

Mizan-Tepi University
College of Social Science and Humanities
Department of Sociology
Course Outline

Background Information

Instructor's Name: **Demelash Belay**

Consultation Hours: **Monday (8:20-10:20 Local Time)**

Wednesday (8:20-10:20 Local Time)

Friday (8:20-10:20 Local Time)

Module Name: **Sociological Theories**

Module Code: **SocM1041**

Course Name: **Sociological Theories II: Contemporary Perspectives**

Course Code: **SOCl1042**

Module ECTS: **5 ECTS**

Total Module Study Hour: **135 Hours**

1. Course Description

This course deals with contemporary sociological theories that were developed in the late 20th century and afterwards. After the classical phase, sociology came to be recognized as a distinct perspective, and widely popularized in European as well as American academics. One of the results of this consolidation was a process of reinterpretation of classical theory and its conversion into organized schools of thought. This course provides a broad coverage of such contemporary sociological schools of thought including the likes of structural functionalism, neo-functionalism, conflict theory, neo-Marxist theories and others.

2. Objectives of the Course

The primary objective of the course is to impart to students the basic knowledge about the development of sociological theories in modern period. After completing the course, students will be able to develop the skills to articulate, compare, contrast, and apply selected theoretical perspectives to their own research and/or interests.

3. Mode of Delivery and Study Hour

The mode of delivery for this course is interactive teaching and learning, independent learning and collaborative learning. The total study hours allocated for this course is 135 hours. Of this time, 30 hours is allocated for lectures, 19 hours for assignments, 15 hours for presentation, 20 hours for tutorials and problem solving sessions, 16 hours for assessment and 35 hours for independent study.

4. Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to understand the relationship between social change and the formulation of theoretical constructs as well as understand, analyze, and use contemporary sociological theories as tools for social research.

5. Course Content

Section One: Introduction to the Structure of Contemporary Sociological Theories

Section Two: Structural-Functionalism and Neo-Functionalism

2.1. Structural Functionalism

- 2.1.1. Basic Premises of Functionalism
- 2.1.2. Talcott Parsons: Theory of the Social System
- 2.1.3. Robert Merton's Paradigm of Functional Analysis
- 2.1.4. Critical Evaluation of Functionalism

2.2. Neo-Functionalism

Section Three: Conflict Theory

- 3.1. Premises of Conflict Theory
- 3.2. Ralph Dahrendorf's Dialectical Conflict Theory
- 3.3. Lewis W. Coser's Functional Conflict Perspective

Section Four: Neo-Marxian Theory

- 4.1. The Context of Origin
- 4.2. Varieties of Neo-Marxism
 - 4.2.1. Classical Marxism

- 4.2.2. Hegelian Marxism
- 4.2.3. Critical Theory
 - 4.2.3.1. The Major Critiques of Social and Intellectual Life
- 4.2.4. Historically Oriented Marxism
 - 4.2.4.1. Immanuel Wallerstein: The Modern World-System
- 4.2.5. Post-Marxist Theory

Section Five: Symbolic Interactionism

- 5.1. Common Themes of Interactionism
- 5.2. George Herbert Mead's The Self
- 5.3. Herbert Blumer's Interpretation and Methodology
- 5.4. Erving Goffman's Dramaturgy and the Interaction Order
- 5.5. Criticism of the Interactionist Perspective

Section Six: Exchange and Rational Choice Theories

- 6.1. Premises and Roots of Exchange Theory
- 6.2. Social Exchange Theory of George C. Homans
- 6.3. Peter M. Blau's Structural Exchange Theory

Section Seven: Postmodernism and Contemporary Feminism

- 7.1. Frederic Jameson's Moderate Postmodern Social Theory
- 7.2. Jean Baudrillard's Extreme Postmodern Social Theory
- 7.3. Postmodern Social Theory and Sociological Theory
- 7.4. Criticisms Against Postmodernism
- 7.5. Contemporary Feminism

6. Mode of Assessment

- ☑ **Assignment - Article Review:** Students will select the work of one contemporary sociological theory and provide the general idea of the theory. They will also identify strengths, weakness and possible application of the theory in contemporary society. It will account for 20% of the total course mark.
- ☑ **Tests:** Students will take tests which will account for 20% of the total course mark.
- ☑ **Quiz:** will account for 10% of the total mark
- ☑ **Final Examination:** There will also be a final exam at the end of the course which will account for 50 % of the total course mark.

7. Reading Materials

Basic Texts

Ritzer, Gorge (1996). Sociological Theory. 4th Edition; New York: McGraw-Hill. (Or any other edition of the same book)

Wallace, Ruth and Alison Wolf (1995). Contemporary Sociological Theory: Continuing the Classical Tradition (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall) [Call No. HM, 51, W15, 1995]

Collins, Randal (1988). Theoretical Sociology. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Pub. [Call No: F, HM, 433]

Supporting Texts and Reading Materials

Farganis, James (1993). Readings in Social Theory: The Classical Tradition Post-Modernism (New York: McGraw-Hill) [Call No: HM, 24, R .37]

Cuff, E. C. et al. (1990). Perspectives in Sociology. London: Unwin Hyman [Call No.: HM 66, P37, 1990] Merton, Robert (1957). Social Theory and Social Structure. Glencoe, Ill: Free Press [Call No.: HM 66, .M4, 1957]

Course Schedule

Course Duration: **Ginbot 04 – Ginbot 30**

Class Schedule (Local Time): **Monday = 2:00 – 5:00**

Tuesday = 2:00 – 6:00

Wednesday = 2:00 – 5:00

Thursday = 2:00 – 6:00

Friday = 2:00 – 4:00

Course Content and Allotted Lecture Time

Ginbot, 2008 E.C.							
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
	1/09/2008	2/09/2008	3/09/2008	4/09/2008	5/09/2008	6/09/2008	7 th
Week 1	-	-	-	Introduction to the Structure of Contemporary Sociological Theories	Structural-Functionalism	-	-
Week 2	8/09/2008	9/09/2008	10/09/2008	11/09/2008	12/09/2008	13/09/2008	14 th
	Structural-Functionalism	Structural-Functionalism	Neo-Functionalism	Conflict Theory	Conflict Theory	-	-
Week 3	15/09/2008	16/09/2008	17/09/2008	18/09/2008	19/09/2008	20/09/2008	21 st
	1st Exam: Chapter 1 and 2	Neo-Marxian Theory	Neo-Marxian Theory	Symbolic Interactionism	Symbolic Interactionism	-	-
Week 4	22/09/2008	23/09/2008	24/09/2008	25/09/2008	26/09/2008	27/09/2008	28 th
	2nd Exam: Chapter 3 and 4	Symbolic Interactionism	Exchange Theory	Exchange Theory Final Day for Submitting Group Assignment	Rational Choice Theory	-	-
	29/09/2008	30/09/2008	1/10/2008	2/10/2008	3/10/2008	-	-
	Group Assignment Presentation	Postmodernism and Contemporary Feminism	-	-	Final Exam: Chapter 5 and 6	-	-