

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY  
COURSE OUTLINE

COURSE/SECTION: SOCIOLOGY 333: L02 Contemporary Sociological Theory  
SESSION: Winter, 2008

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Amal Madibbo  
OFFICE: SS 948  
CONTACT: Phone: 220-6512: Email: [amadibbo@ucalgary.ca](mailto:amadibbo@ucalgary.ca)  
OFFICE HOURS: TuThu: 14:15 - 15:15 or by appointment  
LECTURES: TuTh: 12:30 - 13:45 pm  
LOCATION: TRB 102

SOCIOLOGY WEBSITE: <http://soci.ucalgary.ca/>

BLACKBOARD: <http://blackboard.ucalgary.ca> or [my.ucalgary.ca](http://my.ucalgary.ca)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course will focus on contemporary social theorizing, with an emphasis on how social researchers theorize about such issues as power, agency, social structure, social in/equalities, race relations, and gender issues. The work of such theorists as Bourdieu, Dubois, El Sa'adawi, Foucault, Giddens, Gramsci and Hill-Collins will be examined. The discussions and the theoretical perspectives –both from the North and the Global South– provide diverse ways in which to analyze the working of the structures of in/equalities that characterize post-colonial societies. We will also discuss the merits of a more integrated sociological theorizing. By the end of the course students will be able to effectively integrate sociological theory and concepts within the contexts of concrete empirical issues and substantiate arguments by locating them within a school/s of sociological theory.

**The class format** is primarily organized around lectures and discussions of the assigned readings. As well there will, on occasions, be DVD/video documentaries.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND STUDENT EVALUATION:**

The final grade for this course will be based on a (1) mid-term exam, a final exam, a term paper outline and a term paper.

## **1. Examinations**

A (1) **mid-term examination** will be held in class on February 14<sup>th</sup>. A **final exam** will be held during the official exam period.

These exams questions are based on required readings, lecture notes and documentaries we watch in class. These exams will consist of short answer questions, multiple choice questions and short-essay questions.

## **2. Term Paper Outline**

A term paper outline of one (1) double-spaced page (12 font), not including the bibliography, is due on March 25<sup>th</sup>. The term paper outline identifies the research topic you select for the major term paper, your main argument, your research questions and how you plan to conduct your research. It also includes a bibliography (a list of 4-6 sources you plan to use). The sources may include books, journal articles, one (1) internet source, one (1) media report, one (1) newspaper article or one (1) film. The bibliography incorporates at least two (2) sources from the assigned readings.

## **3. Major Term Paper**

The paper will be between six and eight pages (12 font), not including the bibliography, and is due on April 17<sup>th</sup>. This paper will analyze/critique a subject that you find interesting, provoking or problematical. You may, for example, choose to focus on how one or several theorists discussed in the course deal with a central concept such as power, agency, structure, race or gender, and/or compare how two or more authors approach questions of conflict, power, equity, democracy or freedom. Another possible topic might be viewing the utility of contemporary sociological thought for social order or social change by examining the relevance of the work of one or several authors for a current international event or for other issues such as immigration, education, work and ethnic and racial relations.

Your paper needs to include:

- 1. A Title Page:** Consists of your name and student number, the topic's title, the course's title and number, and the instructor's name.
- 2. An Introduction:** Outlines the overview/summary of the main themes, issues and objectives discussed in the paper.
- 3. Analysis:** Analyzes the main concepts, themes and issues. Incorporates the relevant literature review. You need to be analytical (not only describing concepts and themes, but explaining why and how they occur)

4. **A Conclusion:** Summarizes the topic discussed and the findings of your research.
5. **A Bibliography:** A list of the sources used in the paper (6-8 sources). Incorporates at least two (2) relevant course readings.

**Referencing:** Paper should consist of proper referencing in the body of the paper, as well as in the bibliography section at the end of the paper. You may choose to use the style of the American Psychological Association (APA) below:

An example of a style you may wish to use in the body of your paper is the following:

**Example:** Amin (1976) found that social structures are shaped by capitalism and unequal Development.

Examples of a style you may wish to use in the bibliography section at the end of the paper:

**Examples:**

1. Kivisto, P. (2008). *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
2. Durkheim, E. (1972). The Field of Sociology. In A. Giddens (Ed.), *Emile Durkheim: Selected writings* (pp. 51-68). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

More discussion and details on the paper will occur in class. If an extension has not been granted the late penalty is a deduction of 10%, from the mark you earn on your paper, per day if it is late.

**4. Breakdown, Weight, and Due Date of Student Evaluation**

<i>Assignment / Exams</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>% Grade</i>
Mid-term Exam	Thursday, February 14 <sup>th</sup>	20 %
Term Paper Outline	Tuesday, March 25 <sup>th</sup>	05 %
Term Paper	Thursday, April 17 <sup>th</sup>	35 %
Final Exam	During official exam period	40 %

**5. Letter Grade Assignment**

95 - 100 = A+	67 - 71 = C +
90 - 94 = A	63 - 66 = C
85 - 89 = A -	59 - 62 = C -
80 - 84 = B +	54 - 58 = D +
76 - 79 = B	50 - 53 = D

**Academic Accommodation:** Students with a disability, who require academic accommodation, need to register with the Disability Resource Centre (MC 293, telephone 220-8237). Academic accommodation letters need to be provided to course instructors no later than fourteen (14) days after the first day of class. It is a student's responsibility to register with the Disability Resource Centre and to request academic accommodation, if required.

**Student's Union Social Science Rep: Email:** [socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:socialscirep@su.ucalgary.ca)

**Safewalk Service:** The University of Calgary provides a "safe walk" service to any location on campus, including the LRT, parking lots, bus zones, and campus housing. For Campus Security/Safewalk call 220-5333. Campus Security can also be contacted from any of the "Help" phones located around Campus.

