

BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
Winter 2012
Sociology 2271b section 530
Survey of Contemporary Theory

Course Director: Dr. Lina Sunseri

Class Times : Mondays 12:30-2:30 pm and Wednesdays 1:30-2:30 pm Room BR 302

Office Hour: Wednesdays 3:00-4:30 pm, Room 121 St. James Building, or by appointment

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Prerequisites: Sociology 2270a/b

Unless you have either the prerequisite for this course, or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from this 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.

Antirequisite(s): Sociology 2240E or the former Soc. 230

OVERVIEW

This course studies several contemporary social theories from the mid 20th century to the present. We will cover some central contributors to structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, conflict theory, feminist theory, post-structuralism, post-modernism, and post-colonial theory.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, the student ought to know:

- the basic theoretical perspectives of major contemporary social theorists such as Parsons, Merton, Marcuse, Habermas, Bourdieu, Stuart Hall, Giddens, Foucault, bell hooks, as they strove to analyze the social changes happening in late modernity and our current social world;
- how critical perspectives on modernity, such as those of Foucault and Baudrillard, differed from more functionalist approaches, such as that of Merton;
- how contemporary social theorists are relevant to understanding the contemporary social world we live in.

FORMAL ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADE STRUCTURE

1. In-Class Test One Scheduled on **January 30, 2012**. The in-class test will cover readings from January 9, 2012 until, and including, January 25, 2012. It will have 2 essay questions and multiple choice/true false questions.....**30% of total mark**

2. In-Class Test Two. Scheduled on **March 12, 2012**. The in-class test will cover readings from February 1, 2012 until, and including, March 8, 2012. It will have 2 essay questions and multiple choice/true and false questions..... **30% of total mark**

3. Final Exam. Scheduled in April, it will have 3 essay questions and multiple choice/true and false questions. It will cover ALL course material from January 9 until end of term ... **40% of total mark**

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. George Ritzer, *Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots: The Basics*, 2010, 3rd edition. [RTZ]
2. Peter Kivisto, *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, 2011, 4th edition. [PK]
3. There will be some readings that will be available through the Brescia's library, placed on a 2 hour reserve.

Topics and Readings

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE AND INTRODUCING CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORY January 9

- *Introduction to Sociological Theory*, 1-11, RTZ

2. Structural Functionalism January 11-16

- *Structural Functionalism*, 65-87, RTZ

- R. Merton, "The Unanticipated consequences of Social Action", 187-194, PK

- T. Parson, "The Subsystems of Society", 195-200, PK

3. Symbolic Interactionism January 18-23

- *Symbolic Interactionism*, 137-148, RTZ

- H. Blumer, "Society as Symbolic Interaction", 242-248, PK

- E. Goffman, "Performances", 249-254

4. Ethnomethodology and Phenomenology January 25

Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis, 149-155, RTZ

A. Schutz, "Indirect Social Relationships", 255-260, PK

H. Garfinkel, "Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities", PK

January 30 In-Class Test One

5. Critical Theory –Part One February 1-8

Contemporary Grand Theories, 106-136, RTZ

H. Marcuse, "One-Dimensional Man", 426-431, PK

J. Habermas, "Three Normative Models of Democracy", 442-450, PK

A. Giddens, "The Reflexivity of Modernity", 461-464

Critical Theory –Part Two February 13-15

Globalization Theory, 272-309, RTZ

D. Kellner, "Theorizing Globalization", 550-570, PK

February 20-24: READING WEEK

6. Feminist Theory- February 27-March 8

Contemporary Feminist Theories, 193-228, RTZ

C. West and D. Zimmerman, "Doing Gender", 318-325, PK

J. Butler, "Subversive Bodily Acts", 326-333, PK

P. Hill Collins, "Toward an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology", 334-443, PK

b hooks, "Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression", available at the Brescia Library

March 12 In-Class Test Two

7. "The Posts": A Look at some Postmodern, Poststructural and Postcolonial Theories March 14-April 11

Postmodern Grand Theories, 229-256, RTZ

P. Bourdieu, "The Correspondence between Goods Production and Taste Production", 483-490, PK

J. Baudrillard, "Advertising", 491-496, PK

M. Foucault, "Panopticism", 497-502

L. Sunseri, "Theorizing Nations and Nationalisms: From Modernist to Indigenous Perspectives", available at the Brescia Library

P. Gilroy, "Between Camps: Race and Culture in Postmodernity", 374-384, PK

H. Bhabha, "The Postcolonial and The Postmodern: The Question of Agency", available at the Brescia Library.

S. Hall, "When Was the 'Postcolonial'? Thinking at the Limit", available at the Brescia Library.

BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

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.

If supporting documentation is from a family physician, Hospital Urgent Care Centre or Emergency Department, or a walk-in clinic a UWO Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is **required**. To download an SMC go to <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm> and follow the link under "Medical Documentation". Documentation should be obtained at the time of the initial visit. If it is not possible to have an SMC completed by the attending physician, 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 document-ation stating simply that the student "was seen for a medical reason" or "was ill" is **not** considered 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/2011/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, 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

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.

The University of Western Ontario Registrar's website is at <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/index.cfm>

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.