

Jean-Pierre Reed (J.-P.)
 Phone: 453-7610
 Office: **Faner 3426**
 E-mail: reedjp@siu.edu

Lecture/Discussion: **Faner 1326**
 T+TH, 12:35-1:50 PM
Office Hours: T+TH, 2:00-4:30 PM,
 W, 5:00-6:00 PM,
 and by appointment

Theory and Society:
An Introductory Survey on Classical and Contemporary Traditions

“Theory is [used] to challenge the givenness of the social world ... to enable researchers to see new problems and new facts ... to theorize is to open vistas of understanding.”

Craig Calhoun

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introductory survey on Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory. It is intended to give students a broad understanding of theoretical issues on society. As such the basic objective of this course is to come to terms and evaluate classical and contemporary sociological theories, including the relationship contemporary theories have to classical ones.

There are two lectures each week. You are expected to keep up with the reading material. **Attendance at lectures and films (if scheduled) is required.**

Course Agenda

- To study the classical roots of sociological theory (e.g., Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber) and how these explain social conditions, group dynamics, and social change.
- To examine the relationship between classical and contemporary theories
- To explore the ways contemporary sociological theory has been defined, interpreted, and developed by various theorists
- To reflect on the uses, making-processes, and socio-historical contexts of theory.

Course Goals

- To question the taken-for-granted assumptions connected to social conditions and theory itself.
- To facilitate the development of critical and theoretical “thinking” about the relationship between personal experiences, social conditions, and the social processes through which these are constituted.
- To (re)activate our sociological imaginations in challenging ways.

COURSE SCHEDULE

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| • First Day of Class: 8/24 | • Number of Discussion/Lectures: 28 |
| • Last Day of Class: 12/09 | • Number of Holidays: 3 (11/11, 11/23, 11/25) |
| • Final Exam Day: 12/15 | • Number of Absences Allowed: 5 |

TEXTS / READINGS

Required (Available at the University Bookstore and Reserve Room at the Morris Library)

- *Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots: The Basics*, (**CSTCR**), 3rd edition, by George Ritzer.
- *Readings in Social Theory: The Classical Tradition to Post-modernism* (**RST**), 6th edition, by James Farganis.

Supplementary Readings

- Selections from *Classical Sociological Theory* (**CST**) by Bert N. Adams and R.A. Sydie.
- Selection from *Sociological Theory* (**ST**) by Bert N. Adams and R.A. Sydie.
- Related Readings, PDF formatted

COURSE REQUIREMENTS**I. *Class Participation (CP) (20 points) (5%)***

About **5%** of your grade will be based on your **CP**. You are expected to engage with the course material, to actively participate in the learning process. Come prepared to ask questions during the Lecture / Discussion period. As you engage with the course material, work to formulate questions for you to bring to class. Develop your questions: 1) After a good-faith reading of the material; 2) based on concepts, arguments, and assumptions in a theory or theories; 3) on a “critical” evaluation of these theoretical elements; and/or 4) on the connections between and within weekly readings. I will be making note of your participation throughout the term. I mention the issue of participation not to intimidate you but rather because I feel dialogue is conducive to the learning process. My role as an instructor is to stimulate the (further) development of “critical thinking.” An important element to such development or practice is the learning process itself. Discussion in the classroom facilitates the learning process. Therefore, your class participation plays an important role in what you learn. In order to stimulate class discussion, I strongly encourage you to bring questions during the Lecture / Discussion period.

We will get a chance to engage in discussions of the original writings in **RST** during the class period. You can use these opportunities to ensure the accumulation of participation points.

NOTE: Non-participation will result in “0” CP points.

II. *Class Attendance (CA) (30 points) (10%)*

CA at lectures and films (if scheduled) is required. To ensure accurate reward for your presence in the classroom, you will receive a score every time you attend. You are responsible for signing -- legibly -- the attendance sheet distributed in class. You can accumulate up to 30 points for the entire semester, depending on your attendance rate. This course requirement is worth **10%** of your grade.

NOTE: **6** absences will automatically result in a **Failing Grade** for the course. Absences include medical, family, and work emergencies.

III. *List of Questions (LQs) (30 points) (10%)*

As you formulate questions to bring to class (see the 4 directives above in **CP** section) you may also submit these as a LQs. You are required to turn in 3 LQs, **5** questions per LQ, on lecture, discussion, and reading material. Each **LQ** counts **10** points and should cover material between and up through the dues dates (see below and Outline of Course Explorations). We will get the opportunity to go over some of these questions in class.

