

Spring Semester 2021
Fridays 9 AM-12 PM
Remote Instruction
Office Hours: By appt.

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Intermediate Sociological Theory

Sociology 773
University of Wisconsin-Madison
3 Credits, Remote, General Education
Traditional Carnegie

1. General Orientation

Reading Load: The reading load in this course is heavy and consists mostly (but not exclusively) of original texts. I have carefully selected the readings so that your assignments will rarely be more than 150 pp. of text per week (not including bibliography and endnotes).

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate a broad understanding of major theories, methodologies, and research findings in the sociological literature.
- Students will develop an understanding of the sociological tradition.
- Students will develop analytical thinking skills that enable them to evaluate information pertinent to their research questions.
- Students will communicate in a clear, organized, engaging manner, using language, methods, and critical tools appropriate to the social sciences.

In addition to the substantive goal of imparting knowledge about classical thinkers who have contributed greatly to the development and self-understanding of modern society, this course has another important set of learning objectives: to help students develop skills in reading lengthy, original texts carefully and thoroughly; skills in grasping complex analytic arguments presented therein; and skills in thinking about and critically assessing and evaluating complex analytic arguments. At the course website are some tips on reading and underlining, which should help with at least some of these learning objectives. Included also are reading notes to further assist students in learning the aforementioned skills, together with tips on how to use those reading notes. And there are weekly examinations on the required readings; these weekly examinations further encourage students in the development of these skills—and, of course, test those skills themselves. Our weekly class discussions also aim to foster in students an ability to engage thoughtfully, critically, and in a well-informed manner, with complex arguments.

Readings: Books are on sale at University Bookstore and on reserve at College Library. See the complete list of books for purchase later in this syllabus. Some additional readings also are electronically available through Canvas—but not on sale or on reserve in hard-copy form, so students only will have that electronic option. Finally, as mentioned above, I have posted at Canvas a set of the reading notes I use in my undergraduate “theory” courses. They cover part of the material I assign during the first eight weeks or so of this course. They go over that material page by page, paragraph by paragraph, alerting readers to important points and raising a number of questions along the way. Since the reading notes were prepared for a different course than this one, they are not complete. Nor are they in the proper order. *Please note: Whenever you find a discrepancy between the reading notes and this syllabus, always go with the syllabus.* Remember always: The syllabus is supreme. It is the final arbiter. It is the decider.

Note about Printing Materials Available at Canvas: Please conserve paper in whatever ways possible! Please use double-sided printing and perhaps even try to fit multiple pages on each side. Many students are enrolled in this course, and I have assigned a great many selections. It adds up.

Academic Integrity: By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion. <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/syllabus-statement/>

Sexual Harassment and Misconduct: Professional conduct and appropriate behavior are critical to create a safe learning environment for students and instructors alike. Here is a statement about sexual harassment from the University: What is Sexual Harassment? Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when submission to such conduct is a condition of employment, academic progress, or participation in a university program; or submission to or rejection of such conduct influences employment, academic or university program decisions; or the conduct interferes with an employee's work or a student's academic career, or creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work, learning, or program environment. Tangible Action or Quid Pro Quo (This for That) Sexual Harassment and Hostile Environment Sexual Harassment are both illegal and unacceptable.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a

student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. <https://mcburney.wisc.edu/instructor/>

Diversity and Inclusion: Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background—people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world. <https://diversity.wisc.edu/>

Grading

Grading Format: Students' final grades for this course will be based on (A) a series of weekly examinations; and (B) class attendance and participation. More on each of these below.

A. Weekly Examinations

Examinations:

- This portion of the grading will be on a 100-point scale and will depend entirely on a series of thirteen weekly thirty-three minute examinations. Each of these examinations will consist of ten short questions on the week's readings and will be *open-book / open-notebook*. Each examination will be worth 10 points.
- Your lowest three examination scores automatically will be dropped, leaving you with ten scores, or a total of 100 (possible) points.
- Students whose first language is not English will be allowed to start working on their examinations 20 minutes early each week (i.e., at 8:40 AM) in the same classroom.
- Examinations will be non-cumulative—i.e., focused exclusively on that week's readings.
- There will be no weekly examination in Week 1, during which we discuss Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations*. Regular weekly examinations will commence in Week 2.

Final grades: A/B=98-100. B=94-97. B/C=80-93. C=75-79. F=74 or less. (I explain on the following page why no "A" grade is included in this scale.)

What to Expect: The above grading scale may look absurdly difficult, but it is not meant to be a standard scale. The real challenge for students is that they will have to spend a fair amount of time reading. The weekly examinations require them to keep up with reading assignments. These examinations test whether students have done the readings slowly, carefully, and thoughtfully.

