

University of Toronto - Sociology
Summer 2019
SOC251H1S – Contemporary Sociological Theory

Tuesdays and Thursdays 6:10p.m. – 9:00p.m.
Location: ES4000
Earth Sciences Centre, 5 Bancroft Avenue

Instructor: Melissa Godbout

Email: melissa.godbout@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4:30pm – 5:30pm, by appointment
Room 335, Sociology Department, 725 Spadina Ave.

Teaching Assistant: Burin Yildiztekin burin.yildiztekin@mail.utoronto.ca

Office Hours: TBA

Course Description

This course aims to provide students with a selective introduction to major contemporary thinkers and approaches whose ideas have achieved wide influence, as well as on-going inquiry into the nature of sociological analysis.

Course Objectives

This course is organized in a way which encourages students to build and develop skills focused around critical reading, critical writing, critical discussion, active thinking, and collaborative learning. Students will be encouraged to approach issues discussed in a way that examines underlying assumptions, evaluates evidence, and interprets conclusions.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Evaluate and discuss a number of approaches central to contemporary sociological theory.
- Identify and assess key theoretical concepts and arguments.
- Write analytically and critically about contemporary sociological theory.
- Make and support an academic argument through use of evidence, both in discussion and writing.
- Use contemporary sociological theory to evaluate current events and social issues

Prerequisite:

The prerequisite for this course is SOC201H1 or SOC203H1. Students without this prerequisite may be removed from the class list at any time.

Accessibility Needs:

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible.

Readings:

All course readings will be available as .pdf documents on Quercus.

Description of Evaluation Components

Evaluation Component	Grade Weight	Due Date
Test 1: In-Class	20%	July 18
Test 2: In-Class	25%	August 8
Current Event Paper	25%	August 1
Reading Memos	15%	Ongoing throughout term
Collaborative Activities	15%	Ongoing throughout term

In-Class Tests (2)

There will be two in-class tests over the term. These will be comprised of content from lecture, class discussions and activities, and readings. Questions may take the format of definitions, short answers, and essays answers. Both tests will take place in our regular classroom during regular class time.

In-Class Test 1 (20%): July 18.

In-Class Test 2 (25%): August 8.

Current Event Paper (25%)

Due: August 1, submitted electronically to Quercus

For the final paper, students will evaluate a current event (past 5 years) using theories learned about in class. The goal of his paper is to demonstrate a strong grasp of course material by using it to **make an argument, not summarize the readings**. Students are required to develop an evaluative framework using thinkers from at least two different themes covered in the course. More details will be provided in class and a guidelines document will be posted to Quercus.

Reading Memos (15%)

DUE: 4:00pm Tuesdays and Thursdays, direct entry to Quercus

Before every class, students will complete a brief online memo about the reading for that class. Each memo will be worth 1.5% and will be entered directly into Quercus. This will help students to reflect on the material they are reading about, respond to thinkers' key arguments/concepts, and raise important questions. More details about the Reading Memos will be provided to students in the first class and a guidelines document will be posted to Quercus.

There is no make-up opportunity for missed reading memos and late submissions will not be accepted for any reason.

Collaborative Activities (15%)

A key aspect of strong learning is engaging material consistently and actively. In class we will be working through questions and problems based on the readings and lecture. In short, we'll be using class time to put into practice the material you're learning about. This means that each class is designed based on the assumption that students have completed the assigned reading and the online memo beforehand. Collaborative activities will be worth 1.5% each (a total of 10) and may take place in the beginning, middle, or end of class on Tuesdays or Thursdays, or extend to short online activities outside of class. More details will be provided in the first class.

There is no make-up opportunity for missed collaborative activities for any reason.

Late Work and Missed Test Policies

Handing in Work: All coursework will be submitted electronically on Quercus by the due date/time (outlined above). Tests will be written our classroom during regular class time.

Turnitin Submission Policy: *“Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin for review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com website.”*

Assignments not submitted through Turnitin will receive a grade of zero (0%) unless a student instead provides, along with their paper, sufficient secondary material (e.g. reading notes, outlines of paper, rough drafts of the final draft, etc.) to establish that the paper they submit is truly their own. The alternative (not submitting via Turnitin) is in place because, strictly speaking, using Turnitin is voluntary for students at the University of Toronto.

Work submitted to Quercus will automatically be scanned by Turnitin.com so you do not require a course enrollment key, password, or Turnitin account.

