REMOTE COURSE SCHEDULE

This fall the department has encouraged its faculty to embrace asynchronous teaching to provide as much flexibility as possible for all of our students. This means that our class will not meet live via Zoom at a set time this term. Instead, I will post pre-recorded video lectures and accompanying lecture notes on or before our previously scheduled class time of Tu/Th 9:30am each week. Video lectures and lecture notes will be supplemented by small group discussions, which you will participate in via Canvas. To create as warm and engaged an environment as is possible in this new, remote, and asynchronous classroom, I will also hold optional weekly office hours and weekly full group discussions live via Zoom. The former will cater to individual or small group questions (as in person office hours do) and the latter will give us the opportunity to meet live as a full group. Please see below for more information on each of these items.

**Video lectures and lecture notes.** I will typically post two pre-recorded video lectures each week, on or before our previously scheduled class time of Tu/Th 9:30am. I will keep to a set posting schedule for these lectures for students who value the structure of in-person courses and plan to virtually “attend” these lectures at the same time each week. I will also post the accompanying lecture notes as a PDF to Canvas.

I know pre-recorded lectures have their limits, namely that students can’t ask questions or offer feedback in real-time, as we would do in an in-person class. But I also know that the department is encouraging asynchronous teaching for good reason—many students have additional family care, work, or personal responsibilities during this time and/or do not have consistent internet or technology access, and this format allows as many students as possible to succeed in the course.

- **Please note:** Lecture videos are for class use only—reproduction or distribution of lecture videos is strictly forbidden. The material provided is my intellectual property. Any student who violates this will be referred to Student Conduct and Community Standards for review of the following violation:

  **VII. I. Disruption and Obstruction**

  *Failure to comply with the lawful order or reasonable request of an identified University official, any non-University law enforcement official, any non-University emergency responder, or any protective order.*

**Small group discussion boards.** Periodically throughout the semester I will ask you to break into small groups to discuss a question I will provide you. Such discussions will take place via the group discussions feature in Canvas, and you will have a span of a few days to discuss each question and respond to one another as a small group. I’ve broken the class up into 6 groups of 6, and you should be able to see your group assignment in Canvas (if you can’t, please let me know.) The purpose of these discussion boards is twofold:
1) Your group discussion board gives you the opportunity to secure a strong participation grade. The more actively you participate in the discussions, as measured by the thoughtfulness of your responses and your attentiveness to other group members’ comments, the stronger your participation score will be.

2) Your group discussion board allows you to get to know some of your classmates a little better, which is otherwise quite difficult in a remote learning environment. I hope you’ll make the fullest use possible of your groups, not only by completing the group discussions I assign but also by sharing thoughts and questions about the course material and forming study teams to help one another prepare for assignments and exams.

I will monitor discussion forums and grade them on a complete/incomplete basis, but please feel free to speak in these forums as if you were talking to one another in small groups in class. I don’t expect you to use academic language and/or to write your responses as you would an essay to be turned in for a letter grade.

Weekly discussion sections. To create a space for full group discussion and to provide students with a real-time space for asking questions and hearing my responses in a group format, I’ll be hosting weekly discussion sections via Zoom on Fridays from 11:00am to 11:50am. I’ve created a recurring Zoom meeting in Canvas that you can access during this time to join the discussion sections. These discussion sections are optional, but I strongly encourage you to attend if possible. In the course outline below, you’ll see that that I’ve posed one or two discussion questions for each week, highlighted in garnet (Go Noles!). Please keep your audio and video on for these discussion sections. (You’re welcome to use a fun—and classroom appropriate!—virtual background if you wish.)

Office hours. I’ll hold office hours live via Zoom on Tuesdays from 1 to 3pm. I’ve created a recurring Zoom meeting in Canvas that you can access during the office hours window each week. Once you click to join the meeting, you’ll be placed in a waiting room. I’ll let students in to office hours on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you feel more comfortable doing so, you may use audio only and turn off your video function for office hours. (You’re welcome to use a fun—and classroom appropriate!— virtual background if you wish.)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to classical and contemporary sociological theory. We will read a mix of original texts and contemporary sociologists who draw insights from sociological theory. The goal of the course is to expose you to varied ways of making sense of sociology’s key object of study: social relations in all their forms. Many theory courses and theory textbooks are designed as “great books” sequences, where the goal of reading seminal texts is simply to have read them. I hold the view that no piece of theory is important or meaningful in its own right; great theories only become great because of the meanings we attribute to them.

