

## Sociology 611: Seminar in Classical Sociological Theory Syllabus

Monday 3:00-5:30 p.m. Saunders 637

Course site on Laulima: <https://laulima.hawaii.edu/portal>

\*Check for additional readings and assignments

\*Submit assignments to Laulima in Word or PDF

Office hours: Tuesday, 1:30-4 or by apt.

Location: Porteus 240

Messages: e-mail or note in my box

e-mail: steinhof@hawaii.edu

### Seminar Aims

The purpose of this seminar is to help students acquire familiarity with the major classical sociological theorists and the ability to think analytically and critically about theoretical issues, as a foundation for independent work at the graduate level. Because this is a core course generally taken at the beginning of the graduate program in sociology, I will also try to ensure that by the end of the semester students have the basic reading, writing and research skills the program demands. Our tools for this endeavor are reading, lectures, class discussion, short exercises, and research and writing assignments.

**Student Learning Objectives** This course will develop your critical learning skills through reading and discussion of the writings of sociological theorists; your reading and analytical writing skills through writing and revising short papers about major theorists and a longer paper on a selected topic; and your oral presentation skills through the presentation of the longer paper to the class.

### Text:

Calhoun, Craig, Joseph Gerteis, James Moody, Steven Pfarr, and Indermohan Virk, *Classical Social Theory, third edition*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012. (ordered through UH, but you may get a better price on Amazon.)

Additional readings will be posted on Laulima or accessible online.

### Seminar Requirements

#### Classroom requirements:

All students are expected to attend class regularly, complete assigned readings and exercises before class and be prepared to discuss them, participate in class discussions, and submit written assignments on time.

#### Reading requirements:

- A. **Original works of major theorists.** The most important reading you will do for this seminar is to read selections by the theorists we will study. You should come to class each week having read the assigned material carefully, and if possible, with a question based on the reading to contribute to the discussion. Your papers should be based primarily on your readings of these original works. In addition to the assigned text of readings, other selections from original works will be posted on Laulima.
- B. **Background reading for lectures and class discussion.** We will begin the semester with a textbook comparison exercise. You are encouraged to become familiar with the range of available theory textbooks and use them selectively to meet your background and bibliographic needs. Warning: you cannot pass this class or write your papers using secondary sources such as textbooks. As a graduate student, you need to read the translated original writings and understand how the author reasoned and wrote.
- C. **Extended reading in secondary sources.** For your seminar paper you will also need to do some reading in the critical and secondary literature. In your paper you will discuss the major debates surrounding a key sociological concept and trace the use of the ideas of the classical theorists by others. You will therefore need to supplement your reading of the original work with some understanding of how other scholars have read and interpreted that work.

**Writing Requirements:**

- A. A notebook or note-set, carefully maintained, which includes all lecture and reading notes for this course, with appropriate bibliographic references. Develop a system for taking reading notes and then discipline yourself to maintain it. Your notebook should contain your reading notes for all assigned reading and class exercises, and all reading for the seminar paper. You may keep it as a computer file, but you will need to print it out for final grading. The notebook will be turned in at the very end of the course for evaluation as part of your grade, after which it will be returned to you.
- C. Three short papers (5 pages double-spaced) on Marx, Weber, and Durkheim. Each should present the major ideas of one theorist based on your reading, lectures, discussion, and how you have engaged with these ideas. All references to the theorists or to additional readings should be properly cited with full bibliographic references at the end.
- D. A seminar paper of about 10-12 pages on a sociological concept, researched through primary and secondary sources. Choose from one of the following concepts: power, class and/or social stratification, sociological method, alienation and anomie, social interaction, social structure, social change, the state, ideology, religion--or argue your case for an exception. The paper is to be written in two stages: a full draft, due in the middle of the semester, which the instructor will read, comment on at length and return for further work; and a final version, due at the last regular class session. I do not give grades to papers unless I have first read and commented on a draft and the draft has been revised and resubmitted. Please turn in both versions of the paper at the end of the semester, together with my written comments, so I can evaluate improvement. All references to the words and ideas of others should be properly cited in the text and included in full bibliographic references at the end of the paper.

Papers should follow American academic standards for the citation of other authors' words and ideas, and should follow *American Sociological Review* conventions for in text citations and bibliographic references. It is unacceptable and unethical to use the work of other scholars, in whole or in part, without full acknowledgment of the sources. This applies even to paraphrasing or using another scholar's work to support an argument. All such uses of other scholars' words and ideas must have a proper citation to the source. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated by quotation marks or indentation in the text of the paper, together with full citation information in ASR style. I expect you to practice the highest standards of scholarship in all of your work.

