**SOC 483: Sociological Theory**

Professor: Mary B. Olson

Hours: Variable-check day- to-day schedule

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Office Hrs: 3-4 T,W, and by appointment

# Description on the Course:

This course consolidates the introductory reviews of sociological inquiry in earlier courses and initiates an intensive focus on sociological explanations. The organization of material develops a chronology of contributions to sociological theory and concentrates on the works of major classical theorists. The chronology considers the impacts of the Industrial and French Revolutions, the alienation of the workers, and the formation of bureaucratic states on the thinking of those theorists who advanced the development of sociological inquiry.

# Learning Objectives of the Course:

Students should emerge from the course fully familiar with the key ideas of three classical sociological theorists: Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber. Students should be able, in both written and verbal form, to compare and contrast the works of these theorists and to situate each of their works in its socio-historical context. This course supports the Educational Priorities and Outcomes of Cornell College with an emphasis on knowledge, inquiry, and communication.

# Texts:

Zeitlin, Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory, (several copies on reserve in library)

Collins and Makowsky, The Discovery of Society.

Heilbroner, The Worldly Philosophers.

Marx and Engels, The Communist Manifesto.

Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society.

Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

# Course Requirements:

Class activities will vary from day to day. You are encouraged to ask questions, raise issues, and otherwise contribute to classroom discussions. You are expected to attend class, and to complete all course readings and assignments on time. The course features both a heavy reading schedule and challenging reading material. Every effort will be made to schedule adequate time for students to carefully read the texts. Lectures and class discussions will focus on developing an in- depth understanding of the assigned material.

Each student is responsible for one mid-term take-home examination, one final take-home examination, one group presentation, one short analysis paper, and active class participation.

Both the mid-term and final examinations will feature two required essays that will ask you to analyze, connect, compare, and contrast the ideas of classical sociological theorists. The in-class presentation will require you to summarize and analyze a chapter from Durkheim’s, The Division of Labor in Society. The analysis paper assigns you the task of demonstrating connections between classical sociological theory and a work situation presented in the film, Modern Times. Your participation grade depends upon a combination of attendance and active class participation.

Excellent examinations, analysis papers, and presentations will be well organized and well argued, they will demonstrate evidence of critical thinking, and indicate both breadth and depth of understanding of the course material. Class discussions will call upon your ability to outline major ideas covered in each of the days readings, to connect ideas in each day’s readings with those addressed in earlier books and articles, and to reflect upon the day’s readings through an identification of questions the readings raise for you.

# Grading:

Grades for the course will be computed using the following distribution:

# Exam 1=30%

# Exam 2=30%

# Presentation=l0%

Analysis paper =20%

# Participation=10%

Grades will be assigned using the following criteria:

A’s—evidence outstanding breadth and depth of coverage of material and indicate an outstanding level of knowledge of and ability to analyze concepts and key ideas.

B’s-evidence good breadth and depth of coverage of material and indicate a good level of knowledge of and ability to analyze concepts and key ideas.

C’s-evidence average breadth and depth of coverage of material and indicate an average level of knowledge of and ability to analyze concepts and key ideas.

D’s-evidence below average breadth and depth of coverage of material and indicate a below average level of knowledge of and ability to analyze concepts and key ideas.

F’s-evidence an unacceptably low level of breadth and depth of coverage of material and indicate an unacceptably low level of knowledge of and ability to analyze concepts and key ideas.

# Academic Honesty Expectations:

Cornell College expects all members of the Cornell community to act with academic integrity. An important aspect of academic integrity is respecting the work of others. A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is his or her work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College’s requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty. The procedures regarding how the College deals with cases of academic dishonesty appear in The Catalogue, under the heading “Academic Honesty.

# Students with Disabilities:

Cornell College makes reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities. Students should notify the Coordinator of Academic Support and Advising and their course instructor of any disability related accommodations within the first three days of the term for which the accommodations are required, due to the fast pace of the block format. For more information on the documentation required to establish the need for accommodations and the process of requesting the accommodations, see [The Disability Services and Resources Web Page](http://www.cornellcollege.edu/academic-support-and-advising/disabilities/index.shtml).

# COURSE OUTLINE:

All readings must be done before class meets. Articles and books on reserve are denoted by an ®

## FIRST MONDAY:

**Introduction/The Enlightenment**

Course will meet: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

® Irving M. Zeitlin, The Enlightenment (Chapters=The Enlightenment, Philosophical Foundations (One)) in Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory. On reserve in the library.

I may also lecture from the following source which is in your folder:

® Charles Lemert, “Social Theory: Its Uses and Pleasures,” in Charles Lemert,” (ed.), Social Theory: The Multicultural and Classic Readings (2nd. Ed.). Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press, l999, Pp.1-20.

# FIRST TUESDAY:

**The Enlightenment, the French Revolution and the Development of Sociological Theory**

Course will meet: 12:30-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

® Irving M. Zeitlin, "The Enlightenment (Chapters= The Enlightenment, Philosophical Foundations (One); Montesquieu (Two); Rousseau (Three))" in Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory.