Moreover, great theories should not be read without consideration of the context in which they were written. Too often we consider “theory” as a set of ideas that exists in a vacuum, but sociology’s canonized thinkers wrote in response to the problems of their time just as contemporary sociologists do today—and practicing sociologists (myself included!) make decisions about what counts as
“theory” under the same constraints of perspective. With this in mind, I have arranged the readings in this course thematically. We will explore theorists’ contributions while contextualizing their enduring ideas in the problems of their times: urbanization, industrialization, globalization, and their many expressions of power. As we move through these texts, we’ll also remain attuned to the question of what counts as theory and why.

You’ll note that over half of this course covers texts written before 1950. Why do we continue to read these old texts? Why not read contemporary theorists exclusively, or at least updated and accessible renderings of the original texts? We continue to engage with these original texts for at least two reasons. First, classical social theorists were among the first thinkers to conceptualize “the social,” “society,” and “social relations” as objects of analysis. In reading them, we gain a fuller understanding of the discipline’s origin story. Second, and relatedly, contemporary sociology is not fully intelligible without understanding the broader historical conversation in which it takes place. Put simply, intellectual history matters. It teaches us how sociology as a field came to be what it is today. Importantly, in exploring sociology’s intellectual history, this class also encourages students to pay close attention to the voices and perspectives that the discipline has marginalized or left out over time—particularly those of women, people of color, and people from the global South.

I ask you to acquire the following two texts for this course. Please note that selections of both of these texts may be available to you for free via the library website or other such venues online—you may wish to investigate your online options before purchasing hard copies of the texts. All other course readings will be available via our Canvas site.


**HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS CLASS**

Remote learning this term will feel new and different for many of us, myself included. I encourage you to keep in mind that how much you get out of this course depends on how much you put into it. I will do my very best to provide you with the resources and opportunities for engagement you need to learn as much and as well as you can. It’s up to you to take advantage of them. Please keep in mind that your fellow students, too, depend on and benefit from your engagement.

A few tips on how to do your best in this class:

- **Give the readings an honest try.** The readings are difficult, but you must demonstrate engagement with them in order to succeed on your response papers and on the midterm and final exams. Remember that struggling to understand a passage is not a sign that you are struggling in the course. It’s a sign that you are perfectly normal! All of these texts were revolutionary at the time in which they were written—then as now, their readers were perplexed by the words on the page. Stick with it.

- **Ask questions—and attend office hours and weekly discussions!** As noted above, the readings and concepts covered in this course are difficult. We all learn by acknowledging when we don’t
understand and by asking questions. I regularly check my email during business hours Monday through Friday and will respond to questions sent via email as quickly as possible. I am also available to answer any and all questions about course material during our live weekly discussion sections on Fridays from 11am to 11:50am and during live office hours on Tuesdays from 1pm to 3pm. I am happy to schedule additional zoom meetings by appointment if my office hours do not fit with your schedule.

- **Reach out if you fall behind or if you are having difficulties.** There are many reasons why we can fall behind—especially in the current environment. If you experience any setbacks of any kind, please let me know as soon as possible so that we can devise a plan to minimize the impact of these on your grade. The sooner you let me know you are struggling, the easier it will be for me to make accommodations. After assignments are due—or worse, after the term has ended—is the worst time to let me know you’ve had a setback that affected your performance.

**ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING**

Your final grade will reflect your participation in online discussion forums and your performance on three response papers, your midterm, and your final exam. The breakdown is as follows:

- Participation 20%
- Response Papers (3) 30%
- Midterm (take home, open book & note) 20%
- Final Exam (take home, open book & note) 30%
- TOTAL 100%

To compute your final grades, I adhere to FSU’s grading scheme, which is detailed below. Please note that in this scheme, grades are truncated at the nearest whole number and are not rounded up. I encourage you to be mindful of your grade throughout the semester and to contact me with any concerns you have as early as possible. Once I submit final grades, I cannot make changes to them, except in (rare) cases of recording error.

**FSU GRADING SCHEME**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Percentage</th>
<th>Maximum Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100 %</td>
<td>to 93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>&lt; 93.0 %</td>
<td>to 90.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>&lt; 90.0 %</td>
<td>to 87.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>&lt; 87.0 %</td>
<td>to 83.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>&lt; 83.0 %</td>
<td>to 80.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>&lt; 80.0 %</td>
<td>to 77.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>&lt; 77.0 %</td>
<td>to 73.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>&lt; 73.0 %</td>
<td>to 70.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
PARTICIPATION

Your participation is essential to your success in the class—and to everyone’s learning—and as such, participation makes up a significant proportion of your overall grade. I have structured our course so that you will have many opportunities to demonstrate engaged participation, including your participation in small group discussions, in our weekly discussion sections, and in office hours. Weekly discussion sections and office hours are optional, which means that you are not required to attend them in order to receive full participation points, but doing so will increase your chances of receiving top marks for participation—and it will also give you a big leg up in understanding the course readings and performing well on exams.

