

WESTERN UNIVERSITY  
BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

SOCIOLOGY 2270A  
Foundations of Sociological Theory

Intersession 2015

---

Dr. Peter Chimbos  
Department of Sociology

Class Times: Tuesday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon  
Thursday, 9:00 a.m.-12:00 noon

Phone: 519-432-8353 ext. 20662

Classroom: 201 Brescia University College

---

### **Course Description**

The objective of this course is to introduce the student to the classical theories and theorists (among others Harriet Martineau, Comte, Spencer, Durkheim, Weber, Marx, Simmel) of sociology. Lectures and class discussions will be divided into topic areas including the nature and importance of sociological theory, pioneers of classical sociological theories, development of major methodological and theoretical perspectives including social conflict theories, social functional theories, social interactionist theories, and phenomenology.

Since the early 1800s through the early 1900s Sociological Theory was an attempt by the intellectual giants to make sense of the complex social problems of urban industrial societies in which they found themselves. This course will help the student to see the world in the eyes of each one of the theorists. It is an amazing way to get into it.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Discuss the social and intellectual milieu that helped to shape the works of the classical social theorists.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of each classical theory and the way it provides distinctive perspectives to society's institutions and human behavior
- Display a good knowledge of the contributions of early women sociologists to theory and methodologies for studying and publicizing social issues and problems.
- Demonstrate how propositions grounded in early sociology theories can be examined and tested.

- Differentiate between social structural and social interaction theories and have a good knowledge of their limitations.
- Describe the contributions of classical theorists to contemporary theory construction and research.
- Discuss how the writing of early social theorists are concerned with the social problems confronting modern industrial-technological societies.
- Demonstrate an understanding of integrated theoretical models as applied to the explanation of social deviance and social problems.
- Explain how the ideas of each classical theorist were shaped by the events of his or her own personal biography.

**Prerequisite(s):**

“At least 60% in Sociology 1020 or Sociology 1021E.

**Antirequisite(s):** The former Sociology 2230 or Sociology 2420E

**Required Text:**

Ritzer, George Classical Sociological Theory. Toronto: McGraw Hill. 6<sup>th</sup> Edition (2011) or 5<sup>th</sup> Edition (2008) if available at Western’s book store.

**Suggested References When Required: (Do not buy these books)**

1. Allan, Keneth, Explorations in Classical Sociological Theory.
2. Ashley, David and David Orenstein, Sociological Theory: Classical Statements.
3. Coser, Lewis, Masters of Sociological Thought.
4. Durkheim, Emile, Suicide.
5. Goodwin, Glenn and J. Scimecia, Classical Sociology Theory.
6. Mills, C. Wright, The Sociological Imagination and The Power Elite.
7. Thomson, Anthony, The Making of Sociological Theory.
8. Weber, Max, The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism.

9. Wolff, Kurt, The Sociology of Georg Simmel.

**Evaluation Procedures:**

1. Mid-term Exam, May 29, 2015.....50%
2. Final Exam, June 23, 2015.....50%

The above exam dates are tentative and therefore subject to change.

WESTERN UNIVERSITY  
BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE  
Department of Sociology  
General Course Outline  
  
SOCIOLOGY 2270A  
Foundations of Sociological Theory

Intersession 2015

Course Instructor: Dr. Peter D. Chimbos

1. **Introduction** (Read text pp.1-14)

1. What is sociological theory?
2. The bearing of sociological theory on research.
3. The bearing of empirical research on sociological theory.
4. Social forces in the development of classical theory.
5. The study of ideal (abstract) types of human societies. (Howard Becker)

II. **Development of Classical Sociological Theories (Some of the Pioneers)**

1. **Ibn Kaldun** (1332-1406) An Arab historical and social theorist of the Middle Ages. (Read text p. 6)
  - a) used historical data to study societies (see his work "Universal History").
2. **Alexis de Tocqueville** (Read pp. 13-14 and Chapter 3)
  - a) Tocqueville's biography and social theory
  - b) contradictions in American democracy
  - c) race relations in America
  - d) evaluation of Tocqueville's views on freedom, democracy and socialism
  - e) Tocqueville's contributions to Sociology
3. **August Comte** (1798-1857) Positive Philosophy (1840) (Read text pp. 14-16 and chapter 4)
  - a) the law of three stages
  - b) methods for obtaining scientific knowledge
  - c) views of human societies
  - d) family and society
  - e) criticisms of Comte's sociological works

4. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) and William Sumner (1840-1910) (Read text pp. 33-35, 44-46 and Chapter 5)
  - a) organic analogy and evolutionary progress
  - b) militant and industrial societies
  - c) society as a social system
  - d) Spencer in retrospect: contributions and criticisms
  - e) Sumner's social Darwinism and his introduction to concepts of "Falways" and "mores"
  
5. Emmille Durkheim (1858-1917) (Read text pp. 16-18 and chapter 7)
  - a) the study of social facts
  - b) types of societies
  - c) Durkheim's concept of anomie
  - d) types of suicide and social organization
  - e) Durkheim's contributions to the study of religion
  - f) functions of crime and punishment
  
6. Max Weber (1864-1920) (Read text pp. 24-28 and Chapter 8)
  - a) the Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
  - b) types of authority
  - c) bureaucratic organizations
  - d) social action theory
  - e) methods of data collection
  - f) criticisms of M. Weber's sociological works
  