Late Work: All requests for consideration of late work must be submitted directly to the Instructor, not to the Teaching Assistant.

- Online Memos & Collaborative Activities: There is no make-up opportunity for missed collaborative activities or online memos. Late work will not be accepted for any reason.
- Current Event Paper: Late work will never be accepted without proper documentation from a student's physician, college registrar, or Accessibility Services (see below). This must be provided within 3 days of the assignment due date. As such, there are no per day penalties for late work. Work must be submitted on time, or appropriate documentation provided for acceptance of late submission.
- Missed Tests: Students who miss a test will receive a mark of zero unless reasons beyond their control prevent them from taking it. Within 3 days of the test date, students who wish to write the make-up test must provide the Instructor with a written request for

consideration accompanied by appropriate documentation (see below). If approved, the make-up test time and location will be communicated to the student. A student who misses the subsequent make-up test for a valid reason (additional documentation required) will not have a third opportunity to take the test. Instead, the grade assigned for the missed test will be the same as the student earns for the other test in this course.

You are expected to keep backup copies of your work in case it is lost or you experience computer malfunction. Technical difficulties or lost work are insufficient reasons for requesting to submit work late.

Documentation from Your Physician, College Registrar, or Accessibility Services

If you do miss the final paper deadline or a test, do not contact the Instructor or Teaching Assistant unless you have followed the steps described here within 3 days of the due date/test date.

In case of **illness**, you must supply a duly completed Verification of Student Illness Form (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor's note is also acceptable and while it does not need to specify the illness, it **MUST** state the start and anticipated end date of the illness. The Verification of Student Illness form or doctor's note **MUST** also state that you were ill on the due date of the assignment for a one day extension. For a longer extension, you must prove you were sick during a longer period.

If a **personal or family crisis** prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must obtain a letter from your college registrar (it is a good idea anyway to advise your college registrar if a crisis is interfering with your studies). This letter must specify the length of the extension that is justified under the circumstances.

If you are registered with **Accessibility Services**, your counselor will send an email to the Instructor on your behalf if you ask them to (with a one week extension the norm).

Supporting documentation must be provided to Melissa Godbout by email or in a sealed envelope addressed to Melissa Godbout. Your Teaching Assistant will never accept or review documentation and is unable to make decisions regarding extensions. When your paper is ready, submit to Quercus by the revised due date/time indicated by the Instructor.

Course Policies and Expectations

Attendance: Responsibility for being aware of what the Instructor says in Lectures (including administrative announcements) rests solely with the student. If a student is unable to attend a class, they are responsible for obtaining the information presented and should not contact the Instructor or Teaching Assistant for this information. For this reason, it is strongly encouraged that students have a “buddy” in the class who is willing to share lecture notes.

Classroom Etiquette: It is extremely important to foster a learning environment that is courteous and respectful to all in the class. Part of this involves ensuring that we are not causing unnecessary distractions for all those present in the class. These are some basic rules that will help everyone have the best learning experience possible:

- Arrive on Time: Coming into class late can cause a disruption and distract your peers and the Instructor. Please do your best to always arrive on time to class.
- Laptop Use: Laptop use in class is restricted to note-taking. Using laptops for other activities (e.g., emailing, browsing the web, social media, watching videos, etc.) will result in the student being required to turn the laptop off and not bring it to future classes.
- Cellphones - Turn them Off: Please ensure cell phones are turned off for the duration of the class. This includes ensuring the ringers are off as well as not using cell phones for non-class related activities (e.g., texting, social media, etc.).
- Recordings - Video/Audio/Photo: Videotaping, audio recording, or taking photos in class (or of things written on the board) is strictly forbidden without the Instructor's consent.

Course Communication with the Instructor and TA: Students will receive a response to emails within two business days (except for weekends and holidays). Following the below guidelines on every communication will ensure you receive a prompt response (emails which do not, may not receive a response):

- Course Code in Subject Line: All email communications **must** include SOC251H1S in the subject line.
- UTORONTO Email Account: All emails must be sent from students' utoronto email account.
- Signature: All emails must be signed with students' full names and student number.
- Professional Etiquette: Treat emails to the Instructor and TA as you would any other professional correspondence. Avoid the use of emoticons, slang, inappropriate language, or acronyms.