**Grading Policy:**

Your final grade in the seminar will be based on your grades for the three short papers (15% each) and the seminar paper (25%), the quality of your notebook as evidence of your reading (15%), and general class participation (15%). Theory is a fundamental part of your graduate education in sociology. Your grades in this and other core courses and seminars will be reviewed by various committees as you proceed through the program. My goal is to provide an honest evaluation of your overall performance in this course, based on a variety of measures. In addition, my philosophy of grading is that it should provide incentives and opportunities to learn, rather than being simply a judgment on your initial submission. The seminar paper will be done in two drafts, which gives you an opportunity to improve based on comments on the first draft (which is not assigned any points). You may also resubmit any of the short papers for re-grading based on my comments, provided this is done within two weeks after the paper was returned to you.

**Course Deadlines:**

- By September 13: meet with instructor to discuss topic for seminar paper and relevant readings  
 September 14: submit one paragraph on selected paper topic and main theorists you plan to use  
 October 5: First analytic paper on Marx due on Laulima by midnight.  
 October 26: Second analytic paper on Weber due on Laulima by midnight.  
 November 16: full draft of seminar paper due. Please post to Laulima AND submit paper copy in class  
 November 23: Third analytic paper due on Laulima by midnight  
 December 7: final draft of seminar paper due in class. Turn in notebook with paper

### Lecture and Discussion Schedule

August 24            Instructor out of town, class will be made up during exam period  
Assignments: Read materials posted on Laulima and do textbook exercise posted there

#### The Three Masters

Aug. 30, 14        Marx (September 4, Labor Day, no class)  
Readings: *Classical Social Theory*, Part III, pp. 133-191. (Read introduction and ALL of these selections)  
Two additional short Marx readings will be posted on Laulima

Sept. 21, 28        Weber  
Readings: *Classical Social Theory*, Part V, pp. 265-338 (Read introduction and ALL of these sections)  
Two additional readings will be posted on Laulima

Oct. 5, 12          Durkheim  
Readings: *Classical Social Theory*, Part IV, pp. 193-264 (Read introduction and ALL of these selections)  
One additional reading will be posted on Laulima

#### Other European Views

Oct. 19            Simmel and Freud  
Readings: *Classical Social Theory*, Part VI, pp. 361-403 (Read introduction and these selections)  
Additional readings may be posted on Laulima

Oct. 26            Critical Theory and the Frankfurt School  
Readings: *Classical Social Theory*, Part VII, pp. 419-486 (Read introduction and ALL of these selections)  
Additional readings may be posted on Laulima

#### The American Tradition

Nov. 2             Cooley, Mead, Park and W.I. Thomas  
Readings: *Classical Social Theory*, Part VI, pp. 341-360, 410-418 (Read introduction and these selections)  
Three additional readings will be posted on Laulima

#### Mid-Twentieth Century Perspectives

Nov. 9             Symbolic Interaction (Blumer, Goffman)  
Four readings: will be posted on Laulima

Nov. 16, 23        Structural Functionalism (Parsons, Merton)  
Readings: *Classical Social Theory*, Part VIII, pp. 487-542.  
One or more additional readings will be posted on Laulima

Nov. 30            Conflict Theories (Coser, Dahrendorf)  
Two readings will be posted on Laulima

Dec. 7             Wrap-up and Paper Presentations

Makeup Session during Exam week: rest of paper presentations

Recommended for further reading:

Durkheim, Emile, *Suicide: As Study in Sociology*. George Simpson, ed., John A. Spaulding and George Simpson, trans. New York: The Free Press, 1979.

Durkheim, Emile, *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Karen E. Fields, trans. New York: The Free Press, 1995.

Freud, Sigmund, *Civilization and Its Discontents*. James A. Strachey, trans. and ed. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1961.

Ritzer, George, *Classical Sociological Theory*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1996.

Tucker, Robert C., ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed. New York and London: W. W. Norton & Company, 1978.

Weber, Max., *Economy and Society, An Outline of Interpretive Sociology*. Roth, Guenther and Claus Wittich, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978. 2 vols.

Weber, Max, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. Talcott Parsons, trans. London and New York: Routledge, 1992.

All written work must be your own. Plagiarism, drylabbing, and ghostwritten work are **ABSOLUTELY FORBIDDEN** in this course. Plagiarism is grounds for expulsion from UH and will be treated according to the student conduct code.

“Plagiarism includes but is not limited to submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any work that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual's work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another's idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student's language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral or artistic material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; or "drylabbing," which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of a course or from previous terms” (University of Hawaii at Manoa, Student Conduct Code, Section H. Academic Dishonesty, Part 2, Page 6).

**KOKUA for Students with Disabilities:** If you feel you need accommodations because of the impact of a disability, please 1) contact the KOKUA Program (V/T) at 956-7511 or 956-7612 in room 013 of QLCSS, and 2) speak with me to discuss your specific needs. I will be happy to work with you and the KOKUA Program to meet your access needs related to your (documented) disability. (The KOKUA program will assist you in the documentation process if you have not yet completed it.)