**Academic Misconduct:** cheating is regarded as a serious academic offense. Students are advised to consult the 2007-2008 University Calendar at [http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/2005/how/How\\_LB.htm](http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/2005/how/How_LB.htm), which presents a Statement of Intellectual Honesty and definitions and penalties associated with cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct.

**The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP)** legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public space, e.g., outside an instructor's office or the Department main office. Term assignments must be returned to students individually, during class, or during the instructor's office hours; if a student is unable to pick up her/his assignment s/he may provide the instructor with a stamped, self-addressed envelope to be used for the return of the assignment.

## **6. Handing in Papers Outside of the Class, Return of Final Papers, and Release of Final Grades**

1. When students are unable to submit papers at class, they should make arrangements to hand in their papers directly to the instructor rather than at the Sociology Department main office.
2. Final papers will not be returned through the Sociology Department main office. The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) legislation disallows the practice of having students retrieve assignments from a public space, (i.e., outside an instructor's office, the department office). Students who want their final papers returned by mail must attach a stamped, self-addressed envelope with the paper. Otherwise final papers will only be available for pick-up during the instructor's office hours at the end of this term or the beginning of the next term.

3. Final grades are not posted by the Sociology Department. They are only available online.

## **COURSE READINGS**

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:**

Mann, D. 2007. *A Survey of Modern Social Theory*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

### **COURSE PACKAGES:**

You will also need to purchase a course package consisting of various other articles for the course. Course packages can be ordered online (<http://www.calgarybookstore.ca>) or picked up from the University of Calgary Bookstore, First Floor of MacEwan Student Centre.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Week 1: Introduction**

January 15: Introduction to course and review of syllabus - no readings assigned

January 17: Understanding Society

Maan, D. 2008. "An Introduction to Social Theory" (Chapter 1). *A Survey of Modern Social Theory*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

### **Week 2: The Sociology of Bourdieu**

January 22

Maan, D. 2008. "Pierre Bourdieu and the Varieties of Capital" (Chapter 3), (pp. 85-89). *A Survey of Modern Social Theory*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

January 24

Jenkins, R. 2002. "Practice, Habitus and Field". In *Pierre Bourdieu* (pp. 66-102). London: Routledge.

### **Week 3: A New Marxist Theorist: Antonio Gramsci**

January 29 & January 31

Simon, R. 1991. "Gramsci's Political Thought: An Introduction". In *Gramsci's Political Thought* (pp. 11-67). London: Lawrence & Wishart.

## **Week 4: Structure and Agency: Anthony Giddens 1**

February 5

Maan, D. 2008. "Structure vs Agency: The Basics" (pp. 139-141) & "Anthony Giddens on Agency and Structure" (174-178). A Survey of Modern Social Theory. Toronto: Oxford University Press. &

Munch, R. 1994. "Power and Agency: Anthony Giddens's Theory of Structuration". In R. Munch. Sociological Theory (pp. 175-199). Chicago: Nelson-Hall.

February 7

Layder, R., Ashton, D., and Sung, J. 1991. "The Empirical Correlates of Action and Structure: The Transition from School to Work". Sociology 25: 447-464.

## **Week 5: Structure and Agency: Anthony Giddens 2**

February 12 Lecture notes – no readings assigned

February 14 **Mid-term Exam**

**February 17 – 24 Reading Week – No classes**

## **Week 6: Structuralism and Post Structuralism 1**

February 26

Maan, D. 2008. "Structuralism, Semiotics and Post-structuralism" (Chapter 7). A Survey of Modern Social Theory. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

February 28

McHaul, A. and Grace, W. 1995. "Foucault's Counter History of Ideas", "Power". In A Foucault Primer (pp. 57-90). California: UCLA Press.

## **Week 7: Postmodernism**

March 4

Maan, D. 2008. "Postmodernism: Political Economy and Communications" (Chapter 8). A Survey of Modern Social Theory. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

March 6

Maan, D. 2008. "Postmodernism: Time, Space and Culture" (Chapter 9). A Survey of Modern Social Theory. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

## **Week 8: Feminist Theory**

March 11

Nawal el Sa'dawi. 1986. "Memoirs from the Women's Prison". London: Women's Press. Translated from Arabic by Marilyn Booth. London: The Women's Press.

March 13

Man, G. 2007. "Racialization of Gender, Work, and Transnational Migration: The Experience of Chinese Immigrant Women in Canada". In S. Hier and S. Bolaria (eds.). Race and Racism in 21<sup>st</sup> Century Canada (pp. 235-252). Peterborough: Broadview Press.

Hill-Collins, P. 2008. "Toward an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology" (pp. 363-372). In P. Kivisto (ed). Social Theory: Roots and Branches (3<sup>rd</sup> Edition). New York & London: Oxford University Press.

## **Week 9: The Sociology of W.E.B. Dubois**

March 18 & March 20

DuBois, W.E.B. 1996. The Philadelphia Negro: A Social Study (pp. 229-256). Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press

## **Week 10: Contemporary Theory in Practice Session 1**

March 25 & March 27

Lecture notes – no readings assigned

**Term Paper Outline due on March 25<sup>th</sup>**

## **Week 11: Globalization 1**

April 1 & April 3

Maan, D. 2008. "The Global Village" (Chapter 11). A Survey of Modern Social Theory. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

## **Week 12: Globalization 2**

April 8 & April 10

Maan, D. 2008. "Globalization, Macdonalization and Corporatism" (Chapter 12). A Survey of Modern Social Theory. Toronto: Oxford University Press.

**Week 13: Contemporary Theory in Practice Session 2**

April 15 Lecture notes – no readings assigned

April 17 **Final Paper due April 17<sup>th</sup>**