

**University of Hawaii at Manoa**  
**Soc 321 – Survey of Sociological Theory**  
**Summer 2012- Session I**  
**Meeting place & time- TBD**

**Instructor-** Nick Chagnon- MA University of North Carolina Wilmington

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**Office/Hours-** Saunders 218 MWF 1:30-3:30 p.m.

**Phone-** (808) 956-3726

**Course Description-** This class will provide undergraduate students with an introduction and background to sociological theory. We will cover select classical and contemporary theories. The course will introduce and explain select theoretical traditions and orientations, paying close attention to their historical origins. Furthermore, the course will illustrate to students how theorists have used their ideas to analyze and explain important social phenomenon, such as gender, the economy, politics, and crime. This course will be writing intensive and discussion oriented. Students will be encouraged to engage social theory through critique and application. Each student will learn not only to discuss theory but how to use theories to explain phenomenon in which they are interested. Throughout the course of the session, students should begin to understand how social theory can help them to better understand their personal experiences and the larger world around them. The ultimate goal of this class is to enhance students' abilities to think on an abstract sociological level—in short to enhance what C. Wright Mills called the sociological imagination.

**Learning Objectives-** At the end of the course each student should...

- Be familiar with major theoretical perspectives and concepts in sociology.
- Develop an ability to read theoretical texts and comprehension of such texts.
- Be familiar with major theorists, both classical and contemporary, and their historical roots.
- Understand the diversity of social theory, especially the strengths and weaknesses of major perspectives.
- Develop their ability to think theoretically, making theoretical arguments by applying theory to contemporary society.
- Enhance their sociological communication by developing an ability to communicate theoretical ideas, not only verbally but also in writing.

## Required Reading-

- Ritzer, George- *Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots: The Basics* 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. McGraw Hill- Available at the bookstore or online at sites such as Amazon.com
- Additional Supplementary Readings will be provided in PDF format on Lulima

## Grading Scheme-

4 Weekly Analytical Papers- 10% each  
Class Participation- 25%  
Final Application Paper- 20%  
Final Presentation- 15%

## Grading Scale-

|              |              |                 |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------|
| 94 – 100%= A | 80-83%= B-   | 67 – 69%= D+    |
| 90-93%= A-   | 76 – 79%= C+ | 64-66%= D       |
| 86 – 89%= B+ | 73-75%= C    | 60-63%= D-      |
| 83-85%= B    | 70-72%= C-   | 59% or lower= F |

**Academic Dishonesty-**Any form of cheating will not be tolerated. Any student caught cheating during exams will be removed from class and will receive an automatic F for the class. Plagiarism, in any form, will not be tolerated either. Not understanding plagiarism will not be an acceptable excuse. A presentation on plagiarism will be given during the first week of class. Furthermore, online references relating to plagiarism will be provided on Lulima. Students caught plagiarizing will be given one warning. Repeated plagiarism will result in the student being referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs. Please refer to the student code of conduct for further information.

## Assignments-

Weekly Analytical Papers- For the first four (4) weeks, students will write one (3-5 page) analytical paper. This paper will discuss and critique a theoretical argument made by a theorist we have discussed that week. Students will discuss the argument, demonstrating their comprehension of the argument. Furthermore, students will critique the argument, discussing its strengths and weakness, and specifying possible solutions to problematic elements of the argument.

Final Application Paper- For a final project, students will pick one theory and apply it to a contemporary phenomenon. This paper will be similar to the analytical papers in that students will discuss a theoretical argument and assess it. However, in addition to this, students will attempt to apply this theory, illustrating in detail, how this theory can be used to study and explain a particular phenomenon. As part of their application, students

will write a very short research proposal, detailing how they would use their theory in field research. The final paper will be approximately 7-10 pages long.

Final Presentation- In addition to the final paper, students will do a final presentation, which summarizes their paper to the class. Students will include all elements of the paper in their presentation, yet distill it into a short (10-20 minute) presentation. Students should include some sort of visual aid to enhance their presentation.

Participation- Any course in social theory should be highly interactive. Because of this students are expected to participate in each class. Students should come prepared to discuss each day's readings, ready to ask questions and respond to the instructor's discussion prompts. Guiding questions will be provided for each day's reading. Participation in class discussions is not only necessary for a productive class environment but is a necessity for each student to pass this course.

**Writing Intensive-** This class is designated writing intensive by the University of Hawaii. In order to meet the requirements of this designation,

- At least 18 pages of writing are required from each student.
- The class will involve different types of writing assignments, in different contexts. Specifically students will participate in in-class writing activities, in addition to graded, take-home assignments.
- Students will be given extensive feedback on writing assignments.
- The instructor will give two in-class writing instruction workshops to help students improve their writing throughout the session.
- Students may schedule conferences during the instructor's office hours to discuss writing improvement.
- It is expected that students will use constructive criticism to improve their writing throughout the session.