B. Class Attendance and Participation

How Much Do Class Attendance and Participation Count? I indicated above that there is a 100-point scale in this course. But please notice that a perfect or near-perfect score on that scale will only get you an A/B. The second major determinant of your final grade—i.e., class attendance and participation—is what will raise that A/B to an A or keep it at an A/B or even lower it to a B. More generally, class attendance and participation will take whatever a student has earned by way of weekly examinations and *either keep that grade the same, raise it by a notch, or lower it by a notch*. Satisfactory class attendance (as defined below) with good participation will raise your grade a notch. Satisfactory class attendance with average participation will keep it the same. Satisfactory or unsatisfactory class attendance with below-average participation will lower it a notch. Clearly, class attendance and participation are an extremely important determinant of your final grade. Let me say a few words about how I assess whether your class attendance is or is not satisfactory and how I assess whether your participation is above average, average, or below average.

Class Attendance: Attendance all the way through each class meeting is required, with the exception of no more than three absences. *No attendance will be taken the first week of the semester. It will not count toward your final number of classes attended or missed.* If not in attendance for the entirety of a class meeting, students will be considered not to have attended that day. You can miss an examination at the beginning of class and simply rejoin the class after the break. “Class attendance” refers only to being in class between 9:45 AM and 12:00 PM. Beyond the three allowed absences, there is no such thing as an allowed absence in this course, except in cases of extended, sustained, several-weeks-long personal illness or family emergency. Otherwise, please don’t even bother to ask. But if you do have a significant personal illness or family emergency, then by all means get in touch with me.

Class Participation: Class participation will be evaluated—subjectively, by me—on the basis of overall contributions to weekly class meetings. I want to see evidence on a consistent basis across the semester, not only in weekly examinations but also during class discussions themselves, that a student has read the assigned materials carefully, thoughtfully, and thoroughly. This does not mean s/he must know and understand everything when s/he walks in the door to start the class meeting. It does not mean a student’s judgments as to what is most important in the readings always must be the same as my judgments. It does not mean the student has to dominate class discussion and speak up every other minute. What it does mean is that, if a student gives me a sense that s/he is not doing careful and consistent reading for the course, that s/he is not putting in a serious effort, then it will bode poorly for this portion of that student’s final grade. (I will designate it “below average.”) I expect students to take part actively in class discussions. If I ask a student a question at a moment when s/he seems not to be paying attention, and the student answers, “Can you please repeat the question?,” then this will be taken into account. If a student’s comments do not reflect serious preparation for class discussions, then this too will be noticed. And if a student takes the class discussion onto irrelevant tangents, raises issues of interest only to him or herself, deflects attention from the important issues raised by me in class or by the readings, then this also will be taken into consideration. I do not ask for really frequent interventions. Some students are talkative; others are quiet. All I ask for are a few—just a few—substantive, thoughtful, well-informed contributions per class meeting. This will get a student an “average” designation for this portion of their final grade or perhaps even a “good” designation. If a student really is

trying hard and doing their best to contribute, whether or not they always are “correct” in what they say, then this will get them a “good” designation.

C. Summary of Grading

The Bottom Line: To put it in very general, informal terms, if you do really well in both your weekly examinations and your class participation (combined with class attendance), you will get an A for the course. If you do really well in one but not in both, you will get an A/B. If you do well in both (but not really well in either), you will get a B. If you do well in one (either one) but less than well in the other, you will get a BC. If you do less than well in both, you will get a C. If there is something truly wrong—e.g., cheating on an examination; grossly inadequate performance on examinations; very poor class attendance and/or participation—you will get below a C.

Books on Sale

Books on Sale at University Bookstore (and on Reserve at College Library)

Please note: I have done my very best to keep expenses down as much as possible!

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*., translated by George Lawrence; edited by J.P. Mayer. Please use only this edition, which is in one volume published by Harper Perennial.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*, edited by Robert Tucker.
- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim: Sociologist of Modernity*, edited by Mustafa Emirbayer.
- Max Weber, *From Max Weber*, edited by Hans Gerth and C. Wright Mills.
- Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, translated by Talcott Parsons. Please use only the Norton translation I’ve ordered.
- Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*.
- Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction*.

Course Readings

Week 1: Adam Smith and Political Liberalism

Introductory considerations:

- Canvas: Charles Tilly, “Why Read the Classics?” (Recommended but not required.)
- Canvas: Robert Nisbet, “The Two Revolutions.” (Recommended but not required.)
- Online: R.W. Connell, “Why is Classical Theory Classical?” *American Journal of Sociology* 102 (1997): 1511-57. (Recommended but not required.)

Economic liberalism:

- Canvas: Adam Smith, selections from *The Wealth of Nations*.

Political liberalism:

- Canvas: Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789).
- Canvas: Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1793).

