

## **Selected Topics in the History of Sociological Thought**

Sociology and Anthropology 849

Section: D100

Term: 2008 Fall

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Discussion Topics: This course is intended to be a graduate level survey of several key formative sociological theorists or schools of thought. Its objective is (a) to uncover the principal elements of the theories under consideration, and (b) to undertake a critical analysis of them. The range of theorists and theories is largely determined by the themes identified below, but the outline can be modified somewhat to reflect the interests of the seminar.

The course will be divided into two sets of theoretical approaches. One will include those that give primacy to the individual, and will cover social contract theories, social Darwinism, exchange theories, and, if time, Freud and his followers. The other will include those that give primacy to the social, and will cover Marx, Durkheim and Weber, and, if time, Toennies, Mead, and Polanyi, among others.

The course will be run as a seminar, not as a series of lectures, and so it will rest on the active participation of, and presentations by, its members. The goal is a critical grasp of the principles of the selected theories.

The main writings that will form the basis of our reading will be in the form of original texts/chapters/ articles. It is expected, however, that students will read and consult more primary texts and secondary material for their assignments.

Grading: There are three main assignments for this course: (a) a mid-term paper, (b) a final research paper, and (c) at least two short presentations to the seminar.

a) The mid-term paper will be the analysis of a particular concept. This will be chosen by the student but will be drawn from the course materials. It could, for example, be one of the following: alienation, anomie, class, family, ideology, power, etc., but the list of possible choices is much longer. (10-15 pages: 40%)

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b) The final research paper will be on a topic of interest to the student, yet related to the material of the course, and chosen in consultation with the instructor. (20-25 pages: 60%)

c) The short presentations will not be graded but will be a required part of the course. In other words, they must be completed before a final grade is submitted.

All the assignments in this course must be completed for a final grade to be assigned. The Department of Sociology and Anthropology follows SFU policy in relation to grading practices, grade appeals (Policy T 20.01) and academic dishonesty and misconduct procedures (Policy T 10.03). It is the responsibility of students to inform themselves of the content of these policies (available on the SFU website under Administration, SFU Policies & Procedures).<sup>1</sup>

Required Texts: see course description

Recommended Texts: see course description

Materials/Supplies: None

Prerequisite/Corequisite: Required course for MA and PhD students in sociology. Students from other department and faculties may enroll with permission of instructor. Offered each fall semester.

Notes: All students are expected to read and understand SFU's policies with regard to academic dishonesty (T 10.02 and T 10.03). These policies are available at the following web addresses: <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10-02.htm> and <http://www.sfu.ca/policies/teaching/t10-03.htm>

This outline is derived from a course outline repository database that was maintained by SFU Student Services and the University's IT Services Department. The database was retired in 2014 and the data migrated to SFU Archives in 2015.