LQs are another exercise to facilitate dialogue in the classroom, and an outlet for your analytical and conceptual concerns. Since you are expected to actively participate in the learning process, turning in written questions will facilitate this goal. This course requirement is worth **10%** of your grade.

NOTE: Only “**your**” **original Qs** will count.

Type or e-mail your 5 questions. Also number your LQs (e.g., LQ1, LQ3). And **ONLY** use the last 4 digits of your Dawg # on the upper right corner of the first sheet of your submission in order to identify your work.

Due Dates for LQs: LQ1, **9/16** (based on weeks I-IV); LQ2, **10/21** (based on weeks V-IX); LQ3, **12/02** (based on weeks X-XIV).

IV. *Essay Examinations (EEs) (220 points) (75%)*

You will be required to turn in **3** take-home EEs, including a Final EE. These will entail writing essay answers on a set of questions based on course lectures, readings, and discussions. **EE1-EE2** will range from **5-7** pages in length. **EE1** and **EE2** approximately cover about 3/4 of the course outline. The final **EE** will be comprehensive and it should be at least **6-9** pages in length. The first 2 **EEs** count **60** points each. The Final **EE** counts **100** points. This course requirement makes up about **75%** of your grade. Please number your **EEs** as you submit these (e.g., EE1, EE2, etc.). Submit **EE1-EE2** at the end of class or via e-mail attachment by 12 mid-night on the due date. You will have at least a week to work on the examinations.

Due Dates for EEs: EE1, **9/30**; EE2, **11/04**; Final EE, **12/15** (at my office, Faner 3426, 12:50-2:50 PM).

Guidelines for EEs

All EEs need to be submitted in order to PASS this course. They should be double-spaced, standard sociological journal format (1.25 margins), page numbered, and typed. Please **ONLY** use the last four (4) digits of your Dawg # on the upper right corner of the first page to identify your work when submitting these.

This course requirement is intended to provide you with an opportunity to further develop your analytical and writing skills. Your examinations should reflect a critical and sociological analysis of examined topics. These assignments should also reflect **critical thinking** ability. Critical thinking entails a willingness “to ask any question, no matter how difficult; to be open to any answer that is supported by reason and evidence; and to openly confront one's biases and prejudices when they get in the way” (Appelbaum and Chambliss 1995:4). “Critical” writing, moreover, reflects a concise understanding of a theme, idea, or concept, and also offers critical evaluation and/or (when possible) an alternative or more nuanced interpretation to material content.

Be sure to also reference the reading materials -- at least 3 different citations -- on your answers. Attach a bibliography of the referenced material to each of your EEs too.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- **Morris Library:** You will benefit from your University experience if you choose to take advantage of the services the Morris Library has to offer. The following are potential resources for you to take advantage of:
 - **Research Resources** at <http://www.lib.siu.edu/departments/distance/researchresources/view?searchterm=research%20resources>
 - **Library Instruction** at <http://www.lib.siu.edu/departments/instruction>
- **Good Writing:** Should you require help with your writing feel free to stop by my office. I shall be providing some tips on good writing, but in the meantime you may want to consult the following resource first:
 - The *Writing Center* at <http://write.siu.edu/>.
- **Academic Success:** Should you want guidance in achieving your best the following services are available to you:
 - **Saluki First Year** at www.FirstYear.siu.edu
 - **Student Support Services** at <http://mcma.siu.edu/faculty/student-services>
 - **Center for Academic Success** at <http://success.siu.edu/cas/>
- **Well-being:** Stressed, homesick, or overwhelmed? SIU cares! You may contact Saluki Cares for help and referrals at www.salukicare.siu.edu
- **Academic Integrity / Student Conduct:** Plagiarism of any type or academic dishonesty will **NOT** be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action. Students are also expected to abide by Student Code of Conduct.
 - See <http://policies.siu.edu/policies/conduct.html> for info on Academic Dishonesty, Student Code of Conduct, and Academic Dishonesty Procedures.
- **Incompletes:** Incompletes need to be formally requested by the student and officially approved by me. No Incompletes will be granted on account of poor performance and/or after the end of the term.
- **Classroom Conduct:** No disruptive, distracting, or demeaning behavior will be tolerated in this class. Additionally, texting, recording of any type, ringing, and surfing the net are strictly prohibited during the Lecture/Discussion period. If your cell phone must be on for medical, childcare, or other reasons, please set it on vibrate. **Should I need to remind you about Classroom Conduct more than twice, your final grade will be downgraded a letter grade – no exceptions!**
- **Acknowledging Differences:** During the course of the semester we will have the opportunity to share thoughts, opinions, and beliefs about our life experiences as we try to illuminate the sociological perspective. Differences in

