This course is intended to generate a first, basic understanding of the work of three classical sociological theorists, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber. Students will be required to read extensively from the authors’ original works. Developing an ability to comprehend “difficult” material is a central agenda of the course and the original texts will be abbreviated only to improve the likelihood of comprehension and to keep the total reading load manageable. Class time will be used primarily for discussion of the assigned readings. Lecturing will be limited to providing the contextual and theoretical background necessary to understand the readings.

**Course Strategies**

It will be impossible to succeed in this course without a commitment to devoting the necessary time and effort to the reading. I have tried to limit the number of pages but much of the material may require multiple readings. A particularly effective strategy is to read the assigned material before class (required) and then re-read it again after class.

Another strategy I highly recommend is to write out a 1-2 page summary of the central argument(s) of each reading. In addition to aiding in comprehension and retention, these summaries will be extremely useful for the exams and will be valuable reference materials in future years when re-reading the books is impractical. In order to promote this practice, students will be required to prepare and hand in (in a timely fashion) 4 such summaries over the course of the semester.

One note on terminology: The classical sociological tradition often applies very specific meanings to words whose contemporary usage tends to be much more general (“modern,” “class,” “status,” “state,” “function”) or even substantially different (“corporation,” “bureaucracy”). In addition to paying close attention to everything else, it is important to take note of the specific meanings these authors apply to the terms they use.

While the core readings for this course are much more difficult than typical undergraduate fare, Marx, Durkheim and Weber are all excellent writers and brilliant thinkers. If you approach the readings with patience, effort, and some amount of faith that hard work will be repaid, you should find the course very rewarding.
Grading

There will be two open-book exams. The mid-term will count for 30% of the grade and the final for 40% of the grade. The remaining 30% will be based on class participation, including the homework assignments.

Reading List

Most of the readings for this course are widely available. Please feel free to obtain the readings in the most economical and convenient way for you. However, be aware that many of the books on the list exist in multiple editions. The page numbers given in the syllabus are for the editions given. If you acquire a different edition, please use caution to ensure you are reading the correct passages. A handful of required readings will be made available via email or E-RESERVE.

The following books are available for purchase at University Book Store:


SYLLABUS

Week 1
9/2: Organization and General Introduction

9/4: Europe from 1789 - 1914
Week 2
9/9: Adam Smith
• Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations:
  Introduction and Plan of Work, pp. xxiii-xxvi.
  Book 1, Chs. 1-3 and first part of Ch. 5, pp. 3-23, 33-42.
9/11: The Condition of the Working Class in England
• Friedrich Engels, The Condition of the Working Class in England:
  Prefaces and Introduction, Chs. 1, 3: pp. 9-35, 87-100.

MARX:

Week 3: Marx I
9/16:
• Giddens, Ch. 1, pp: 1-8.
• “Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right: Introduction,” pp. 53-54 only in Tucker (through “the criticism of politics”). [Read this AT LEAST TWICE.]
9/18:
• Giddens, Ch. 1, pp. 9-17.
• Selections from “Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844”, pp. 70-81, 93-101 in Tucker.

Week 4: Marx II
9/23:
• “The German Ideology: Part 1,” pp. 149 (“The premises from which we begin...”) - 155, 172 (“History is nothing...”) - 175, 184 (“The concentration of trade...”) – 188, 192 (“Finally...) - 200 in Tucker.
9/25:

Week 5: Marx III
9/30:
• “Manifesto of the Communist Party”, pp. 469-491 only in Tucker.

10/2:
• “Marx on the History of His Opinions” (generally known as “Preface to A Critique of Political Economy”), pp. 3-6 in Tucker. [Read this AT LEAST TWICE.]

Week 6: Marx IV
10/7:
• Capital, Vol 1:
  - Preface to the First German Edition, pp. 7-11.
  - Part III, Ch. X (“The Working Day”), pp. 231-302. (You can skim Sec. 3, pp. 243-256.)
10/9:
- *Capital, Vol. 1:*
  - Part VIII ("The So-Called Primitive Accumulation"), pp. 713-741, 761-774.

**Week 7: Marx V**

10/14: Catch-up and Review

**FIRST EXAM: Thursday 10/16**

**DURKHEIM:**

**Week 8: Durkheim I: The Division of Labor in Society**

10/21:
- Giddens, Ch. 5, pp. 65-70.
- *The Division of Labor in Society*
  - Book I, pp. 11-30.

10/23:
- Giddens, Ch. 5, pp. 70-76.
- *The Division of Labor in Society*
  - Book I: pp. 38 ("The totality of...") - 48 ("...repressed by punishment.")
  - Book I: 60-64, 68-71, 83-86, 149-154, 160 ("Undoubtedly...") - 163 ("...upset in another.")

**Week 9: Durkheim II**

10/28:
- Giddens, Ch. 5, pp. 76-81.
- *The Division of Labor in Society*
  - Book II, pp. 200-205, 217-221 ("...moral and social life.")
  - Book II, 275-277 ("... is found necessary.")

10/30:
- *Suicide*
  - Preface and Introduction, pp. 35-53.
  - Book One, Ch. 3 (Suicide and Cosmic Factors), pp. 104-122.

**Week 10 (11/4, 11/6): Durkheim III**

- Giddens, Ch. 6, pp. 82-91.
- *Suicide*
  - Book Two, Chs. 2 (pp. 152-170) and 3 (pp. 202-216 only).
  - Book Two, Ch. 5 (pp. 241-264 only).
Week 11 (11/11, 11/13): Durkheim IV
- *Suicide*
  - Book Three, Chs. 1 (pp. 297-300, 321-325 only) and 3 (pp. 361-392.)
- Catch-up and Review

**WEBER:**

Week 12 (11/18, 11/20): Weber I
- Giddens, Ch. 9.
- *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

Week 13 (11/25): Weber I
- *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*
  - Part II, pp. 101-123, 141-159.

Week 14 (12/2, 12/4): Weber III
- “Basic Sociological Terms” from *Economy and Society* (Vol. 1, Ch. 1), pp. 4-9, 22-26.

Week 15 (12/9, 12/11): Weber IV
- “Bureaucracy,” pp. 196-244 in Gerth and Mills.
- “Politics as a Vocation”, pp. 77-92 (“... from one case to another.”), 115 (“One can say...”) -128 only in Gerth and Mills.
- “Science as a Vocation”, pp. 129-156 in Gerth and Mills.

**FINAL EXAM: Sunday, 12/14, 12:25 PM**