**Writing Workshops-** One of the major goals of this course is for each student to improve their ability to write both sociologically and in general. To further this objective, we will be conducting two writing workshops. Each workshop will consist of an entire class period dedicated to improving not only technical aspects of writing but also the foundational communicative elements of writing, such as organization, flow, and coherence.

**Attendance-** Attendance is mandatory and expected for each student, for each class period. Though an attendance role will not be taken each day, attendance for each class period will be a significant part of each student's participation grade. Chronic absence (missing more than 25% of the class) will result in course failure.

**Classroom Etiquette-**

- Cell phones should be turned to silent or off before class begins.

- Please do not text in class.
- Laptop computers may be used for note taking. However, the instructor reserves the right to revoke this privilege if computers become a significant distraction.
- Classroom discussions may touch on a number of sensitive topics. While students are encouraged to share their views, all views must be respected. Interruptions of or insults directed at other students will not be tolerated.

**Kokua/Students with Disabilities-** Any student who requires accommodations because of a disability should contact the Kokua program (956-7511 or 956-7612) and discuss this with me. Any required arrangements will be made.

### Course Schedule

| Week   | Readings   | Topics   | Assignments   |
|--------|--|--|---|
| Week 1 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritzer Ch. 1</li> <li>• C. Wright Mills- “The Promise” (on Laulima)</li> <li>• Max Weber- “Types of Social Action”</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to social theory</li> <li>• Roots of sociological theory</li> <li>• Introduction to sociological concepts</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analytical paper #1 due Friday</b></li> </ul> |
| Week 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritzer- Ch. 2</li> <li>• Karl Marx- “The ideology of capitalism” (on Laulima)</li> <li>• Max Weber- “Class, Status, &amp; Party” (on Laulima)</li> </ul>                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classical Icons- Marx, Weber, Durkheim</li> <li>• Writing workshop</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analytical Paper #2 due Friday</b></li> </ul> |
| Week 3 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritzer- Ch. 3</li> <li>• C. Wright Mills- “Grand Theory” (on Laulima)</li> <li>• Irving Goffman- from “The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life” (on Laulima)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classical Sociology continued</li> <li>• Georg Simmel</li> <li>• Symbolic interaction</li> <li>• George Herbert Mead</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analytical Paper #3 due Friday</b></li> </ul> |
| Week 4 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritzer- Chs. 4-5&amp;8</li> <li>• Patricia Hill Collins- “Learning from the Outsider Within” (on Laulima)</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functionalism</li> <li>• Neomarxism</li> <li>• Feminist Theory</li> <li>• Writing workshop</li> </ul>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Analytical Paper #4 due Friday</b></li> </ul> |
| Week 5 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritzer Chs 6-7 9</li> <li>• Harold Garfinkel- from “Studies in</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethnomethodology</li> <li>• Pierre Bourdieu</li> <li>• Social</li> </ul>  |   |

|        |  |  |   |
|--------|--|--|---|
|        | Ethnomethodology”<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional Readings TBD</li> </ul> | Constructionism<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Postmodernism</li> <li>•</li> </ul>        |   |
| Week 6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ritzer Ch. 10</li> </ul>                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Globalization</li> <li>• Course wrap-up and review</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final papers due Monday</li> <li>• Final presentations all week</li> </ul> |
|        |  |  |   |

### General Writing Guidelines-

-All writing will be graded on content, overall writing quality, grammar, and proper format.

#### -Content-

- Content should be relevant to the paper topic.
- The paper must demonstrate adequate comprehension of subject matter.
- Any arguments should be supported with evidence, not opinion.
- The paper should not merely regurgitate class materials but expand upon them.

#### -Writing Quality-

- Writing should be simple, clear, and concise.
- Use vocabulary properly.
- Paper must be clearly organized.
- Ideas in the paper should follow a logical progression.

#### -Grammar and Spelling-

- All words, especially proper nouns, should be spelled correctly.
- All sentences should make sense.
- Proper punctuation must be used throughout the paper.
- Papers must demonstrate proper verb usage, especially in terms of subject/verb agreement.

#### -Format-

- Papers should be double-spaced, using 12-point, Times New Roman font.
- Papers should be in ASA format. I have provided a link to an accessible online ASA format guide on Laulima.
- Sources should be properly cited.
- Papers must have a references page.
- All quotes should be attributed properly.
- Be extremely careful not to plagiarize. Self-monitoring for plagiarism is not a passive activity; you must be vigilant, actively examining your writing to make sure you haven't plagiarized.

\* I strongly encourage any students who have trouble with or are unsure of their writing to utilize the **writing center**. More information is available on their website at <http://www.english.hawaii.edu/writingcenter/>