outlooks will inevitably surface as we share our points of view. Let us recognize and acknowledge such differences as an opportunity to critically come to terms with the complex organization of social life. Most importantly, let us respect such differences. While the critical appraisal of difference is part of the course in the exchange of ideas, such an opportunity should not be conceived as an occasion to dismiss or put someone down.

- **Emergency Procedures:** Southern Illinois University, Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and health environment for study and work. Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the SIUC Emergency Response Plan and Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) program. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT's website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Safety's website www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down), and in the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Know how to respond to each type of emergency.

Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency. The Building Emergency Response Team will provide assistance to your instructor in evacuating the building or sheltering within the facility.

- **Statement for Disability Students:** Special accommodations may be arranged for disability students. I encourage you to contact me at the end of lecture or during my office hours to discuss accommodation-related matters. See <http://disabilityservices.siu.edu/> for related info on Disability Support Services.

OUTLINE OF COURSE EXPLORATIONS

<<COURSE AND CLASSROOM INTRODUCTIONS; PEDAGOGY; OVERVIEWS; AND SOME "CONCRETE" POINTS OF DEPARTURE>>

Week I (8/24, 8/26)	CSTRC, Intro RST, Intro Reading Supplements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Pedagogy of the Oppressed</i>, Chapter 2, by Paulo Freire (Available as PDF) • "The Promise of Sociology" by C. Wright Mills (Available as PDF) Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ST, Chapter 1 (Available as PDF)
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<<CLASSICAL POSITIONS: EARLY, CONSERVATIVE, RADICAL, AND COMPLEX IDEAS>>

Week II (8/31, 9/2)	<i>Classical Positions: Durkheim</i> CSTRC, section in Chapter 2 RST, Chapter 2 Reading Supplements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CST, Chapter 4 (Available as PDF)
Week III (9/7, 9/9)	<i>Classical Positions: Marx</i> CSTRC, section in Chapter 2 RST, Chapter 1 Reading Supplements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CST, Chapter 5 (Available as PDF)
Week IV (9/14, 9/16)	<i>Classical Positions: Weber</i> CSTRC, section in Chapter 2 RST, Chapter 3 Reading Supplements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CST, Chapter 7 (Available as PDF) Dues: LQ1
Week V (9/21, 9/23)	<i>Classical Positions: Simmel, Mead, and Cooley</i> CSTRC, Chapter 3 RST, Chapter 5 Reading Supplements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CST, Chapter 8 + related sections in Chapter 13 (Available as PDF) Recommended: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RST, Chapter 4

<<CONTEMPORARY MACRO-SOCIOLOGICAL THEORIES>>

Week VI (9/28, 9/30)	<i>Functionalist Traditions: Parsons, Merton, and Davis and Moore</i> CSTCR, Chapter 4, sections on <i>Parsons, Merton, and Davis and Moore</i> RST, Chapter 7, pp. 159-67, 176-92 Dues: EE1
Week VII (10/05, 10/7)	<i>Conflict Traditions Part I: Coser, Dahrendorf, and Mills</i> CSTCR, Chapter 4, section on <i>Dahrendorf</i> RST, Chapter 8, pp. 195-203, 203-12 Dues: EA
Week VIII (10/12, 10/14)	<i>Conflict Traditions Part II: Critical Theory and World System</i> CSTCR, Chapter 5, related sections Recommended: • RST, Chapter 12, pp. 335-48 Dues: EA, BR Selection and Explanation

<<CONTEMPORARY MICRO-SOCIOLOGICAL (ACTION) THEORIES>>

Week IX (10/19, 10/21)	<i>The Self, Symbolic Interaction, and Dramaturgy</i> CSTCR, Chapter 6, section on Goffman RST, Chapter 11, pp. 300-07, 307-16 Dues: EA, LQ2
Week X (10/26, 10/28)	<i>Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis</i> CSTCR, Chapter 6, section on Garfinkel Dues: EA