7. Early Women Sociologists and their contributions to sociological theory. (Read Chapter 10)
  - a) Harriet Martineau (1802-1870)
  - b) Jane Addams (1860-1935)
  - c) Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860-1935)
  - d) Ida Wells-Barnett (1862-1931)
  - e) Anna Julia Cooper (1859-1964)
  - f) Beatrice Potter Webb (1858-1943)
  
8. Other Pioneers
  - a) Edward B. Taylor (1832-1917)
  - b) Ferdinand Tonnies (1855-1936)

**MID-TERM EXAM:            May 29, 2015**

### **III. Consideration of Other Major Theoretical and Methodological Perspectives**

#### 1. Macrosociology (Macro-level Orientation)

##### A) The Social Conflict Perspective

1. Karl Marx (1818-1883) - Economic determinism and social class conflict. (Read text pp. 19-24, 57-58, 65-66 and Chapter 6)
2. William Bonger (1870-1940) - Development of economic determinism theory of crime.
3. Thorstein Veblen (1857-1929) - Theory of leisure Class (1899). (Read text p. 46 and Chapter 12)
4. Critical Theorists of the Frankfurt School (G. Lukacs, M. Horkheimer)
5. C. Wright Mills - Contemporary critical (radical) sociological theory. (Read text pp. 60-62)
6. W.E.B. DuBois (1868-1963) - race and ethnic relations (Read text pp. 53-54 and Chapter 11)
7. George Vold - Group/cultural conflict as an explanation of deviant behaviour.

##### B) The Structural-Functional Perspective

1. Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923) - Society as a system of equilibrium. (Read text pp. 35-36)
2. Talcot Parsons - Societies, communities and organizations as social systems. (Read text pp. 54-57 and Chapter 17)
3. Robert Merton - Functional analysis of cultural items.
4. Lewis Coser - Conflict Functionalism. Functional aspects of social conflict.
5. The application of the structural-functional perspective to smaller social units (eg. Delinquent gangs, and family).

##### C) Social Interactionist Perspective

1. Georg Simmel (1858-1918) - Emphasis on small groups (e.g. dyads and triads). (Read text pp. 28-31 and chapter 9)
2. Charles Cooley (1864-1929) - Primary groups and the making of the self. (Read text pp. 50-51)
3. George Mead (1863-1931) - Mind, self and society. (Read text pp. 51-52 and Chapter 15)
4. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) Biology, society, socialization and personality development. (Read text p.30)
5. Concluding remarks on the social interactionist perspective.

D) Other Perspectives

1. Phenomenology (Edmund Husserl, 1859-1938 and Alfred Schütz, 1899-1959) (Read text pp. 64-65 and Chapter 16)
2. Ethnomethodology (Harold Garfinkel)
3. Sociology of Knowledge (Karl Mannheim, 1893-1947) (Read text pp. 58-59 and Chapter 14)
4. Creative Destruction in Capitalism and Economic Growth (J. Schumpeter, 1883-1950) chapter 13

**IV. Review and Commentary on the Nature and Application of Sociological Theories**

1. Contributions of classical theories to contemporary sociological research and theory construction.
2. Toward integration and formation of sociological theories (see integrated theoretical perspective to deviance and crime).

**FINAL EXAM:      During Exam Period      June 23, 2015**

## 1. POLICY REGARDING MAKEUP EXAMS AND EXTENSIONS OF DEADLINES

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation. Academic accommodation on medical grounds will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete her academic responsibilities. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office in consultation with the student's instructor(s). Please note that personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are not grounds for academic accommodation.

A UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required** if a student is seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds. This documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial consultation with the physician/nurse practitioner or walk-in clinic. A SMC can be downloaded under the Medical Documentation heading of the following website: <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> . If it is not possible to have an SMC completed by the attending physician/nurse practitioner, the student must request documentation sufficient to demonstrate that her ability to meet academic responsibilities was seriously affected. Please note that under University Senate regulations documentation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** adequate to support a request for academic accommodation. All documentation is to be submitted to an Academic Advisor.

Whenever possible, requests for academic accommodation should be initiated in advance of due dates, examination dates, etc. Students must follow up with their professors and Academic Advisor in a timely manner.

The full statement of University policy regarding extensions of deadlines or makeup exams can be found at <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/2014/pg117.html>

## 2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal problem that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds may not be considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult an Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines (refer to the Registrar's website, [www.registrar.uwo.ca](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca), for official dates). You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

The Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory.

## 3. ABSENCES

**Short Absences:** If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

**Extended Absences:** If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work and arrange academic accommodations, if appropriate.

## 4. POLICY ON CHEATING & ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT



Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Students are urged to read the section on Scholastic Offences in the Academic Calendar. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Misconduct in the Western Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Student Services Centre, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

### **Plagiarism:**

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com.

### **Computer-marked Tests/exams:**

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

## **5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS**

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal signed by the student must be sent to the Department Chair. If the response of the department is considered unsatisfactory to the student, she may then submit a signed, written appeal to the Office of the Dean. Only after receiving a final decision from the Dean may a student appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic. A Guide to Appeals is available from the Ombudsperson's Office, or you can consult an Academic Advisor. Students are advised to consult the section on Academic Rights and Responsibilities in the Western Academic Calendar.

## **6. PREREQUISITES AND ANTIREQUISITES**

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Similarly, you will also be deleted from a class list if you have previously taken an antirequisite course unless this has the approval of the Dean. These decisions may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course because you have taken an antirequisite course.

## **7. SUPPORT SERVICES**

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at [http://www.brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar\\_services/index.html](http://www.brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar_services/index.html) . The Western Registrar's website is at <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm> . The website for the Student Development Centre at Western is at <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/> . Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

---

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.