

San José State University
Sociology and Interdisciplinary Social Sciences
SOCI 101: Social Theory (Section 01) Spring 2025

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. William Armaline
Office Location:	Dudley Moorhead Hall [DMH] 216
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Office Hours:	Mondays and Wednesdays 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.
Class Days/Time:	Mondays and Wednesdays 12:00 – 1:15 p.m.
Classroom:	Dudley Moorhead Hall [DMH] 162
Prerequisites:	SOCI 01 and SOCI 100W

Catalog Course Description

Comparative analysis of micro and macro sociological theories and their origins, including, but not limited to, conflict theories, consensus theories, structural functionalism, symbolic interaction and recent theoretical developments. Required for majors.

Instructor Course Description

We will explore the role (What is theory for? Why do we have it? Why/how do we use it?) and substance of sociological theory from the “core” to the more contemporary periods of sociological thought. To do so, we will study both the theories and the theorists that helped to build the field of sociology and the discipline of social science. We’ll look at what they had to say, but also at who they were, and what the world was like around them at the time.

We will begin with an exploration of “core” sociological theory that emerged from intellectual debates and social conflict over the meaning and implications of the rise of industrial capitalism in the 19th century. We will then move from the classic core theorists (Durkheim, Marx, Weber) to the work of sociological theorists in the 20th and 21st centuries that critiqued, expanded on, and departed from these early models. These later theorists (many of whom were also political prisoners/revolutionaries, people of color, women, and colonized peoples) constructed many of our most critical theoretical tools of today: Neo-Marxist schools and contemporary Anarchisms, Feminism(s), Critical Race Theory, Post Modernism/Post Structuralism, Symbolic Interactionism, Theories on Deviance/Social Control, and so forth.

Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. (CLO1) Identify and describe the traditionally central bodies of sociological theory and many of their founding scholars.
2. (CLO2) Demonstrate an understanding of the role of theory in scholarship and research.
3. (CLO3) Demonstrate a substantive familiarity with specific bodies of political and sociological theory as they apply to contemporary debates and social problems.
4. (CLO4) Demonstrate the ability to engage with complex theories in conversation with intellectual peers (one focus of intellectual life).

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook

Garner, Roberta & Blackhawk Hancock. (2014). *Social Theory: Continuity and Confrontation—A Reader* [3rd edition]. Toronto, Canada: U. of Toronto Press.
ISBN: 978-1442606487

Other Readings

All assigned readings beyond the required texts above will be provided by the instructor via email (PDF files). Should you have any problems obtaining reading materials throughout the course, please email the instructor for assistance.

Library Liaison

For help with library resources and library research (including the use of databases and online research materials—such as journal search engines), students are strongly encouraged to contact the Sociology Subject Librarian:
Kathryn Blackmer Reyes, Kathryn.BlackmerReyes@SJSU.edu.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Readings

Students are expected to complete readings by the class session indicated on the course schedule. Students should come to class prepared to *discuss* the assigned readings such that class time is not wasted, and we can engage the material together.

Classroom Activities and Discussion

Though not graded per se, this course requires a great deal of classroom discussion and classroom activity. Discussions and classroom activities are designed to help students successfully achieve all learning objectives and to develop students' graded assignments (CLO 4).

Mid-Term and Final Examinations

Description and Purpose: Students complete two take-home exams (conceptual definitions and short essay questions) that will test their ability to describe, compare, contrast, critique, and apply sociological theories and theoretical concepts (CLOs 1, 2, 3).

Grading: Exams will be worth **100% of the final course grade (50% each)**.

Grading Information

Determination of Grades

Final grades will be calculated as a percentage on a typical “100 point scale”:

98-100%	A+
94-97	A
90-93	A-
88-89	B+
84-87	B
80-83	B-
78-79	C+
74-77	C
70-73	C-
68-69	D+
64-67	D
60-63	D-
<60	F

<u>Graded Assignment</u>	<u>Weight</u>
Mid-Term Exam	50%
Final Exam	50%
FINAL GRADE	100%

Students have the opportunity to complete unlimited **extra credit** for this course. Extra credit opportunities will be announced in class. Further, students can “pitch” their own extra credit assignments to the instructor at any time for approval. These assignments and opportunities will be discussed further throughout the course.

Classroom Protocol

1. This course depends on participation and interaction. Students are expected to be on time to class out of respect for your colleagues and instructor.
2. All classroom participants are expected to foster an environment that encourages participation, rather than silencing others (be respectful to one another, do not insult or intimidate others, and so forth).
3. Students are expected to complete all readings and assignments by the dates indicated on the syllabus.
4. Students are responsible for any and all notes and materials missed in their absence.
5. Cell phone, PDA, and Laptop/Internet use will not be tolerated during class time unless they are part of class activities or necessary to field an emergency.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

University Resources

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act:

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the AEC (Accessible Education Center) to establish a record of their disability.

