

SOCI 210 Classical Social Theorizing

(TWF 1:30-2:20pm)

*Friday Classes Consist of Optional Tutorials (with the exception of Friday December 3)



Course Description

SOCI 210 examines the emergence of sociology in Europe and America, its founding ideas, and some its early theorists. The main ideas, concepts, and theorists composing the history of European and American sociology are reviewed, as well as the social and historical contexts from which they developed. The course centers on the canonical theories of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber but also considers the philosophical foundations of classical theorizing and some of the ways that the traditional canon has been expanded.

Instructor/Contact Details



Professor Sean Hier
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Course Delivery Format

SOCI 210 incorporates some of the principles associated with a flipped model of teaching (see below). Weekly in-person classes will be supplemented with pre-recorded lecture clips and instructional videos (6-20 minutes in length). Pre-recorded lectures and instructional videos are required material for the course. A small number of optional supplementary lectures will also be offered.

Pre-recorded video lectures will be available on Wednesdays in the week prior to the one we are studying. Videos will appear on Brightspace. Students may view the video lectures and instructional videos anytime after they are released (and as many times as they wish). Students will be expected to view video lectures prior to attending in-person classes.

In-person classes will take place on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. An optional tutorial will be offered on Fridays, save for November 12 (reading break) and December 3 (term exam). Tutorials will begin on September 10. The tutorial will be aimed at clarifying reading and video lecture materials. Some tutorial time may also be devoted to the application assignment.

Study guides (or overviews) will be posted for each term exam. Study guides consist of general overviews of main themes and ideas.

The Flipped Classroom Approach

A flipped classroom is a form of student-centered learning. Students will attend classes having viewed a set of lecture and instructional videos. The flipped classroom is designed to shift away from traditional group learning spaces (e.g., the physical classroom, conventional lecture) to individual learning spaces. In a flipped classroom, the instructor begins to move away from the “sage on the stage” model by encouraging a greater degree of independent learning and inquiry.

Shifting the conventional balance (somewhat) among in-person lectures, on the one hand, and readings and pre-recorded lecture materials, on the other hand, will benefit students in at least eleven ways:

1. Pre-recorded videos are concise, clear, and edited with text and images;
2. Pre-recorded videos will be viewed prior to attending in-person lectures;
3. Pre-recorded videos can be viewed ‘on demand’, based on students’ individual schedules;
4. Pre-recorded videos can be viewed many times, offering important supports when we encounter challenging material;
5. Pre-recorded videos will, in some ways, deal with the challenges students routinely face when they are required to take notes during in-person lectures (and to pay attention for the entire class);
6. Pre-recorded videos can be paused and viewed in small segments to meet each student’s individual learning needs;
7. Pre-recorded videos will ensure that material is not entirely missed when students are absent from class;
8. Pre-recorded videos will support students whose first language is not English;
9. Pre-recorded videos will support students whose first language is not theoretical;

10. Pre-recorded videos will enable the instructor to clarify, build on, and/or apply course materials during in-class meetings based on the level of difficulty from week to week (rather than always starting from the beginning);
11. Based on teaching experiences during the COVID-19 pandemic, the flipped approach will not only help students to succeed in this challenging course but also better appreciate the course material.

Evaluation

Evaluation will be based on the results of three term examinations (45%), an application assignment (20%), and a cumulative final examination (35%).

Examinations

Four term examinations will be administered. The term exams are worth 15% each. The lowest term exam score will be dropped. Students are permitted access to one conventional index or cue card (3" x 5") with anything written on it during term exams.

Term Exam 1: Tuesday September 28

Term Exam 2: Tuesday October 19

Term Exam 3: Tuesday November 9

Term Exam 4: Friday December 3

A cumulative final examination will be scheduled by the University in December. Students will be permitted access to one ordinary piece of paper (8.5" x 11") with anything written on it during the final.

Application Assignment

The purpose of the application assignment is to apply any aspect of the course to a real-life situation, event, issue, or phenomenon. The aim of this assignment is to demonstrate how classical social theorizing can explain or be applied to some aspect of everyday social life. Creativity is strongly encouraged.

There are at least two ways to complete the application assignment.

1. Essay (written) or Unessay Format

Assignments can be presented in a conventional essay-style format or a nonconventional 'unessay' one. Essay-style formats take the form of a written document spanning 6-8 pages (a normal essay or critical report).

Students choosing to develop an unessay project must discuss details with the instructor/teaching assistant before starting. There are many options (e.g., create a video game, write and perform a song, make a video/movie/mini documentary, develop an

artistic work, create a website, write a comic strip, publish an op-ed in a newspaper, create an instructional video to post on YouTube).