Week 2: Alexis de Tocqueville

Tocqueville on equality of conditions:

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*: 9-12 (until “The Christian nations of our day”); 50-56; 316-20; 340-63; 584-94; 600-03; 535-38; 614-16; 572-80; 555-58; 452-54; 634-45.

Tocqueville on political liberty:

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*: 12 (from “The Christian nations”)-20; 56-57; 246-48; 250-53; 254-56; 259-61; 690-95; 503-13; 525-28; 513-17; 62-63; 87-98; 262-63; 270-76; 277 (entire page, including the italicized material); 286-87 (down to the very bottom of that page); 290-92 (down to the very bottom of that page); 301-08; 702-05.

Tocqueville on intellectuals:

- Canvas: selection from Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*.

Week 3: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

Some early writings by Marx:

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*: 26-52; 53-54 (two-thirds down); 64 (middle)-65; 70-81.
- Canvas: Mode of Production. (This is a reading aid for the selection that follows.)
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*: 149 (bottom)-55.

Marx’s “Communist Manifesto”:

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*: 473-91; 499-500.
- Canvas: Karl Marx, “On Trade Unions.”

Engels on capitalism and gender:

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*: 734-51.

Week 4: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels—and Ida B. Wells-Barnett

Engels on working-class Manchester:

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*: 579-85.

Marx and Engels on the capitalist system:

- Canvas: Karl Marx, selection from *Capital*, vol. I.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*: 3-6; 294-312; 319-29; 431-36; 329-431; 436-38.

Wells-Barnett on white supremacy:

- Canvas: Ida B. Wells-Barnett, “Southern Horrors.”

Week 5: Emile Durkheim—and a Glance Ahead to Max Weber

Selections centering around Suicide:

- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 32-49; 218-19.
- Canvas: Emile Durkheim, “Preface to the Second Edition.” (Although this is a preface specifically to *The Division of Labor in Society*, it pertains less to the arguments there than to the theoretical framework developed in *Suicide*.)

Durkheim’s and Weber’s political sociologies contrasted:

- Canvas: Emile Durkheim, selection from *The Rules of Sociological Method*.
- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 172-85.
- Max Weber, *From Max Weber*: 77 (second paragraph)-82 (top); 196-216; 221-35.

Week 6: Emile Durkheim—and More Max Weber

Selections centering around The Division of Labor in Society and Socialism and Saint-Simon:

- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 193-202.

Selections centering around The Elementary Forms of Religious Life:

- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 84-96; 109-24; 140-42.
- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 237-44; 263-67; 272-79.
- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 97-99; 101-05; 134-38; 158-64; 188-91; 249-54.
(This is an assortment of related selections by mid- to late-twentieth century authors.)

Weber’s sociology of modernity:

- Max Weber, *From Max Weber*: 328 (eight lines from top)-57.

Week 7: W.E.B. Du Bois—and Back to Karl Marx

Du Boisian sociology:

- Canvas: W.E.B. Du Bois, selections from *The Souls of Black Folk* and other writings.

Marx on the events of 1848-51 (The Eighteenth Brumaire):

- Canvas: Background Reading for *The Eighteenth Brumaire*: 670-76; 684-85; 690 (first full paragraph); 696-701.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Marx-Engels Reader*: 594-617.

Week 8: Max Weber and Marianne Weber

Weber on power and social stratification:

- Canvas: Max Weber, selection from *Economy and Society* on social closure.
- Max Weber, *From Max Weber*: 180-94 (top).

Weber's sociology of religion:

- Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*: 3-13; 21-29 (middle); 33 (middle)-34 (two-thirds down); 45 (bottom)-46; 47-66; 81-97. (Routledge edition: xxvii-xlii; 13-24; 30 (one-third down)-32 (top); 48 (two-thirds down)-50; 53-80; 102-25.)

Marianne Weber on marriage and the sexes:

- Online: Marianne Weber, "Authority and Autonomy in Marriage." *Sociological Theory* 21 (2003): 85-102. (Please read pp. 85-95; the rest on pp. 95-102 is recommended only.)

Week 9: Max Weber—and Back to Emile Durkheim

Weber's basic sociological concepts:

- Canvas: Max Weber, selection from *Economy and Society* on types of social action.

Weber's value-theory and methodology:

- Max Weber, *From Max Weber*: 114 (middle)-28; 134 (two-thirds down)-56.
- Canvas: Max Weber, "The 'Objectivity' of Knowledge in Social Science and Social Policy."

Durkheim's methodology:

- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 284-93.

