecture and discussion questions
- Be available for our office hours
- Answer questions you have
- See you as an active agent in your own learning
- Be transparent in our grading
- Seek your feedback about the course
- Provide opportunities for you to bring in your own interests to class topics (in assignments and discussion sections)

Readings

- Ritzer, George and Jeffrey Stepnisk. 2018. *Classical Sociological Theory (7th edition)*. Los Angeles, CA: SAGE (available at the bookstore for purchase and the library)
- Those that are posted on iLearn

Course Format and Grading

Each part of the class is meant to complement one another, and each has a different purpose. As such, you will be unable to earn a high grade in the course without participating in both lecture and discussion sections.

This class is based on active learning principles, which means that student participation is central to the class.

- *Lectures* are meant to introduce you to a wide array of topics, link readings, and spur your sociological imagination.
 - In practice, our meetings are not traditional lectures because I will ask and require your participation. I will often ask you to talk with your colleagues because my approach to teaching is that our classroom is a learning environment and you will learn just as much from one another as from me and from the materials.
- *Discussion sections* are meant to engage you in deeper thinking through discussions and activities.
 - Note: TAs may arrange their sections differently, however each discussion section is organized around discussion, engagement, and active learning
- You'll get the main content of the course through the *assigned readings*.
- *Exams and the final paper* are meant to evaluate what you've learned and an opportunity to apply your interests to the topics in the course through the required essays
- I am also conducting a research project on teaching strategies I incorporate in class. You do not have to do anything. After the course has ended, my graduate research assistant, Karin Johnson, will de-identify any materials. If you wish to opt-out, please contact her at kjohn033@ucr.edu. An informed consent document is listed on the course's iLearn page.

Grades:

Exam 1: 25% (identification and short answers)

Exam 2: 25% (identification and short answers)

Final paper: 25% (7-10 page paper)

Discussion section: 25% (20% participation [as decided by TA], 5% reflection)

A+ (97-100), A (94-96), A- (90-93), B+ (87-89), B (84-86), B- (80-83), C+ (77-79), C (74-76), C- (70-73), D+ (67-69), D (64-66), D- (60-63), F (59 and below)

You can earn 5 points extra credit in the final paper if you make an appointment with the Academic Resource Center's Undergraduate Writing Support Program to get support on your final paper. To earn the extra credit points, you must turn in the tutor slip you receive after your appointment in-person, to your TA on the last day of discussion section, **June 7th**. For more information about the program: <https://arc.ucr.edu/cohort/writing-support/index.html>

Classroom Courtesy

Please observe the following courtesies so that our course runs smoothly:

- Arrive on time and do not leave early, unless you have spoken with me before class.
- Avoid side conversations

I look forward to the class and hope this will be an exciting and productive quarter!

COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: By covering a different theorist each day (and two days for the field's major thinkers), this course is designed to emphasize breadth over depth. As such, this means we'll highlight *some*—but not all—of each person's theoretical contributions to the discipline.

Week 1: Introduction to Classical Theory and Development of Sociology

- April 1: Introduction; syllabus; what is sociological theory? Why classical theory?
- April 3: Comte, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 4*
- April 5: Spencer, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 5*

Note: In your discussion section, you will be taking a syllabus quiz

Week 2: Marx and Weber

- April 8: Marx, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 6*
- April 10: Marx, *reading on iLearn*
- April 12: Weber, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 8*

Week 3: Weber and Durkheim

- April 15: Weber, *reading on iLearn*
- April 17: Durkheim, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 7*
- April 19: Durkheim, *reading on iLearn*

Week 4: Exam, Social Order and Human Nature

- April 22: Review
- April 24: Exam 1
- April 26: Hobbes, *reading on iLearn*

Week 5: Social Order and Human Nature

- April 29: Locke, *reading on iLearn*
- May 1: Rousseau, *reading on iLearn*
- May 3: Tocqueville, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 3*

Week 6: Community, Exam

- May 6: Tonnies, *reading on iLearn*
- May 8: Review
- May 10: Exam

Week 7: Symbolic Interactionism

- May 13: Simmel, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 9 AND reading on iLearn*
- May 15: Mead, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 15 AND reading on iLearn*
- May 17: Cooley, *reading on iLearn*

Week 8: Chicago School and Chicago School for Women

- May 20: Park and Burgess, *reading on iLearn*
- May 22: Thomas and Znaniecki, *reading on iLearn*

- May 24: Jane Addams, *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: 307-308, 319-328* AND reading on *iLearn*

Week 9: Du Bois

- May 27: NO CLASS (Memorial Day)
- May 29: No class (to do observations for final paper)
- May 31: Du Bois, *reading on iLearn*
 - Optional: *Ritzer and Stepnisk 2018: Chapter 11*

Bring in your written observations to your discussion section, you will be workshopping it for your final paper

Week 10: Du Bois and Cooper

- June 3: Du Bois, *reading on iLearn*
- June 5: Cooper, *reading on iLearn*
- June 7: Q&A re: final paper
 - You will be workshopping your final paper in your discussion section

Final papers due no later **Tuesday, June 11th at 6pm** on iLearn

- There will be a 2-point penalty, starting on **Tuesday, June 11th at 6:01pm**, for each day it is late (e.g., for materials received between **Tuesday, June 11th at 6:01pm to Wednesday, June 12th at 6:01pm** there will be two points taken off; for materials received between **Wednesday, June 12th at 6:02pm to Thursday, June 13th at 6:02pm** there will be an additional two points taken off for a total of a four point deduction)

5% of your discussion section is based on a 1-2 page reflection of the class, particularly as it relates to using observations for your final paper and the active learning activities and discussions in your sections. I will survey the class on when you'd like these due: the same day as the final paper or the last day of lecture, June 7th

**** NOTE: syllabus is subject to change****