- If you wish to attend my live office hours on Tuesdays or the live weekly discussion sections on Fridays but cannot do so due to a scheduling conflict, please contact me directly and we will work something out.

RESPONSE PAPERS

You will write three response papers, 3-5 pages each, throughout the term. You’ll notice on our course outline that this course has six units. You will need to submit one response paper per every two units of the class. In other words, your first response paper will cover units 1-2, your second will cover units 3-4, and your third will cover units 5-6. You may submit response papers to Canvas at any time, but your three response papers must be submitted no later than midnight of the due date as listed on the syllabus. I’m happy to talk writing strategy or review selections of draft response papers in office hours.

- **Content.** Your responses must cover at least two authors. The goal of these papers is twofold: 1) to encourage you to think analytically by comparing and contrasting the contributions of different theorists; and 2) to hone your writing skills. You are welcome to summarize the arguments of the authors you choose to cover—and indeed, some summary will be necessary—but I encourage you to devote the majority of your paper to comparison. Possible comparative questions you may wish to answer include:
  - How do the authors’ initial assumptions (about society, about social problems) lead them to different conclusions?
  - How do authors differ in their explications of social structure?
    - Here I encourage you to describe how different authors place emphasis on different elements of the social structure OR come to divergent conclusions about the same subject or concept.
  - How do authors’ inclusion or oversight of particular subjects shape their conclusions?
• **References and Citations.** You are required to cite all references in your response papers, including course texts and my lecture slides. You may use in-line citations only for primary sources (i.e., the course texts and my lecture slides) but you must include a bibliography at the end of your paper with full citations for any secondary sources you use (e.g., web pages, summary articles, etc.). **Failure to properly cite your sources is a form of plagiarism.**

**In-line citation example:**
Marx argues that there are two forms of surplus value: absolute and relative (Marx, *Capital*).

**Direct quote example:**
Du Bois claims that American society in the post-Civil War era is characterized by “the problem of the color line” (Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folk*, p. 2).

**Full bibliography example for secondary source:**

• **Response Paper Grading.** I use the following rubric to grade your response papers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Engages directly with primary texts. Provides thorough, accurate summary of theorists' main ideas and offers thoughtful comparisons between them. Makes an argument and supports that argument with evidence from the text and/or real-world examples. Paper is clearly written, with few to no grammatical errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>Engages directly with primary texts. Accurately summarizes theorists’ main ideas and makes clear, engaging comparisons between theorists. Paper is clearly written, with few to no grammatical errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>Some engagement with primary texts. Summarizes theorists’ main ideas, with a few inaccuracies. Makes clear, if at times superficial, comparisons between theorists. Paper contains some grammatical, style, and usage errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Some engagement with primary texts. Summarizes theorists’ main ideas with several inaccuracies. Makes superficial comparisons between theorists. Paper contains several grammatical, style, and usage errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>Little to no engagement with primary texts and/or overreliance on lecture material. Summaries and comparisons contain inaccuracies. Paper contains several grammatical, style, and usage errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C or below</td>
<td>Little to no engagement with primary texts, overreliance on lecture material, overuse of quotes, and/or failure to fulfill all parameters of assignment. Paper contains several grammatical, style, and usage errors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXAMS
Your midterm and final exam will be writing heavy. You will be asked to complete a series of fill in the blank questions, short answers, and short essays on material covered during the term. The goal of these exams is not to test rote knowledge. Instead, these exams will prompt you to think critically about the course material and to make connections across texts and theorists. Both exams will be a “take home” format and will be open book and open note. We will discuss strategies for how to succeed on the midterm and final exams throughout the term and during our two review sessions.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES
Please see below for a detailed overview of FSU’s policies on attendance, academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodating students with disabilities, and more.

University Attendance Policy
Excused absences include documented illness, deaths in the family and other documented crises, call to active military duty or jury duty, religious holy days, and official University activities. These absences will be accommodated in a way that does not arbitrarily penalize students who have a valid excuse. Consideration will also be given to students whose dependent children experience serious illness.

Academic Honor Policy
The Florida State University Academic Honor Policy outlines the University’s expectations for the integrity of students’ academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Students are responsible for reading the Academic Honor Policy and for living up to their pledge to "...be honest and truthful and...[to] strive for personal and institutional integrity at Florida State University." (Florida State University Academic Honor Policy, found at http://fda.fsu.edu/Academics/Academic-Honor-Policy.)

Americans With Disabilities Act
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should:

1. Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; and
2. Submit a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type.

