

**WEBER STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Sociology & Anthropology**  
**Spring Semester 2015**

**SOCLGY 4030:**  
**Contemporary Sociological Theory**  
**T. 5:30-8:15 p.m.**  
**Room: SS113**  
**E-mail: [Hweiarthus@weber.edu](mailto:Hweiarthus@weber.edu)**

**Dr. H. Wei-Arthus**  
**Office: SS 124**  
**Phone: 801-626-7888**  
**Office Hours: T. 5:00-5:30 p.m.**

### **I. Course Description**

This course is the second half of the overall Sociological Theory. If students haven't taken the classical theory class prior to this course, they are not recommended to take this class. The concentration of this course is on the development of American sociology and new theories since the turn of the twentieth century. We will discuss theories on structural functionalism; conflict theories; symbolic interactional theories; phenomenology and ethnomethodology; exchange theory and so on. Then we will link the classical and contemporary theories together and examine the trend of sociology in today's world.

### **II. Learning Objectives**

- a. Have a basic knowledge of the modern history and development of sociological theories.**
- b. Master major theoretical approaches and their explanations of social phenomena and issues.**
- c. Develop critical/analytical thinking and evaluation skills.**
- d. Have the capability to apply theories to reality and compare/contrast different theories.**

### **III. Course Requirements and Policy of Grading**

- a. Class attendance and discussant: 15% of the final grade. Each student is required to attend all the classes, and each person will be responsible for one article leading discussant. I will have the article assignment ready soon.
- b. A class presentation of one original writing from a sociologist, and a 3-4 page hand-in (typed) notes: 10% of the final grade.
- c. Three take-home essay exams: 25% for the **first** and **second** exam, 15% for the **third** one.
- d. Students are absolutely required to do the readings before coming to the class.

e. There will be some in-class writings and homework; I will collect them each time I assign them. This will count 10% of your final grade.

### **Final Grade Calculation:**

Attendance & leading discussant 15% + presentation 10% + three take-home exams (25%+25%+15%) 65% + in-class writing & homework 10% = 100%

90 - 100	A	87 - 89	A-
84 - 86	B+	80 - 83	B
77 - 79	B-	74 - 76	C+
71 - 73	C	68 - 70	C-
65 - 67	D+	60 - 64	D

### **III. Text Books**

1. **Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory**, by Kenneth Allan.
2. Online (Canvas) Readings in Contemporary Sociological Theory

### **IV. Students' Responsibility and Obligations**

1. If a student is absent from the class, it is his or her own responsibility to contact other students to get the class notes. The instructor does not give out her own lecture notes to any students.
2. It is considered cheating if one student signs other student's name on the attendance sheet. Some sort of sanction will be applied to both students if this incident happens.
3. Generally speaking, there is no make-up exam; unless there is a real emergency and a legitimate document is required to present.
4. "Any student requiring accommodations or services due to a disability must contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) in room 181 of the Student Service Center. SSD can also arrange to provide course materials (including this syllabus) in alternative formats if necessary."
5. **No cell phone call or text messaging is allowed** in class room, make sure you silence your cell phone before class. If I hear your phone ring or catch you text messaging, I will confiscate your phone till the end of the class. If your computer is not used for taking notes, but surfing other internet sites, I will stop you from bringing your computer to the class.
6. **Plagiarizing or any kind of academic cheating behavior** will suffer penalties from the instructor. Each case will be dealt with individually according to the severity of the behavior.

**V. COURSE OUTLINE (The following outline is NOT a weekly based schedule. It is only an outline. Each section may last as long as two weeks or more. The professor will announce the progress each week.)**

**I. Introduction to Contemporary Sociological theories**

**--- Parsons and the Frankfurt School**

Readings: Allan -- Chapter 1&2

**II. The Social Situation and its people**

**--- Symbolic Interaction: Herbert Blumer**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 3

**--- Harold Garfinkel**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 4

**--- Erving Goffman**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 5

**--- Exchange Theory: George Homans, Peter Blau and Randall Collins**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 6

**Class Presentations: the reading articles on Canvas**

**First Midterm Take-Home Exam**

**III. Social Structures and Inequality**

**--- Structures of Racial and Gender Inequality: Wilson and Chafets**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 7

**--- Class Inequality: Pierre Bourdieu**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 8

**--- Global Inequality: Immanuel Wallerstein**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 9

**--- The Network Society: Manuel Castells**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 10

## **Second Midterm Take-Home Exam**

### **IV. Modernity and Postmodernity**

**--- Jurgen Habermas**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 11

**--- Anthony Giddens**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 12

**--- Michel Foucault**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 13

**--- Jean Baudrillard**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 14

**Class Presentations: the reading articles on Canvas**

### **V. Identify Politics**

**--- Cornel West**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 15

**--- Dorothy Smith**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 16

**--- Judith Butler**

Readings: Allan --- Chapter 17

**Class Presentations: the reading articles on Canvas**

## **Third Take-Home Exam**

**The End of the Semester**