

**Development of Social Theory, SOC 310**  
**Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 10:10-11:00am**  
**Room: SLOAN 163**

Instructor: Dr. Sarah Whitley

Office: Wilson-Short Hall #207

Office Hours: M/W 8:30-10:00am or by appointment (email to schedule)

Email: [whitley@wsu.edu](mailto:whitley@wsu.edu) (please put "Soc 310" in subject line)

Phone: 509-335-2659 (for emergencies only)

TA: Xiaoqu Huang

Office: Wilson-Short Hall #235

Office Hours: M/T 11:15am-12:30pm

Email: [xiaoqu.huang@wsu.edu](mailto:xiaoqu.huang@wsu.edu) (please put "Soc 310" in subject line)

**Course Description and Learning Objectives:**

This course is designed to examine how sociological theory developed and to help you learn how to think like a sociologist. We will analyze, apply, and compare the ideas of major theorists and schools of thought (both classical and contemporary) and place those ideas in context. The lectures and discussions will address the following questions:

1. How can we best account for how people do the things they do?
2. How can we best account for how modern societies work?
3. How can we best understand and assess the rise of modern societies?
4. What light can sociological theory shed on problems and changes in our society?

By the end of this course, you should:

- Have a solid understanding of the main lines of sociological thought and the way in which they inform some of the most important questions and issues surrounding the field of sociology.
- Be able to critically think, apply sociological theoretical perspectives, and write about contemporary social issues.

**Course Structure**

The course is divided into three sections that are focused around major sociological perspectives and theoretical paradigms. We will examine:

1. **Classical or Contemporary Sources:** we will examine the ideas, concepts and theories of classical and contemporary sociologists using original readings that focus on answering major sociological questions.
2. **Applications:** we will apply key ideas, concepts and theories to modern social issues.

**Required Material:**

- Readings provided in pdf format on Blackboard

### **Blackboard Course Space:**

A Blackboard course space has been set up for this class. Here you will find important announcements, readings, discussions, assignments, and grade information. **Please make sure that you regularly check the Blackboard site and email attached to your Blackboard account!**

### **Course Requirements:**

1. **Exams:** (225 points). Three exams are scheduled for the course. Exam dates are listed in your Course Schedule. The exams will consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, matching, short answer, and/or short essay questions and will focus on the specific sections indicated on the Course Schedule (exams will not be cumulative). Study guides will be made available to help assist you when studying. Please check the Course Schedule for exam dates. No make-up exams will be given unless you have a **University excused absence**. If you will be absent for a University approved event on the exam date you must take the exam prior to leaving for the event and you must provide proper documentation. Each exam will be worth a possible total of 75 points.

**Optional Cumulative Final (to replace lowest exam score from previous exams):** (75 points). During finals week an optional cumulative final will be provided on Blackboard. If you score higher on the optional cumulative final then your lowest score on Exam 1, 2, or 3, I will replace your lowest exam score with the score you earned on the optional cumulative final. More information on the optional cumulative final will be provided throughout the semester.

2. **Blackboard Discussions:** (200 points). Eleven discussions are scheduled for the course. Discussion dates are listed in your Course Schedule. Discussions will be completed on Blackboard by 9:00am on designated Fridays. Discussions will consist of essay questions. No make-up or late discussions will be given unless you have a **University excused absence**. If you will be absent for a University approved event on the discussion date you must complete the discussion prior to leaving for the event and you must provide proper documentation. Each discussion will be worth a possible total of 20 points. I will drop your lowest discussion. More information on the discussions will be given in-class.
3. **Friday Group Led Discussions:** (60 points). Seven group led discussions are scheduled for the course. The group led discussion dates are listed in your Course Schedule. On discussion dates a designated student group will lead a discussion during class time connecting class materials for the week to a relevant event or topic taking place in the popular news. Groups will briefly (5 minutes) discuss and summarize the relevant event or topic in the news, pose discussion questions to the class connecting the event or topic to class materials for the week, allow students to work in small groups to answer the questions, bring the class back together to discuss the questions posed, and then briefly (5 minutes) discuss and summarize the connections of the relevant event or topic in the news to class materials for the week. Your grade on the discussion will depend on your group's ability to create high quality critical thinking discussion questions, engage your classmates in high quality discussion, and provide a comprehensive and thorough brief discussion and summarization of the connections of the relevant event or topic in the news to class materials. You will be graded as a group, however you will have the opportunity to rate your group member's contributions and if a member is found to be free riding on the work of other group members they will be graded accordingly and separate from the group grade. For further guidelines and grading parameters refer to the group led discussion document provided on BB. Participating in each discussion is worth a possible 5 points and presenting your one designated discussion is worth a possible 30 points.

