

**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 I: Classical Perspectives**

Course Code: **SOCI3011**

Module ECTS: **5 ECTS**

Total Module Study Hour: **135 Hours**

**1. Course Description**

The course introduces classical sociological thought and the main approaches to early sociological theorizing. The course starts with a brief overview of the fundamental social and intellectual forces, which served as the background conditions for the rise of classical sociological thought in the Western World in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. A large number of thinkers and scholars have contributed to the development of classical sociological theory but time limitations necessitate a selective approach. The founders of classical sociological thought to be covered in the course include: Adam Smith, Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel. This approach is followed partly due to the fact that in the formative stages of classical sociological theory clearly defined and separate schools of sociological thought were just in the process of formation and had not fully crystallized. An attempt will be made to introduce these different thinkers in terms of the schools of thought that inherited their

legacies and that got crystallized during the later phases of the history of social thought. This includes Positivism, Marxism and Neo –Marxism, Functionalism, and so on.

## **2. Objectives of the Course**

Primary objective of this module is to introduce sociology undergraduate students to the context, nature and basis of classical sociological theory.

## **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 would understand the relationship between social change and the formulation of theoretical constructs to understand, analyze, and use classical theory as a tool for research.

## **5. Course Content**

### **I. Introduction**

1. Factors Responsible for the Emergences of Classical Theories
  - a) Social Forces: Political Revolution; Industrial Revolutions and the Rise of Capitalism; Rise of Socialism; Feminism; Urbanization; Religious Change; Growth of Science;
  - b) Intellectual Forces: The Enlightenment and the Conservative Reaction to It.

### **II. Adam Smith**

- i) Political Economy
- ii) Division of Labor
- iii) The Invisible Hand and the Wealth of Nations

**III. Auguste Comte**

- i) Positivism: Search for the Invariant Laws and Search for Order and Progress
- ii) Law of the Three Stages
- iii) Sociology: Social Static and Social Dynamics
- iv) Comte's Contribution to Sociology

**IV. Herbert Spencer**

- i) Evolutionary Theory
- ii) Social Darwinism

**V. Emile Durkheim**

- i) Social Facts
- ii) Division of Labor in Society: Dynamics Density; Law; Anomie, Collective Conscience; Collective Representations
- iii) Suicide and Social Currents: Four Types of Suicide
- iv) Religion: Sacred and Profane; Totemism
- v) Assumption About Human Nature and Socialization and Moral Education

**VI. Max Weber**

- i) Methodology
- ii) Sociology: Social Action; Class; Status and Party
- iii) Structures and Authority
- iv) Rationalization; Religion and the Rise of capitalism

**VII. Karl Max**

- i) The Dialectic
- ii) Human Potential: Power and Needs; Consciousness; Activity; Sociability and Unanticipated Consequences
- iii) Alienation: Components of Alienation; Distortion Resulting from Alienation and Emancipation
- iv) Structure of Capitalist Society: Commodities; Capital; Private Property; Division of Labor; and Social Class

- v) Cultural Aspects of Capitalist Society: Class Consciousness and False Consciousness; Ideology

### **VIII. Georg Simmel**

- i) Primary Concerns
- ii) Individual Consciousness
- iii) Social Interaction
- iv) Social Structures
- v) The Philosophy of Money

### **6. Mode of Assessment**

- ☑ **Assignment - Article Review:** Students will select the work of one of the classical sociologists and provide the gist of the theory. They will also identify strengths, weakness and possible application of the theory in the 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

Noble, T. 2000: *Social Theory and Social Change*. Macmillan, London. Chapter 2: Structural Effects: Adam Smith and the unintended consequences of human action.

Ritzer, George (1996): *Sociological Theory* (New York: McGraw Hill, 4<sup>th</sup> edition) Chapter 1 (A Historical Sketch of Sociological Theory); Chapter 2 (Karl Marx); Chapter 3 (Emile Durkheim); Chapter 4 (Max Weber); Chapter 5 (George Simmel)

Coser, Lewis A. (1977): *Masters of Sociological Thought: Ideas in Historical and Social Context* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed), [Call No. HM, 19, .C67], Chapters 1-5

### Supplementary Readings

Szacki, Jerzy (1979). *History of Sociological Thought* (London: Aldwych Press, Call No. HM, 19, .S9)

Nisbet, R. (1967). *The Sociological Tradition* (London: Heinemann)

Bottomore, T and R. Nisbet, Eds. (1978). *A History of Sociological Analysis* (New York: Basic Books)

Collins Randall (1988). *Theoretical Sociology* (New York: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich, Call No., F, HM 433)

Collins, Randal (1994). *Four Sociological Traditions* (New York: Harcourt Bruce Jovanovich, Call No. F-2, HM, 223)

Hertzler, J.O. (1961). *The Social Thought of the Ancient Civilizations* (New York: Russell & Russell, Call No. HM, 19, .H4)

## Course Schedule

Course Duration: **Miazea 11 – Ginbot 03**

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

Miazea, 2008 E.C.							
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>10/08/2008</b>	<b>11/08/2008</b>	<b>12/08/2008</b>	<b>13/08/2008</b>	<b>14/08/2008</b>	<b>15/08/2008</b>	<b>16<sup>th</sup></b>
	<i>Introduction</i>	<i>Emergence of Classical Sociological Theories</i>	<i>Adam Smith</i>	<i>Auguste Comte</i>	<i>Auguste Comte</i>	-	-
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>17/08/2008</b>	<b>18/08/2008</b>	<b>19/08/2008</b>	<b>20/08/2008</b>	<b>21/08/2008</b>	<b>22/08/2008</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup></b>
	<i>Herbert Spencer</i>	<i>Emile Durkheim</i>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> Exam: Chapter 1,2 and 3</b>	<i>Emile Durkheim</i>	-	-	-
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>24/08/2008</b>	<b>25/08/2008</b>	<b>26/08/2008</b>	<b>27/08/2008</b>	<b>28/08/2008</b>	<b>29/08/2008</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup></b>
	<i>Emile Durkheim</i> <i>Max Weber</i>	<i>Max Weber</i> <b>Final Day for Submitting Group Assignment</b>	<i>Max Weber</i>	<i>Karl Marx</i>	<i>Karl Marx</i>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Exam: Chapter 4 and 5</b> (up to and Including the Section on Social Facts)	-
Ginbot, 2008 E.C.							
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat	Sun
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>1/09/2008</b>	<b>2/09/2008</b>	<b>3/09/2008</b>	<b>4/09/2008</b>	<b>5/09/2008</b>	<b>6/09/2008</b>	<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>
	<i>Karl Marx</i>	<i>George Simmel</i>	<i>George Simmel</i> <b>Group Assignment Presentation</b>	-	-	<b>Final Exam: Chapter 5</b> (Starting from the Section on Solidarity), <b>6, 7 and 8</b>	-