

**SOCIOLOGY 301: FOUNDATIONS OF THEORY
COURSE OUTLINE: SUMMER TERM 2011**

TEXTS

1. KENNETH D. ALLAN: *The Social Lens* (This book will also be used in Soc. 302)

RECOMMENDED READINGS

1. C. WRIGHT MILLS: *The Sociological Imagination*
2. PETER L. BERGER: *Invitation to Sociology: A Humanistic Perspective*

COURSE OBJECTIVES

“The modern bourgeois society that has sprouted from the ruins of feudal society has not done away with class antagonisms. It has but established new classes, new conditions of oppression, new forms of struggle in place of the old ones” (Marx, from *The Communist Manifesto*). As the US economy wavers, economic institutions like Countrywide Financial Corp. are bought out or crumble and the gap between the rich and the poor widens, one begins to realize this: Marx is as relevant today as he was over a hundred years ago. Moreover, the sociology student can understand why it is essential to grapple with Marx’s theories and the contributions he and others made to our discipline.

Sociological theories are complex frameworks that sociologists use to explain and analyze how social action, social processes, and social structures work. This class aims to acquaint the student with the major historical figures within the discipline and their contributions. We will look at the lives, theories, and criticism of such theorists as Marx, Durkheim, Weber and more. Please note that this course requires a considerable amount of reading and participation; therefore, class attendance is paramount for passing the class. Students should expect to stay on top of the readings and engage the materials through timely completion of all assignments and exercises. I have provided a course calendar with all the important deadlines (see last page). Use this to stay current on all required work.

REQUIRED WORK

1. *Theory in the Real-World*: Learning theory is an active sport; to become truly comfortable with theory you have to engage it, struggle with it, and learn to question its implications. To encourage this growing pain, I will ask you to find a news article, video clip* or blog posting that you will analyze using one of the theorists covered in class. Your analysis should clearly connect the real-world example to a *substantive* aspect of the reading. Analyses should be a minimum of two pages—max of three.
One analysis will be due each week no later than Thursday (worth 6 points each).
2. *Reading Quizzes*: Throughout this course, you will be given a short quiz (about five questions) to test your knowledge of the reading. These quizzes will be completed in class and handed back later in the week. You cannot make up missed quizzes.
Quizzes will not be scheduled (worth 6 points).
3. *Presentation*: Students will be put in groups of three and assigned a theorist to cover. During the first hour of class, groups will lead the discussion on their assigned theorist. The class will develop requirements for presentations, including grading scale.
(worth 25 points)

4. *Final*: The final will be a take-home exam due Thursday, July 7th (worth 25 points)

Late Work: I do not accept any late work. You will need to bring a hard copy to class for full credit.

GRADING

Assignments	Points Possible	# of Items	Total Possible
<i>Theory Analysis</i>	6	4	25
<i>Reading Quizzes</i>	6	4	25
<i>Presentation</i>	25	1	25
<i>Final</i>	25	1	25

Grading Scale (total of 125 points)

Grade	%	Points
A	93	116
A-	90	112
B+	86	107
B	83	103
B-	79	98
C+	75	93

Grade	%	Points
C	70	87
C-	66	82
D+	63	77
D	60	75
D-	57	71