Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: SOCI 480

Course Title: Theories of Society

Number of Credit Hours: 3
Lecture Hours: 3
Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: The course investigates the development of sociological theory, from its Enlightenment precursors to the classical social theorists such as Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and W.E.B. DuBois, to the current era and the influence of poststructuralism. Finally, this course is designed to encourage theoretical application, emphasizing the current relevance and applicability of sociological theory. Prerequisite: SOCI 111. Offered odd Fall.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): SOCI 111.


Course Objectives:

- To understand a large body of sociological thought—from classical social thinkers to poststructuralism.
- To investigate the influence of Enlightenment thought on the development of classical social theory
  - the contributions of the various classical thinkers
  - the development of American sociology
  - the emergence of poststructuralist thought
- To encourage theoretical application.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:

- Understand the major theoretical traditions in sociology and the emergence of each out of their particular socio-historical contexts.
- Identify the influence of Enlightenment thought on the development of classical sociological theory.
- Identify and describe the theoretical perspectives of the classical social theorists. Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and W.E.B. Dubois.
- Explain the development of American sociology, symbolic interactionism and identify the significant theorists working within this tradition.
- Understand the major developments in contemporary sociological theory: critical theory, poststructuralism, feminist sociology, and queer theory.
- Demonstrate theoretical application and an understanding of the current relevance of sociological
Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):

- The historical development of sociology as an academic discipline
  - The Enlightenment: philosophical foundations
    - Montesquieu, Rousseau, Wollstonecraft
  - Post-revolutionary thought
    - Saint-Simon, Comte, de Toqueville, Maritneau
- The structural-functionalist tradition
  - Comte, Spencer, Durkheim, Parsons, Merton
- Marx and Marxism
- Max Weber
- Conflict theories
  - Marx, Simmel, Mannheim, Dahrendorf, Coser
- Frankfurt School and the development of critical theory
  - C. Wright Mills, Habermas
- Symbolic Interactionism
  - The Chicago School
    - Cooley, W.I. Thomas, George Herbert Mead, Goffman
- Current developments
  - Dorothy Smith, Anthony Giddens, Pierre Bourdieu, Habermas, Foucault

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 35

Library Resources: Online databases are available at [http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp](http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp). You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

Prepared by: Kathleen J. Fitzgerald

Date: April 10, 2005

**NOTE:** The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

Office of Academic Affairs
12/04