

SYA 4010: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Fall, 2008

Graham C. Kinloch

101 Bellamy

Phone: 644-5470

e-mail: gkinloch@fsu.edu

Office Hours: After class AND - by appointment

**Description:** This course introduces the student to the kind of theory which has developed in the field of sociology since its foundation, moving through to the contemporary scene. We shall cover major types of sociological theory, theorists, and issues, including the practical, which continue to be part of the sociological approach to explanation.

**Student**

**Evaluation:** Please see page 5 for details.

**Texts:** R. Collins & M. Makowsky, The Discovery of Society, New York, McGraw-Hill, 7th. edition, 2005.

J. Farganis, Readings in Social Theory, New York, McGraw-Hill, 5th. edition, 2007.

**NOTE:** Both the above books are REQUIRED, are PAPERBACKS, and USED COPIES may be available.

PLEASE NOTE

1. review sessions are held prior to each exam.
2. the final exam is not cumulative.
3. NO make-ups are scheduled.
4. NO extra credit for extra work is offered.
6. Incomplete (I) grades are only assigned to students with passing grades in the course as well as legitimate reasons for not completing all required work by the end of the semester.

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COURSE OUTLINE

PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Text Readings</u>	
	C. & M. Chapter Numbers	Reader Selection Numbers
1. What is theory? What is non-theory?		Introduction
2. What is theorizing?		
3. What factors affect theorizing?		
4. What is sociological theory?	Introduction	
5. What are the major types of sociological theory?		

PART TWO: TRADITIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Text Readings</u>	
	C. & M. Chapter Numbers	Reader Selection Numbers
THE ORGANIC MODEL		
Comte	1	
Spencer		
Durkheim	6	2
Tonnies		
General Assumptions and Implications		
THE CONFLICT MODEL		
Marx	2	1
Park	10	
Pareto	12	
Veblen		
General Assumptions and Implications		
EXAM #1		
SOCIAL BEHAVIORISM		
Weber	7	3
Mead		5
Simmel		4
Sumner		
General Assumptions and Implications		
TRADITIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY AS A WHOLE		

PART THREE: CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

<u>Topics</u>	<u>Readings</u>	
	C. & M. Chapter Numbers	Reader Reading #'s
INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY		
STRUCTURE-FUNCTIONALISM		
Parsons	12	7
Buckley		
Etzioni		
Tiryakian		
General Assumptions and Implications		
	EXAM #2	
MODERN CONFLICT THEORY		
Dahrendorf		8
C.W. Mills	13	8
Coser		
Reisman		
General Assumptions and Conclusions		
SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY		
Blumer		11
Goffman	14	11
Blau		9
Garfinkel	14	
General Assumptions and Conclusions		
CONCLUSIONS		

FINAL EXAM = WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10TH., 7:30A.M. - 9:30A.M.

GENERAL NOTES

1. The course attempts to apply sociological theory to specific political and social issues in modern society, i.e., its emphasis is practical rather than abstract.
2. In your review you should focus on the following:
  - a. the meaning of major concepts;
  - b. understanding the paradigms as a whole;
  - c. each theorist's major aims and concepts. These will be highlighted in the EXAMS;
  - d. APPLY each theorist's explanation to major contemporary social issues/problems.
3. Your course grade will be based on three multiple-choice exams, each worth a possible total of 50 points. Your final course grade will be based on your total score out of a possible total of 150 points in relation to the class performance as a whole. ALL exams are CLOSED-BOOK.
4. Attendance will be taken for administrative purposes only. You will be asked to SIGN IN.
5. If you find you are having problems with ANY aspect of the course (lectures, readings, exams, etc.), please see me to discuss this, rather than leaving matters until it is too late in the semester to deal with them constructively.
6. Student Learning Outcomes will be assessed using a short multiple-choice examination. Details will be discussed in class.

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OPTIONAL THEORY PAPER

For those who prefer writing papers to being evaluated on the basis of exams, a paper may be submitted which will be used as part of your final grade. You are still required to take all exams; however, if your paper grade is higher than any one of your exam scores, it will be used in its place, i.e., your highest scores will be used in computing your final grade with the paper counting IF it is higher than any of your exam scores.

Select a sociological theorist we deal with in class, one that interests you, and:

1. select one of the theorist's MAJOR works (i.e., book-length). You might find the bibliographical information contained in your assigned textbooks useful in this regard. Outline the work's major ASSUMPTIONS and/or points, focusing on the writer's major CONCEPTUALIZATION of SOCIETY and related processes (worth 20 points);
2. CRITIQUE the work's approach to society, CLEARLY indicating its advantages and limitations in dealing with modern society's major problems (worth 20 points); and,
3. draw some CONCLUSIONS from your above analysis concerning some of sociological theory's MAJOR CHARACTERISTICS (worth 10 points).

NOTES

1. the paper is worth a possible total of 50 points and is due the week of NOVEMBER 24th.;
2. please let me know in the next few weeks if you are interested in this assignment so I am aware of this:
3. you should work through the assignment in the following steps, informing me as you proceed: (1) select theorist and major work (next couple of weeks); (2) complete outline of paper and receive my reaction to this PRIOR to writing paper; (4) write a DRAFT from my review; and (5) hand in final paper by deadline.

**SYA4010: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY**

**PAPER OUTLINE**

**Student's Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Theorist:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Major Work:** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. MAJOR ASSUMPTIONS/CONCEPTUALIZATION:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ (/20)

**2. CRITIQUE OF ABOVE WORK:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ (/20)

**3. GENERAL CONCLUSIONS REGARDING SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Score:** \_\_\_\_\_ (/10)

**TOTAL SCORE:** \_\_\_\_\_ (/50)

**COMMENTS**

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