<<ALTERNATE CONTEMPORARY THEORIES>>

Week XI (11/02, 11/04)	<i>Feminist and Critical Race Traditions</i> CSTCR, Chapter 8 RST, Chapter 12, pp. 390-98, 428-38 Dues: EA, EE2
Week XII (11/09)	<i>Structure / Agency / Culture: Attempts at Integration: Giddens and Bourdieu</i> CSTCR, Chapter 7 Dues: EA, LQ3
Week XIII (11/16, 11/18)	<i>The Consequences of Modernity: Habermas and Giddens</i> CSTCR, Chapter 5, section on Habermas and Giddens
Week XIV (11/30, 12/02)	<i>Globalization: Culture, Politics, Economy</i> CSTCR, Chapter 10
Week XV (12/07)	<i>Postmodernism</i> CSTCR, Chapter 9

FINAL (12/15)	<i>Final EE Due</i> (At my office, Faner 3426, 12:50-2:50 PM)
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EXTRA-CREDITS: POLICY AND GUIDELINES

Extra-credit is extra-credit. None of the course requirements can be substituted with extra-credit. All your written work must be completed in order to do well in this course **and** for extra credit to count. This means that in order for extra credit to **COUNT** you must have **ALL** your **LQs** and **EEs** in. Extra-credit is offered to you as an option to further cultivate your theoretical imagination. You may choose **1 of the 2 options**:

- **2 Event Analyses (EAs), 10 points each**
- **1 Book Review (BR), 20 points**

These exercises will require you to utilize sociological concepts in your particular interpretations and analyses. Please refer to and follow the **Guidelines** for **EEs** for these extra-credit options. **EAs** should be 3-4 pp. and the **BR** 6-8 pp. in length.

We shall be discussing in class how to write **EAs**, and the **BR**. For now keep in mind the following:

- **EAs** are an opportunity for you to critically write about a current social event in sociological terms. You may respond to a News Item, “controversial issues,” current social conditions such as globalization, or a personal experience that allowed you to make sociological connections. When you are writing your **EAs** try to explicitly specify how the event helped you understand or contextualize certain sociological concepts used in theoretical articulations. **Ask yourself:** Do I feel the event has helped me understand some sociological concepts in the readings? How has the event helped my understanding of the sociological perspective?

Due Dates for EAs: Anytime from **10/05 through 11/09**.

- The **BR** should adequately interpret and critique a book that deals with sociological theory. Briefly, it should consist of an evaluation of an author’s purpose, the type of book, and a summary of the ideas and arguments. Be sure to submit a title and brief explanation indicating your interest (no more than 1/2 a page) by for my approval before you compose the review. I can also provide suggestions, if you would like to discuss a topic of interest.

Due Dates for BR: **BR Selection and Explanation, 10/12; BR, 12/07.**

A COMMENTARY ON TEACHING

“[T]eaching [is] a revolutionary act... Learning and teaching are complex, endlessly fascinating collaborations. [A teacher can] learn enormous amounts from the students ... [Students are] colleagues and companions on an intellectual, potentially life-changing journey.... [Good goals for teaching] include the development of critical thinking skills, acquiring the ability to work collaboratively, honing the art of applying theoretical concepts to actual historical and contemporary situations, and making connections between what we study and how we live” (Foran 2003:02).

A COMMENTARY ON OFFICE HOURS SESSIONS

“Dialogue with the people is radically necessary to every authentic revolution.”

Paulo Freire

I encourage you to attend office hours. I am available to address any concerns or issues connected to your academic experience. Please feel free to talk to me about the subject matter or assignment strategies. You will do well in this course if you are prepared to study hard. Taking advantage of a more “accessible” setting may help your learning efforts. I am available to see you one-on-one in order to address your issues, questions, concerns, ideas, or discoveries. I am interested in your reactions, responses, views, or perceptions. Part of the learning process requires meaningful dialogue between the professor and the student. Therefore, your individual feedback is important and your thoughts, ideas, perceptions, concerns, questions, or doubts are essential to the learning process itself.

FILMS & GUEST LECTURES

(To be announced, if scheduled)

References

Appelbaum, Richard and William J. Chambliss. 1995. *Sociology*. New York: HarperCollins College Publishers.
Foran, John. 2003. Syllabus for Sociology 130ST, *Radical Social Change from Chile to Chiapas*, at UCSB, Summer Sessions.