Week 10: The Pragmatist Impulse in American Sociology

Classical American pragmatism:

- Canvas: John Dewey, selection from *How We Think*.
- Canvas: George Herbert Mead, selections from *Mind, Self, and Society*.
- Canvas: Jane Addams, selection from *Democracy and Social Ethics*.
- Canvas: Mary Jo Deegan, *Jane Addams and the Men of the Chicago School*: chs. 2-3.
- Online: Jane Addams, “A Function of the Social Settlement.” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 13 (1899): 33-55.

The Chicago School of sociology:

- Canvas: W.I. Thomas, selection from *The Unadjusted Girl*. (Please read the material in regular font but skim the material in tiny font. You won’t be examined on the latter.)
- Canvas: W.I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki, “Social Disorganization and Social Reorganization.”
- Canvas: Robert Park and Ernest Burgess, selection from *Introduction to the Science of Sociology*.
- Canvas: Frances Donovan, selections from *The Lady Who Waits*.

More pragmatism-inspired sociology:

- Canvas: Irving Louis Horowitz, “The Intellectual Genesis of C. Wright Mills.”

Week 11: Mid-Twentieth Century American Sociology

Parsonian sociology:

- Canvas: Hans Joas and Wolfgang Knobl, *Social Theory*: ch. II only. (The pdf file I have posted includes chs. III-IV as well. But for the time being, please stop at the end of ch. II.)
- Canvas: Talcott Parsons, selections from *The Structure of Social Action*. (Start by skipping ahead to p. 732 and reading the six sentences from “Second, there is implied . . .” to “. . . the connecting links between them.” These are the punch-line of the entire work. Then examine the table of contents and compare it to what you have just read. Then read the excerpts I have chosen from this work.)
- Canvas: Hans Joas and Wolfgang Knobl, *Social Theory*: chs. III-IV. (Please resume reading the pdf file that begins with ch. II.)
- Canvas: Representations of the AGIL Schema. (These figures are meant as a supplement to Joas and Knobl, ch. IV.)

Mertonian sociology:

- Canvas: Robert Merton, excerpts from “On Sociological Theories of the Middle Range” and “Manifest and Latent Functions.” (One other selection—“The Bearing of Empirical Research on Sociological Theory”—also is included in the handout, but it is recommended only. The first two selections are required.)

Critiques and alternatives:

- Online: George Homans, "Bringing Men Back In." *ASR* 29 (1964): 809-18.
- Canvas: C. Wright Mills, "Grand Theory," "Abstracted Empiricism," and "The Promise" from *The Sociological Imagination*. (These selections are recommended only.)
- Online: James Coleman, "Social Theory, Social Research, and a Theory of Action." *AJS* 91 (1986): 1309-35.

Week 12: Georg Simmel and Erving Goffman

Simmelian sociology:

- Canvas: Georg Simmel, "The Problem of Sociology."
- Canvas: Georg Simmel, "The Triad."
- Canvas: Georg Simmel, "Sociability."
- Canvas: Georg Simmel, "The Stranger."
- Canvas: Georg Simmel, "The Metropolis and Mental Life."

Goffmanian sociology:

- Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*: xi-xii; 1-24 (one-third down); 30-33 (middle); 34-36 (middle); 48 (one-third down)-51; 51-52 (middle); 56 (one-third down)-58; 58-59 (bottom); 65 (top)-66; 70-76; 106-40; 238-55.
- Canvas: Erving Goffman, selection from *Interaction Ritual*.
- Emile Durkheim, *Emile Durkheim*: 126-29; 280-81; 129-33. (Please note: We are not returning to Durkheim; these are selections by Goffman and one other related author.)

Week 13: Pierre Bourdieu and Patricia Hill Collins

Bourdieu on the field of social classes:

- Canvas: Pierre Bourdieu, "Some Properties of Fields."
- Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction*: preface to the English-language edition; introduction; chs. 5-7; conclusion. (Please skip portions of the text that appear in tiny font; also skip the boxes. This amounts to nearly half the overall length of this reading assignment. The assignment, once you skip this material, is much shorter than it appears!)

Collins on intersectional sociology:

- Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction*: ch. 2 (pp. 101-09 only). (Again, skip the portions of the text that appear in tiny font.)
- Canvas: Patricia Hill Collins, selections from *Black Feminist Thought* (specific chapters to be announced).

Week 14: Harold Garfinkel and Dorothy Smith

Garfinkel and ethnomethodology:

- Canvas: Harold Garfinkel, “The Origins of the Term ‘Ethnomethodology.’”
- Canvas: Harold Garfinkel, “Preface” and “Passing and the Managed Achievement of Sex Status in an Intersexed Person, Part I,” in *Studies in Ethnomethodology*.

Smith and institutional ethnography:

- Canvas: Dorothy Smith, “The Everyday World as Problematic” and “Institutional Ethnography” from *The Everyday World as Problematic*.