Student Technology Resources:

Computer labs for student use are available in the Academic Success Center located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall and on the 2nd floor of the Student Union. Additional computer labs may be available in your department/college. Computers are also available in the Martin Luther King Library. A wide variety of audio-visual equipment is available for student checkout from Media Services located in IRC 112. These items include digital and VHS camcorders, VHS and Beta video players, 16 mm, slide, overhead, DVD, CD, and audiotape players, sound systems, wireless microphones, projection screens and monitors.

Learning Assistance Resource Center:

The Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC) is located in Room 600 in the Student Services Center. It is designed to assist students in the development of their full academic potential and to motivate them to become self-directed learners. The center provides support services, such as skills assessment, individual or group tutorials, subject advising, learning assistance, summer academic preparation and basic skills development. [The LARC website is located at: http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/.](http://www.sjsu.edu/larc/)

SJSU Writing Center:

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. The Writing Center is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. [The Writing Center website is located at: http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/.](http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/)

Peer Mentor Center:

The Peer Mentor Center is located on the 1st floor of Clark Hall in the Academic Success Center. The Peer Mentor Center is staffed with Peer Mentors who excel in helping students manage university life, tackling problems that range from academic challenges to interpersonal struggles. On the road to graduation, Peer Mentors are navigators, offering “roadside assistance” to peers who feel a bit lost or simply need help mapping out the locations of campus resources. Peer Mentor services are free and available on a drop –in basis, no reservation required. [The Peer Mentor Center website is located at: http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/.](http://www.sjsu.edu/muse/peermentor/)

SOCI 101: Social Theory (Section 01) Spring 2025 Course Schedule

This schedule is subject to change with fair notice from the course instructor via email.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	1/27	Introduction to course and explanation of syllabus; importance of current events and critical news literacy; what is theory? <u>Notes:</u> We will skip Part I (classic political theory) in the text. Please see the assigned help videos to cover some of this material. Please see reading assignments <i>in italics</i> below listed on the day they are due. Please come to class prepared to discuss them.
1	1/29	Core theory and the rise of industrial capitalism; <i>Watch videos on the late Western Enlightenment</i> (political theories, theorists, revolutions, and historical context); <i>Read Part II Introduction</i>
2	2/3	Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; <i>Read Chap 2.1</i>
2	2/5	Marx and Engels continued
3	2/10	Legacies of Marxism; <i>Read Chap 2.2</i>
3	2/12	Bakunin and the Anarchists
4	2/17	Emile Durkheim; <i>Read Chap 3.1</i>
4	2/19	Durkheim continued
5	2/24	Legacies (Functionalism), Robert Merton; <i>Read 3.2</i>
5	2/26	Max Weber; <i>Read Chap 4.1</i>
6	3/3	Max Weber continued
6	3/5	Legacies of Weber, George Ritzer and Theda Skocpol; <i>Read Chap 4.2</i>
7	3/10	Midterm exam review
7	3/12	TBA
8	3/17	TBA; MIDTERM EXAM DUE VIA EMAIL BY 11:59 p.m.
8	3/19	Cooley, Mead, and the Adlers; <i>Read Chap 6.1 and 6.2</i>
9	3/24	W.E.B. DuBois; <i>Read Chap 6.3</i>
9	3/26	W.E.B. DuBois continued
10	3/31	NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS
10	4/2	NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
11	4/7	The Frankfurt School, Gramsci, and Neo-Marxism; <i>Read Chapter 7 Intro, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4</i>
11	4/9	The Frankfurt School, Gramsci, and Neo-Marxism continued
12	4/14	C.W. Mills and critical theory/Neo-Marxism continued; <i>Read Chap 8 Introduction, 8.2, 8.4, 8.5</i>
12	4/16	Howard Becker, Symbolic Interactionism and the study of Deviance; <i>Read Chap 8.3</i>
13	4/21	TBA
13	4/23	Foucault and Post Modern Theory; <i>Read Chap 10 (all)</i>
14	4/28	Foucault continued
14	4/30	Stuart Hall and critical Cultural Studies; <i>Read Chap 12 (all)</i>
15	5/5	Post-Colonial Theory; <i>Read Chap 13 Introduction, Chap 13.1 (Fanon), Chap 13.2 (Said)</i>
15	5/7	Race and “whiteness” as social constructions; <i>Read Chap 13.3 and 13.4</i>
16	5/12	Gender, Sexualities, and Feminisms; <i>Read Chap 14 (through 14.5)</i> Final Exam Review
Final Exam	5/20	The FINAL EXAM must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. on 05/20 via email to the instructor