Sociological Theory I

This course will provide an introduction to classical sociological theory with an emphasis on the works of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber. The aim is to provide a critical overview of the main ideas of these thinkers, to explore how their theories have been applied to modern society, and to use their writings to illustrate some general problems and alternative strategies of theory construction.

The following texts will be used extensively in the course and are recommended for purchase:

Evaluation will be based mainly on class participation. Roughly every other week each student will be required to introduce and lead discussion on a specific topic based on the readings. Three times during the term (once for each theorist) each student will also be required to write a brief essay discussing their own views, reactions, criticisms, or potential extensions or applications of a specific course reading (maximum length is 8 pages each). These are intended to be “thought pieces” and not mere summaries of the text. The first essay is due no later than November 4, the second no later than November 18, and the third no later than December 4. Copies of this syllabus and other course materials may be found at [http://pages.uoregon.edu/vburris/soc617/](http://pages.uoregon.edu/vburris/soc617/).

Course Outline:

**Week 1 (September 30).  Introduction**

**Week 2 (October 7).  Philosophical Foundations of Social Theory**

**Week 3 (October 14).  Marx: Early Writings and Historical Materialism**
Daniel Little, *Varieties of Social Explanation*, chapters 5-6.

**Week 4 (October 21).  Marx: Class and Politics**

**Week 5 (October 28). Marx: Political Economy of Capitalism**  

**Week 6 (November 4). Durkheim: Division of Labor; Politics; Socialism**  
Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*, chapters 5 and 7.  
Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, Introduction, Book One (chapters 1-5), Book Two (chapters 1, 2, and 5), Book Three (chapters 1, 2, and conclusion).  

**Week 7 (November 11). Durkheim: Suicide; Religion; Knowledge**  
Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*, chapters 6 and 8.  
Emile Durkheim, *Suicide*, Introduction, Book One (chapters 1-4), Book Two (chapters 1-4), Book Three (chapters 1 and 3).  

**Week 8 (November 18). Weber: Religion; Protestantism; Capitalism**  

**Week 9 (November 24). Weber: Authority; Bureaucracy; Rationalization**  
Anthony Giddens, *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*, chapter 11-12.  
Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber*, chapters 4-5, 8-10.  

**Week 10 (December 2). Weber: Class; Stratification; Socialism**  
Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber*, chapter 7, 14, 16.  
Sociology 32 Sociological Theory 5 Political Economy, Ameliorism, and Political Revolutions 5 Social Evolution 34 The Industrial Revolution and the Rise Herbert Spencer (1820–1903) 36 of Capitalism 5 The Key Figure in Early Italian The Rise of Socialism 6 Sociology 39 Feminism 6 Turn-of-the-Century Developments in Urbanization 7 European Marxism 40 Religious Change 7 The Growth of Science 8. Recent papers in Sociological Theory. Papers. People. Part II Methodological Paths and Perspectives for a New Social Theory of Sustainable Development 5. Sustainability and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): From Moral Imperatives to Indicators and Indexes. Sociologists develop theories to explain social phenomena. A theory is a proposed relationship between two or more concepts. In other words, a theory is explanation for why or how a phenomenon occurs. An example of a sociological theory is the work of Robert Putnam on the decline of civic engagement. Putnam found that Americans involvement in civic life (e.g., community organizations, clubs, voting, religious participation, etc.) has declined over the last 40 to 60 years. While there are a number of
Sociological theory. Quite the same Wikipedia. Just better. Sociological theories are statements of how and why particular facts about the social world are related.[1] They range in scope from concise descriptions of a single social process to paradigms for analysis and interpretation. Some sociological theories explain aspects of the social world and enable prediction about future events,[2] while others function as broad perspectives which guide further sociological analyses.[3]. YouTube Encyclopedic. 1/5. Sociologists develop theories to explain social phenomena. A theory is a proposed relationship between two or more concepts. In other words, a theory is explanation for why or how a phenomenon occurs. An example of a sociological theory is the work of Robert Putnam on the decline of civic engagement. Putnam found that Americans involvement in civic life (e.g., community organizations, clubs, voting, religious participation, etc.) has declined over the last 40 to 60 years. While there are a number of Sociological theories can be grouped together according to a variety of criteria. The most important of these is the distinction between Structural and Social action theories. Structural, or macro perspectives analyses the way society as a whole fits together. Structural theory sees society as a system of relationships that creates the structure of the society in which we live. It is this structure that determines our lives and characters.