Please note that instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodation to a student until appropriate verification from the Student Disability Resource Center has been provided. This syllabus and other class materials are available in alternative format upon request. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact the Student Disability Resource Center as follows:

Student Disability Resource Center
874 Traditions Way
108 Student Services Building
Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167
(850) 644-9566 (voice)
(850) 644-8504 (TDD)
Free Tutoring from FSU
On-campus tutoring and writing assistance is available for many courses at Florida State University. For more information, visit the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) Tutoring Services’ comprehensive list of on-campus tutoring options—see http://ace.fsu.edu/tutoring or contact tutor@fsu.edu. High-quality tutoring is available by appointment, on a walk-in basis, and virtually via zoom when in-person sessions are not possible. These services are offered by tutors trained to encourage the highest level of individual academic success while upholding personal academic integrity.

Syllabus Change Policy
This syllabus is a guide for the course. I reserve the right to make changes to it with advance notice.
UNIT 1. THEORIZING SOCIETY BEFORE SOCIOLOGY


August 27 – Political Theory and Political Economy: A Snapshot

*Friday Discussion Questions*
- What is a social contract and what is it good for?
- What does spontaneous social order leave out?

UNIT 2. MARX AND DUBOIS ON SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL CONFLICT

September 1 – Marx on Alienation and Exploitation

September 3 – Class Conflict as the Engine of Social Development

*Friday Discussion Questions*
- Base and superstructure – what about law, government, religion?
- What is historical materialism and why is it important?

September 8 – Marx’s Capital

September 10 – Du Bois on Double Consciousness
**Friday Discussion Questions**

- How does capitalism work in real time?
- What does the color line mean for capitalism?

**September 15 – Black Reconstruction in America and the Failed Promise of Emancipation**

- Last day to submit response paper #1

**UNIT 3. DURKHEIM AND WEBER ON SOCIAL SOLIDARITY AND SOCIAL COHESION**

**September 17 – Social Facts and the Birth of Statistical Social Science**


**Friday Discussion Questions**

- What sets sociology apart from other disciplines?
- What is not a social fact?

**September 22 – Solidarity and Anomie**


**September 24 – The Sacred and the Profane**


**Friday Discussion Questions**

- Why is understanding suicide important for understanding society?
- Understanding the sacred and the profane: are “profane” things illicit things?

**September 29 – Capitalism, Culture, and Social Action**


**October 1 – The Spirit of Capitalism**


**Friday Discussion Questions**

- Midterm review!

**October 6-8 – TAKE HOME MIDTERM, OPEN BOOK & OPEN NOTE**

- You will have 48 hours to complete the midterm
- The midterm will be available at 9:30am on Tuesday October 6
- The midterm is **DUE** by 9:30am on Thursday October 8
UNIT 4. SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

October 13 – The Rise of the Modern State I: Bureaucracy

October 15 – The Rise of the Modern State II: Disciplinary Power

Friday Discussion Questions
- Why is bureaucracy efficient? Is it efficient? If so, for whom?
- How did we become “docile?”

October 20 – Disciplinary Power, continued

October 22 – The Weight of Modernity

Friday Discussion Questions
- What is Foucault talking about when he talks about “the disciplines”?
- Does the panopticon metaphor still hold for 21st century society? Why or why not?

UNIT 5. SELF AND SOCIETY

October 27 – Goffman and the Dramaturgical Model for Social Interaction
- Last day to submit response paper #2

October 29 – Garfinkel’s Breaching Experiments

Friday Discussion Questions
- Why is Goffman’s account of the self part of sociological theory?
- What do breaching experiments reveal?

November 3 – Social Structure, Social Class, and the Habitus

November 5 – Bourdieu on Forms of Capital
Friday Discussion Questions
- Reviewing the habitus: a structuring structure that … come again?
- Why is cultural capital so powerful? Can money buy it?

November 10, 12 – Social Class in Action
- Documentary viewing: *People Like Us*

Friday Discussion Questions
- What in *People Like Us* resonated most with you?
- How does the documentary illuminate Bourdieu’s concepts of habitus and cultural capital?

UNIT 6. PUTTING THEORY TO WORK: VIGNETTES OF CONTEMPORARY INEQUALITY

November 17 – The U.S. Eviction Epidemic

November 19 – Inequality on Campus

Friday Discussion Questions
- To what extent do these texts speak to your personal experiences (or those of people you know)?
- How do Desmond’s and Armstrong & Hamilton’s narratives connect with the theories we’ve read?

November 24, 26 – NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING

December 1 – Synthesis and Reflections
- Last day to turn in response paper #3

December 3 – Final Exam Review LIVE via zoom
- This session will be held live via zoom and will be recorded for those who cannot attend

December 9-11 – TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM, OPEN BOOK & OPEN NOTE
- You will have 48 hours to complete the final exam
- The final exam will be available at 7:30am on Wednesday December 9 (per FSU final exam schedule)
- The final exam is DUE by 7:30am on Friday December 11