Course Syllabus **Sociology 6050 (Sociological Theory Before 1920)** Winter 2018

Course: Sociology 650 (Sociological Theory Before 1920)

Class Meets: Tuesday 5:00– 8:20pm in room 0103 Old Main

Dr. Zachary W. Brewster

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**Office Hours**: I am on campus Monday through Friday. Email me to set up on an appointment.

Required Readings:

1. Tucker, Robert C. (ed.). 1978. *The Marx-Engels Reader* (2nd edition).  New York: W. W. Norton &

Company.

1. Giddens, Anthony (ed.). 1972. *Emile Durkheim: Selected Writings*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
2. Gerth, H. H. & C. Wright Mills (eds.). 1946. *From Max Weber: Essay in Sociology*. New York: Oxford.
3. Sundquist, Eric J. (ed.). 1996. *The Oxford W.E.B Du Bois Reader*. New York: Oxford.
4. Strauss, Anselm (ed.). 1956. *George Herbert Mead on Social Psychology*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
5. Lengermann, Patricia Madoo and Gillian Niebrugge (eds.). 1998. *The Women Founders: Sociology and Social Theory 1830-1930*. Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press.

**Course Description**

This graduate level course is intended to introduce and/or further develop students’ knowledge of classical sociological theory. To actively engage with and think effectively about the present (and the future) students must first reflect on how past societal trends were thought about and understood within their respective historical contexts. Towards this end, this course will examine the origins and progression of sociological theory of the 19th and (early) 20th centuries. By studying the writings of classical social theorists—Marx, Weber, Durkheim***,*** Du Bois, and Mead—this course will introduce students to the major traditions of thought (e.g., structural functionalism, conflict theory, symbolic interactionism) that have and continue to guide sociological inquiry and the production of sociological knowledge. In short, this course is designed to give students a set of theoretical tools that they may draw from to understand and empirically examine the social worlds in which they now exist.

**Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Define theory and describe its role in building sociological knowledge.
2. Compare and contrast basic theoretical assumptions underpinning the work of classical social theorists.
3. Show how theories reflect the historical context of the times and cultures in which they were developed.
4. Draw distinctions between paradigms, theories, and concepts.
5. Identify and intellectually discuss the genesis and central assumptions of the various schools of thought, including functionalism, conflict theory, and symbolic interactionism.
6. Identify and intellectually discuss the contributions of central theoretical figures within the various schools of thought.
7. Recognize how social theory contributes to contemporary analysis of social problems, social change, and social organization.
8. Recognize how empirical research, more generally, is often informed by classical theoretical ideas and propositions.
9. Identify their own theoretical orientation and intellectually defend it utilizing empirical evidence but also acknowledge and appreciate the merits of other perspectives.

**Expectations**

My expectations of you in this course are commensurate to the degree that you are pursuing. In short, I assume by virtue of your decision to pursue a graduate degree that you want to read extensively, write extensively, think extensively, and engage in intellectual discussions (wait for it), extensively. To the degree that my assumptions are correct I can guarantee that you will experience a considerable amount of intellectual growth while taking this course. In the event that my assumptions are incorrect I would suggest reassessing the reasons why you decided to go to graduate school.

**Course Policies**

The following is a description of course policies that are designed and implemented to ensure a quality learning environment. As your professor, my responsibility is to create an environment where students can learn, but it is also the students’ responsibility to respect the policies. Therefore, I take the course policies seriously and I expect that students will abide by them.

*Classroom etiquette and Academic Integrity*

All expressions of ideas are welcome assuming that these expressions are not uncivil to your classmates. Harassment of any nature will not be tolerated. Students are also expected to maintain academic integrity and therefore, cheating of any sort may result in failure of this course. For additional information on academic integrity and related issues refer to the Student Conduct Services homepage (<http://www.doso.wayne.edu/student-conduct/index.html>). Remember, ignorance is not a viable defense against allegations of student conduct violations.

*Assignments*

I expect you to complete and submit all course assignments on the designated due dates. If there is a legitimate reason that you are unable to do so you should contact me immediately to request an extension. If your request is granted a set of accompanying conditions will be outlined, discussed, and agreed upon (e.g., duration of extension, potential late penalty, etc. etc.). If the student fails to meet these conditions it is unlikely that I will accept the assignment for credit. **Nevertheless, please note that all assignments in this course must be completed in order to receive a passing grade.** All course requirements will be assessed using the following generic rubric:

**“A” level work** consists of cogent, well-articulated, and well-developed written presentation, demonstrating exceptional understanding, preparation, insight, originality, logical argumentation, and factual accuracy. “A” work is completed on time and according to the guidelines. “A” work is considered excellent.