4. **Video Analysis Paper:** (50 points). Various videos will be shown in-class throughout the course of the semester. Video dates are listed in your Course Schedule. You will choose one of the videos to critically analyze using sociological concepts and theories discussed in-class and in the readings. The paper should be a minimum of three pages, doubled-spaced, with 1" margins, and college level writing. Paper due dates are listed in your Course Schedule. No late papers will be accepted unless you have a **University excused absence**. If you will be absent for a University approved event on the paper due date you must submit your paper prior to leaving for the event and you must provide proper documentation. The paper should be submitted as a hard copy at the beginning of class on the due date. No electronic papers will be accepted. More information on the paper will be given in-class and the assignment will be posted on Blackboard.
5. **Attendance:** (50 points). Because this is an upper division seminar, your grade will be dependent upon your attendance and participation (see below for more information on Participation). You need to be prepared (that means you've done the reading before you come to class), and ready to contribute. Participation will be divided into two separate components. First, attendance will be tracked for each class meeting (2 points per class) using an attendance sheet beginning in the second week of classes. In order to earn the 2 points of attendance for each class you must be present when the attendance sheet is passed around (during the first five to ten minutes of class). **If you come to class after the attendance sheet has been passed around you will not be allowed to sign the attendance sheet.** Students should come to class on time, be prepared, and ready to contribute. The only way these points can be made up is if you have a **University excused absence**. Please take note that much of what is discussed in lecture and in our class discussions is NOT covered in your readings so attending and participating in class is imperative if you wish to pass the exams and do well on the written assignment for the course. If absent, it is your responsibility to get notes from another student and ask if any announcements or handouts were missed.
6. **Participation:** (25 points). Participation includes not only coming to class, but also contributing to discussions with critical thought and analysis about course materials. In addition to earning 2 points of attendance for each class meeting you are present, you will also earn up to 25 points of participation for contributing constructively to class meetings. I will award these points at the end of the semester based on the quality of your participation throughout the semester. Quality participation includes critically thinking and analyzing the class materials, contributing to class discussions, and asking questions. **Note: just coming to class and talking with a group does not constitute participation.** In order to earn participation points you must engage with the entire class during discussions and with the instructor. Grading scale: students who come to class prepared and contribute to quality discussions 25 points; students who miss 2-5 classes, but contribute to quality discussions 20 points; student who miss more than 5 classes, but contribute to quality discussions 17.5 points; students who come to class and contribute to quality discussions occasionally 12.5 points; students who come to class, but do not contribute to quality discussions 0 points; students who do not contribute to quality discussions 0 points.

### **Point Breakdown**

3 Exams (75 points x 3) = 225 points (with Optional Cumulative Final, worth a possible 75 points)  
10 Blackboard Discussions (20 points x 10) = 200 points  
1 Friday Group Led Discussion (30 points x 1 for presenting and 5 points x 6 for participating) = 60 points  
1 Video Analysis Paper (50 points x 1) = 50 points  
Attendance (2 points x 25 classes) = 50 points  
Participation = 25 points  
**Total Points for the Class = 610 points**

### **Grading Scale**

94-100% = A	76-79% = C+
90-93% = A-	74-75% = C
86-89% = B+	70-73% = C-
84-85% = B	66-69% = D+
80-83% = B-	63-65% = D

**anything below a 63% = F**

**A Few Notes on Successful Completion of this Course:** Social theory is a required class for all sociology majors. You should expect the course to be rigorous and demanding in terms of your time and effort. Don't be discouraged by the quantity and intensity of the readings or by the quality of work you are expected to perform—be motivated! ☺

In order to perform well on exams, discussions and the written assignment, it is imperative you attend lecture and actively participate in class discussions. This means taking thorough notes during lecture and on the assigned readings, as well as completing all readings, discussions and the written assignment on time and asking questions when you need clarification or help understanding course requirements and/or materials.

I am here to assist you when you need help, so please seek my assistance if you find yourself struggling or just want to discuss the course material. The most effective way to reach me is to stop by my office during regularly scheduled office hours (Mondays and Wednesdays from 8:30-10:00am in Wilson-Short Hall #207) or through email ([whitley@wsu.edu](mailto:whitley@wsu.edu), please put "Soc 310" in subject line). You can expect an email response within 24 hours during the week or on Monday if you emailed during the weekend. In order for me to help you as much as possible, please compose your emails carefully, explain problems fully, and make sure to write using full words and sentences.