Getting Help From Your Teaching Assistant: Your TA will hold scheduled office hours throughout the term and respond to your emails and questions about course material. Please be judicious in your use of email. Use it only for questions that are brief and specific. Before sending a question by email, be sure to carefully check the syllabus, course announcements, or guidelines documents (all available on Quercus) to see if an answer is already available. Emails should not be seen as an alternative to doing the assigned readings, attending lectures, or familiarizing yourself with course documents. Expect to receive a response from your TA within two business days (except for weekends or holidays). For more in-depth discussions of the lectures, readings, or work completed, see your TA during office hours.

Grade Appeals: Instructors and Teaching Assistants take the marking of assignments very seriously, and will work diligently to be fair, consistent, and accurate. Nonetheless, mistakes and oversights occasionally happen. If you believe that to be the case, please follow the below guidelines:

- Step 1: Wait 24 hours: Before contacting the TA with inquiries about your grade, students should wait 24 hours. This allows the student to take time to review the work and carefully consider the grader's comments. In addition, this will allow you to review the guidelines and expectations for the assignment within the context of the comments you have received.

- **Step 2: Contact your TA:** After 24 hours, contact your TA with questions you might have. We strongly encourage you to see your TA during office hours for in-depth discussions of your grade. If you are still unsatisfied, within one week of receiving your grade, submit a written explanation to your TA of why you think the mark should be changed. Please note that statements such as “I need a higher grade to go to X or to keep my average GPA”, “It is not fair”, or “I got a higher grade on a different assignment/in a different class, so I deserve one on this assignment” are not compelling arguments. Instead, you want to make a clear and strong substantive case for why you perceive your grade should be changed. The TA will review your work, the original comments, and respond to you with their re-assessment within two business days.
- **Step 3: Contact the Instructor:** Should you still be unsatisfied with your mark after the TA's re-assessment, you can submit a written explanation via email to the Instructor. As in Step 2, you will want to make a strong substantive case for why the grade should be changed. This written request must be submitted within 3 business days of receiving the TA's re-assessment of your work. Once received, the Instructor will complete a re-marking of your work and provide feedback within two business days. *Please note that with the Instructor's re-grade your mark may go up, stay the same, or go down.* The grade provided by the Instructor will be final.

Academic Integrity

Cheating and misrepresentation of work will not be tolerated. Students who commit an academic offense face serious penalties. Claiming you didn't realize referencing had to be done in a certain way, didn't know the rules, or didn't “intend” to do it, are not sufficient rationales for lenience in academic offenses.

Avoid plagiarism by citing properly. Practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in University. Students are expected to appropriately cite sources in all written work. A first rule of thumb: each time you use a sequence of three or more words written by someone else, use quotation marks and give the source with page number. Whenever paraphrasing or discussing someone else's specific ideas, even if these are not direct quotes, you must provide appropriate citations.

You are expected to have read and understood the on-line document: “[How Not to Plagiarize](http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize)” (<http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>).

By enrolling in this course, students agree to abide by the University's rules regarding academic conduct, as outlined in the Calendar.

You are expected to be familiar with the “[Code of Behavior on Academic Matters](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behavac.htm)” (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behavac.htm) and the “[Code of Student Conduct](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/studentc.htm)” (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/studentc.htm) which spell out your rights, your duties, and provide all the details on grading regulations and academic offenses at the University of Toronto.

Weekly Topics and Assigned Readings

Students are expected to complete all readings before each lecture.

Tuesday, July 2: *Introduction to the Course*

- No readings

Thursday, July 4: *Structural Functionalism*

- Talcott Parsons & Robert Merton

Tuesday, July 9: *Micro-Sociological Approaches*

- Herbert Blumer & Erving Goffman

Thursday, July 11: *Exchange and Rational Choice*

- George Homans & Mancur Olson

Tuesday, July 16: *Networks and Social Capital*

- Mark Granovetter, Ronald Burt, & Robert Putnam

Thursday, July 18: * TEST 1 *****

Tuesday, July 23: *Power & Inequality*

- Antonio Gramsci, Anthony Giddens, and CW Mills

Thursday, July 25: *Michel Foucault*

- Discipline and Punish, History of Sexuality

Tuesday, July 30: *Pierre Bourdieu*

- Structures, Habitus, and Practice

Thursday, August 1: *Theories of Race and Gender* **Final Paper Due***

- Frantz Fanon, Judith Butler, & Kimberlé Crenshaw

Tuesday, August 6: *Review of the Course & Future Directions*

Thursday, August 8: * TEST 2 *****

NOTE: every attempt will be made to follow this schedule, but it is subject to change at the discretion of the Instructor.