**“A-“ level work** consists of cogent, well-articulated, and well-developed written presentation, demonstrating very good understanding, preparation, insight, originality, logical argumentation, and factual accuracy. “A-” work is completed on time and according to the guidelines. “A-” work is considered very good.

**“B+” level work** consists of well-written work that demonstrates an acceptable understanding, preparation, insight, originality, logical argumentation, and factual accuracy. “B+” work is acceptable graduate level work, but only shows a basic grasp of concepts and ideas and with only satisfactory levels of communication.

**“B” level work** consists of work that reflects a minimally adequate understanding, preparation, insight, originality, logical argumentation, and factual accuracy. “B” work is considered mediocre and is the lowest passing grade in the course.

**“B-” level work** is not adequate in either form or content, thereby not fully meeting the minimum requirements. “B-” work is not passing at the graduate level. Thus, a final grade of “B-” will require you to retake this course.

**“C” level work** shows the barest understanding of the subject or task assigned, is poorly written, and fails to make a coherent argument. A final grade of “C” may lead you to be removed from the graduate program.

*Attendance*

This is a graduate level course and as such I assume attendance problems will not be an issue. Missing classes will inevitably be reflected in your final course grade. Excessive tardiness and leaving class early will likewise make it difficult for you to do well in this course. If you have a problem with getting to class on time or having to leave early, please see me as soon as possible. You are all adults and are capable of making the decision to attend class. In cases in which you cannot attend class you are responsible for obtaining missed information from a classmate (if you are sick, stay home and get better but **I do not need to see doctors’ notes** if this is the case). I will not provide students with my lecture notes nor will I reiterate lectures and class discussions for individual students. In the case of an emergency, where excessive absences result, please contact me as soon as possible. In the event that you foresee life requiring you to miss more than two classes, I recommend that you drop the course. I also recommend that you drop the course if you find yourself in a situation where life is impeding you from completing the course requirements on schedule. If such a situation materializes and you choose not to drop the course please know that in most cases an “incomplete” will not be granted rather you will be assigned the grade that you have earned. I also do not give students a mercy “B” because a student has tried hard but had issues arise that impeded them from being successful.

*Students with Disabilities*

Wayne State University is working to build a community that is inclusive and welcoming to all people, including those with disabilities. If you have a documented disability that requires accommodations, you will need to register with Student Disability Services for coordination of your academic accommodations. The Student Disability Services (SDS) office is located at 1600 David Adamany Undergraduate Library in the Student Academic Success Services department. SDS telephone number is [313-577-1851](callto:+1313-577-1851) or [313-577-3365](callto:+1313-577-3365) (TDD only). Once you have your accommodations in place, I will be glad to meet with you privately during my office hours to discuss your special needs. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from me without a letter of accommodation from the Office for Student Disability Services.

Student Disability Services’ mission is to assist the university in creating an accessible community where students with disabilities have an equal opportunity to fully participate in their educational experience at Wayne State University. Please refer to the SDS website for further information about students with disabilities and the services we provide for faculty and students: <http://studentdisability.wayne.edu/>

*Course Withdrawals and Incompletes*

Incompletes will only be given in the rare event of a major medical or other verifiable event that preclude a student from completing the final portion of the course (e.g., final exam or final assignment). Incompletes are not given simply because students desire more time to finish the course requirements. In the event that a student is not doing well in this course, they should consult with me and discuss the possibility of withdrawing from the course.

*“Failing” Grades for Graduate Students*

If sociology students receive a B- or lower as their final grade, this is a “failing” grade for a required graduate level course. Thus, if students receive a B- or lower, they must take the course over again in order to receive credit for Sociology 6050. To take a course over a second time, students must formally apply to do so with the Graduate School at Wayne State.

*Changes to the syllabus*

I reserve the right to make adjustments to this syllabus throughout the course if I deem it necessary. However, the syllabus is, in my opinion, a social contract between the instructor and her/his students. As such, I assure you that any alterations to the syllabus that I might make after the semester has started would not result in a notable increase in students’ workload.