## FIRST WEDNESDAY:

**The Response to Modernity: Conservatism, Saint Simon and Comte**

Course will meet: 10:00-ll:00 a.m. (if necessary) and l:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

® Zeitlin, "Post-Revolutionary Thought (Chapters=The Romantic Conservative Reaction: Bonald and Maistre; Saint-Simon; and Auguste Comte)," in Ideology and the Development of Sociological Theory.

Collins and Makowsky, "The Prophets of Paris: Saint‑Simon and Comte," in The Discovery of Society.

## FIRST THURSDAY:

## The Industrial Revolution, the Dismal Science and the Utopian Socialists

Course will meet from 9:00-l1:00 a.m. and l:00-3:00 p.m. if necessary

Readings:

Heilbroner, "The Wonderful World of Adam Smith," and "The Gloomy Presentiments of Parson Malthus and David Ricardo," and The Visions of the Utopian Socialists in The Worldly Philosophers.

## FIRST FRIDAY:

**Reading Day**

## Assignment: Begin reading material on Marx

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## SECOND MONDAY:

**An Introduction to Karl Marx**

Course will meet: l:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

Collins and Makowsky, "Sociology of the Underground: Karl Marx," in Discovery of Society.

Heilbroner, “Karl Marx,” The Worldly Philosophers

(Discuss Marx’s sociology and his theory of politics)

## SECOND TUESDAY:

**Karl Marx: Philosophy and Economics**

Course will meet: 9:00-ll:00 a.m. and l:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

Heilbroner, "Karl Marx" The Worldly Philosophers (review)

® Zeitlin, “The Marxian Watershed” --chapters on “The Philosophical Orientations of Karl Marx” and Marx’s Relationship to Hegel and Feuerbach.”

(Discuss Marx=s philosophy and his economics)

## SECOND WEDNESDAY:

**Karl Marx Continued**

Course will meet: 9:00-ll:00 a.m. and l:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The Communist Manifesto.

®Zeitlin, "The Marxian Watershed"—“Marx’s Historical Sociology.”

## SECOND THURSDAY:

**Completing Marx/Introducing Durkheim**

Course will meet: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m., 11:30-12:00 is a review session for examination)

Readings: Collins and Makowsky, Dreyfus’ Empire: Emile Durkheim and George Sorel, in The Discovery of Society (You don’t need to read the short section on George Sorel.)

**Activity: Review Session 11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Take-home examination handed out at the end of class**

## SECOND FRIDAY:

Take-home Examination due via word attachment to email addressed to [Molson@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:Molson@cornellcollege.edu) by noon.

## WEEKEND ASSIGNMENT:

**Begin Reading Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society, on Friday and continue over the weekend. By Monday, you need to have read all of the text including both prefaces. (Exception, do not read: Book 1, Ch. 7 and Book 2, Ch 1 and 4.)**

## THIRD MONDAY:

**Durkheim’s Perspective/Understanding the DOL**

Course will meet: l:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

Durkheim, The Division of Labor in Society. (Continue Reading)

(Review): Collins and Makowsky, "Dreyfus' Empire: Emile Durkheim and George Sorel," in The Discovery of Society

**Activity: Group presentation appointments from 3:00-5:00**

## THIRD TUESDAY:

**Presentations on The Division of Labor in Society**

Course will meet: 9:00-ll:30 a.m. and l2:30-3:00 p.m.

## Activity: Group Presentations

## THIRD WEDNESDAY:

**Nietzsche and an Introduction to Max Weber**

Course will meet: l:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

Collins and Makowsky, “Nietzsche’s Madness,” and “Max Weber: The Disenchantment of the World” in The Discovery of Society.(Discuss Nietzsche and begin to discuss Weber=s relationship to Nietzsche and to Marx, his methodology and his theory of class).

**Activity: Analysis paper question distributed.**

## THIRD THURSDAY:

**Max Weber**

Course will meet: 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and l:00-3:00 p.m. if needed.

Readings: Max Weber: The Disenchantment of the World in Collins and Makowsky (Discuss the Rest of Weber’s Ideas found in Collins and Makowsky chapter.)

## THIRD FRIDAY:

**Reading day. Read Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism. This book and the questions distributed must be completed by Monday.**

## FOURTH MONDAY:

**Max Weber: The Protestant Ethic**

Course will meet: 9:00-ll:00 a.m. and, if needed, 12:00-3:00 p.m.

Readings:

Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.

**®** Anthony Giddens, "Max Weber: Protestantism and Capitalism" Capitalism and Modern Social Theory. (Handout)

## FOURTH TUESDAY:

**Max Weber: Capitalism, Phenomena of the West**

Course will meet: 9:00-ll:00 a.m. and l2:30-3:00 p.m. (2:30-3:00 is study session for final.)

Readings:

® Zeitlin, “Max Weber,” Ideology and the Development of Modern Social Theory.

(Discuss: Why didn’t capitalism develop in the Oriental World? and Weber on the nature of power and powerlessness in the modern world).

**Activity: Analysis paper question due.**

**Activity: 2:30-3:00 Study Session for Final**

**Assignment: Final take-home examination distributed. It must be returned as a word attachment to the email address:** [**Molson@cornellcollege.edu**](mailto:Molson@cornellcollege.edu) **by noon on Wednesday.**

## FOURTH WEDNESDAY:

**Answers to final take-home examination due by noon.**