The purpose of offering an unessay option is to make opportunities available for students to take advantage of their own skills and talents to present information in the most effective way.

All assignments, essay- and unessay-style, will clearly explain/articulate the theoretical argument/point and demonstrate how it applies to the topic under investigation.

Out-of-class research (outside research) is required for this assignment.

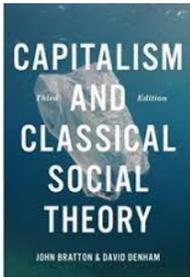
2. Independent or Group Project

Students can work alone or in a group. Group size should not exceed 2 students for written (essay-style) assignments and 4 students for unessay formats (size will depend on the project). The larger the group, the more sophisticated the assignment should be. Group members will be asked to submit a short statement on equitable contribution (i.e., to verify that each group member put in an equitable amount of work).

Textbook

Textbook

Bratton, John and David Denham (2019) *Capitalism and Classical Sociological Theory*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. Third Edition.



Publisher's Prices: \$57.00 (paper copy) and \$45.95 (eBook)

*Also Available for rental through Google Play

*See other purchasing options: <https://utorontopress.com/ca/ebooks>

What Students Have Said About This Course

Comments

engaging lectures

Very well prepared, and although not willing to provide posted copies of the notes– ensured that everything was covered thoroughly in class. I felt that he was sincere in his goal to teach well, and help us do well.

Came to lectures prepared, enthusiastic about content. Helpful that concepts were repeated a couple times to let them sink in!

Professor Sean Hier is quite good at making dry, dull, tedious course material somewhat easy and not boring to learn or dig into. I love his teaching style, ways of elaborating profound theories, warm and enthusiastic attitude towards each student; he is so humorous, kind–hearted, friendly, sometimes serious but overall very nice that I want to take his other courses again. Although SOCI 210 is a requirement for the department, the course load is pretty heavy and the materials are hard to chew, in my opinion, Prof Sean did his job unbelievably well and made me not so afraid of this pure theory class. I feel very lucky to meet him and become a student of him. Thank you, Sean!

he is very passionate about what he is teaching and has a good understanding of the of the subject matter

He is a good story teller. He is able to take a concept and use relevant examples to make sure that you understand what he is talking about. I learn better through examples and stories so that has been helpful for me. At first I was a little nervous because he does not post his slides online but that is okay... I think.

Providing a study guide was helpful. His sense of humour helped keep the class awake especially considering the class takes place in the eveing when everyone is ready to go home.

He understood the material well, which helped me understand the material well. I could tell he was enthusiastic about the topics while teaching. He also repeated things numerous times in his lectures, which was helpful as students were required to take notes off of what he was saying.

Dr.Hier is extremely knowledgeable in the subject matter and it shows during his lectures that he understands the concepts on a deep level.

Clear, full explanations of the content. For material that on the surface seems very dry, he made it interesting and he is an excellent lecturer

He was interested in what he was teaching.

passion for subject

He was engaging and made dry, dense topics seem more approachable with good examples and anecdotes. You could tell he is passionate about the subject which made learning more enjoyable.

Sean was very engaged in his lectures. He always had great examples when referring to specific sociologists and theories and he was always enthusiastic.

Professor Hier provides us with his passionate and informative lectures that definitely unfolds the course material in a clear and interesting way. I can get not only relatable, up–to–date examples, but also well–edited videos (e.g., images, key notes and corresponding background setups like books mentioned in each lecture clip) which definitely caught my eyes and helped me to focus more. The online formate is really helpful particularly for this course as I can replay the lecture clips without being lost in the speeding, condensed lectures.

The format of this class is really great. It's my favourite set up yet via online learning. The lectures were really engaging and the weekly quizzes really motivate students to keep up with the work load.

Very responsive to emails

Comments

I really like this way of teaching. For a student whose second language is English, the sociology terminology is unfamiliar. The video-recorded instruction allows me to not miss any useful information.

He is really good at breaking down heavy concepts into a format that is easy to understand.

Professor Hier provided a very organized course despite working online. The lectures managed to be captivating, and straight to the point with some fun anecdotes to keep you interested. Complex ideas were explained in an easy to understand way. This was my favorite class this semester.

He was a fantastic prof and was very engaging in his lecture videos.

Very nice guy !! Did his best to make historical information interesting

He was interested in his subject and seemed to enjoy his method of teaching.

the videos are well made and explain things clearly at good length

- Dr. Hier is highly organized
- The material was uploaded and accessible on-time
- I enjoyed the lecture videos, and the way the course was delivered helped me to fit the course into my own schedule
- I liked how he takes time to summarize what has been explained so far, it helped me to further grasp the concepts we've learned

passion, good examples, engagement.