**Course Requirements**

1. *Weekly Preparation and Participation (30%)*

This course will be facilitated as a seminar centered on classical social theory. A seminar by definition is a relatively small group of students who are intellectually advanced and who meet regularly with a faculty member to exchange ideas and actively discuss the current state of knowledge within any particular area. This style of learning can be intellectually rewarding and is the convention in graduate school. However, you should recognize that in a seminar the responsibility for teaching is shared equally among all of the participants. In other words, I will do very little lecturing in this course but will rather contribute to class discussions alongside each of you. As you should see, the success of the course is thus contingent on each of you attending class, reading the assigned readings before we discuss them in class, and contributing to class discussions. To facilitate the success of this graduate seminar you are required to complete each week’s readings before class begins. Importantly, you are also required to submit a 1-2 page document demonstrating your engagement with each week’s readings. In each weekly write-up you should concisely identify and discuss a single idea/concept or set of interrelated ideas/concepts that you think is/are of theoretical import in the author’s work. Each week’s write-up should conclude with at least two discussion questions. As you prepare you weekly write-ups be sure to cite specific passages/pages wherein the key ideas are discussed. Note that while these write-ups will focus only on key segments of the week’s readings you are nevertheless required to read all of the assigned material. Finally, it is expected that you will contribute to each week’s seminar. In short, to earn full credit for weekly preparation and participation you must 1) read the material before class, 2) submit a short but thoughtful write-up wherein you actively engage each week’s readings, and 3) contribute to each week’s class discussion.

On two occasions you can choose, without penalty, to opt out of completing the weekly write-up but you still must read the material and come to class prepared to discuss the readings. In the event that you have completed your weekly write-up and life precludes you from attending class that week you can email me it to me for credit. You must do so, however, on or before the Thursday that you were unable to attend class.

*2. Mid-term Exam (30%)*

There will be a take-home midterm exam that will require you to answer essay questions that center on the work of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber; this exam will be described in detail in class.

3. Theory Paper (40%)

As is typical in graduate level courses you are required to produce a final product at the end of the semester. This product will take the form of a “theory paper” and should be between 20 and 25 double spaced pages. As an independent scholar in training you will have considerable leeway in developing your theory paper. However, you must produce a coherent line of argumentation that draws from, elaborates on, and/or integrates the ideas/concepts found in the work of classical theorists discussed in this class (Marx, Weber, or Durkheim). In short, classical theory must be an integral component of your paper regardless of the approach that you take and must include at least 15 secondary (e.g., peer reviewed articles) sources. Some approaches that you might consider include:

1. A Backward Approach: outline the development of a classical theorist’s line of thought. On the shoulders of what giants did the classical theorist’s stand? How did the ideas of a classical theorist’s develop over the course of his life? What is the intellectual history of key classical ideas or concepts?
2. A comparative Approach: What are the conceptual similarities between two or more different theorists or classical lines of thought? What are the major points of contention in the thinking of two or more theorists or assumptions underpinning different theoretical traditions?
3. A Downstream Approach: Trace a classical line of thought or a classical theorist to contemporary sociological theories (e.g., Marxism versus neo-Marxism; Durkheim versus Parsons; Durkheim versus Foucault on education).
4. A Critical Approach: outline the conceptual contradictions or weaknesses inherent in in the work one or more classical theorists and offer insights into how such contradictions/weakness might be resolved.
5. An Application Approach: Elaborate on how classical ideas/concepts have influenced current sociological scholarship.

You should submit a short proposal for a paper idea (2 pages) no later than February 13th.

Grading Scale

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 90-100% A | 80-89% B | 70-79% C | 60-69% D | Below 60% F |

**Tentative Schedule** (Tentative meaning that this is not sketched in stone and can be altered according to class interest, time constraints, and other unforeseen events.)

**Week 1 (January 9th):** Introduction to the Course and Course Requirements

**Week 2 (January 16th):** Early Marx

1. Introduction to Marx reader (Tucker): pp. xix-xlii
2. Marx on the History of His Opinions: pp. 3-6
3. Discovering and Grappling with Hegel: pp. 7-25 and 53-65
4. Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844: pp. 66-125
5. The German Ideology: pp. 146-200

**Week 3 (January 23rdh):** Max’s Critique of Capitalism

1. Wage Labour and Capital: pp. 203-217
2. The Gundrisse: pp. 221-293
3. Capital, Volume One: pp. 294-442
4. Manifesto of the Communist Party: pp. 469-500

**Week 4 (January 30th):** Durkheim and Positivism

1. Introduction to Durkheim’s Work (Giddens): pp. 1-50
2. The Field of Sociology: pp. 51-68
3. Methods of Explanation and Analysis: pp. 69-88
4. The Science of Morality: pp. 89-107
5. Moral Obligation , Duty, and Freedom: pp. 108-122

**Week 5 (February 6th):** Durkheim on Solidarity and the Division of Labor

1. Forms of Social Solidarity: pp. 123-140
2. The Division of Labour and Social Differentiation: pp. 141-154
3. Analysis of Socialist Doctrines: pp. 155-172
4. Anomie and the Moral Structure of Industry: pp. 173-188
5. Political Sociology: pp. 189-202
6. The Social Bases of Education: pp. 203-218
7. Religion and Ritual: pp. 219-238
8. Secularisation and Rationality: pp. 239-249

**Week 6 (February 13th):** Weber and his Work

1. Biography, Political Concerns, and Intellectual Orientation: pp. 3-75
2. Science as a Vocation: pp. 129-156
3. Structures of Power: pp. 159-179
4. Class, Status, and Party: pp. 180-195
5. Bureaucracy: pp. 196-244
6. The Sociology of Charismatic Authority: pp. 245-252
7. The Meaning of Discipline: pp. 253-264

**Week 7 (February 20th):** Weber on the Emergence of Capitalism

1. The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism: pp. 1-125

<https://is.muni.cz/el/1423/podzim2013/SOC571E/um/_Routledge_Classics___Max_Weber-The_Protestant_Ethic_and_the_Spirit_of_Capitalism__Routledge_Classics_-Routledge__2001_.pdf>

1. The Protestant Sects and the Spirit of Capitalism: pp. 302-322

**Week 8 (February 27th):** Midterm Examination Due; No Class

**Week 9 (March 6th):** W.E.B Du Bois on Race

1. W.E.B. Du Bois and the Autobiography of Race: pp. 3-36
2. Concepts of Race (Section 1): pp. 37-96
3. The Souls of Black Folk (Section 2): pp. 97-240

**Week 10 (March 13th):** Spring Break, No Class

**Week 11: (March 20th):** W.E.B Du Bois, Representative men, politics, economics and education

1. Representative Men (Section 3): pp. 241-302
2. Politics, Economics, and Education (Section 5): pp. 344-480

**Week 12: (March 27th):** Mead on Social Psychology

1. Introduction: pp. vii-xxxi
2. Evolution Becomes a General Idea: pp. 1-18
3. The Problem of Society—How We Become Selves: pp. 19-42
4. The Nature of Scientific Knowledge: pp.45-61
5. Mind Approached Through Behavior: pp. 65-81
6. Mind and Nature: pp. 85-111

**Week 13 (April 3rd):** Mead on Mind, Self, and Society

1. Mind: pp. 115-196
2. Self: pp. 199-246
3. Society: pp. 249-282

**Week 14 (April 10th):** The Women Founders of Social Theory

1. Present at the Creation: pp. 1-18
2. Harriet Martineau: pp. 23-61
3. Jane Adams: 65-100
4. Marianne Weber: pp. 193-215
5. The Chicago Women’s School of Sociology: pp. 229-274

**Week 15 (April 17th):** Catch-up, Review, and Final Business

**Week 16 (April 24th)– Study Day**- Final Papers are Due

**Other Important Dates**

**Monday, January 15—MLK Day / University closed**

**Sunday, January 14—Last day to add a class without departmental approval**

**Monday, January 22—Last day to add a class with departmental approval**

**Monday, January 22—Last day to drop a course with full tuition reimbursement**

**Sunday, February 4—Last day to drop a course with no grade reported (no refund)**

**Friday, February 9—Degree applications are due**

**Monday, March 12 – Saturday, March 17—Spring Break**

**Sunday, March 25—Last day to withdraw from a class**

**Monday, April 23—last day of classes**

**Tuesday, April 24—Study day**

**Have a great semester and work hard!!!!! \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**