Grades may be disputed at the instructor's convenience (or during office hours). It is important to note, however, upon review the instructor has the option to lower, as well as raise the grade in question.

**Academic Integrity:** Washington State University and the Sociology department take academic integrity very seriously. If you cheat, you give yourself an advantage over other students; an advantage you do not deserve. Cheating robs honest students and disrespects the entire academic process. It's just not fair! **Do not Cheat! Any and all cheating will result in an "F" for the course and will be reported to the Academic Integrity Board!** Cheating includes but is not limited to the following: plagiarizing (i.e. presenting as your own or for academic evaluation, the ideas or words of another without proper acknowledgement and citations), cheating on assignments or examinations (including submitting the same (or substantially similar) papers or assignments), engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work, taking or acquiring test materials without faculty permission, buying unauthorized materials (i.e. don't buy papers or notes online). For more on what constitutes academic integrity and the consequences of violating academic integrity policies please visit <https://www.academicintegrity.wsu.edu>.

**Students with Disabilities:** I am committed to providing assistance to help you succeed in this course. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, please either visit or call the Access Center (Washington Building 217; 509-335-3417) to schedule an appointment with an Access Advisor. All accommodations must be approved through the Access Center.

**Emergency Procedures/Protocol:** Please take the time to go to the following websites and educate yourself on WSU's emergency procedures and protocol: <http://safetyplan.wsu.edu>.

## Course Schedule

Please note: the instructor reserves the right to alter this schedule if necessary to meet learning objectives, in the event of class cancellations or for other reasons. All changes will be announced in class in advance.

**Reading should be completed for class on the date specified.**

### **Week #1:**

Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup>: Introduction and Syllabus Review

Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: What is Theory?

Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Why Read Classical Theory?

### **Week #2:**

Monday, January 16<sup>th</sup>:

No Class-Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Wednesday, January 18<sup>th</sup>:

Topics: Émile Durkheim

Reading: *The Division of Labor in Society*

Friday, January 20<sup>th</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Professor Whitley and Xiaoqu Huang

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #1: Émile Durkheim *The Division of Labor in Society***

Reading: Review *The Division of Labor in Society*

### **Week #3:**

Monday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>:

Topic: Karl Marx

Wednesday, January 25<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Karl Marx

Reading: *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*

Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Professor Whitley and Xiaoqu Huang

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #2: Karl Marx *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844***

Reading: Review *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*

**Week #4:**

Monday, January 30<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Max Weber

Wednesday, February 1<sup>st</sup>:

Topic: Max Weber

Reading: *The Distribution of Power Within the Political Community: Class, Status, Party*

Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Group 1

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #3: Max Weber *The Types of Legitimate Domination***

Reading: *The Types of Legitimate Domination*

**Week #5:**

Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>:

Video-*Inequality for All*

Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>:

Video-*Inequality for All* and review for Exam 1

Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>:

**Exam #1**

**Week #6:**

Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Wednesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Reading: *Women and Economics*

**Due: Video Analysis-*Inequality for All***

Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Group 2

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #4: Charlotte Perkins Gilman *Women and Economics***

Reading: Review *Women and Economics*

**Week #7:**

Monday, February 20<sup>th</sup>:  
No Class-President's Day

Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>:

Topic: Georg Simmel  
Reading: *The Stranger*

Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Group 3  
**Due: Blackboard Discussion #5: Georg Simmel Stranger**  
Reading: Review *Stranger*

**Week #8:**

Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>:  
Topic: W.E.B. Du Bois

Wednesday, March 1<sup>st</sup>:

Topic: W.E.B. Du Bois  
Reading: *The Souls of Black Folk*

Friday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Group 4  
**Due: Blackboard Discussion #6: W.E.B. Du Bois The Souls of Black Folk**  
Reading: Review *The Souls of Black Folk*

**Week #9:**

Monday, March 6<sup>th</sup>:  
Topic: George Herbert Mead

Wednesday, March 8<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: George Herbert Mead  
Reading: *Self*

Friday, March 10<sup>th</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Group 5  
**Due: Blackboard Discussion #7: George Herbert Mead Self**  
Reading: Review *Self*

**Week #10:**

Monday, March 13<sup>th</sup>-Friday, March 17<sup>th</sup>

No Class-Spring Vacation

**Week #11:**

Monday, March 20<sup>th</sup>:

Video- *Separate and Unequal*

Wednesday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>:

Video- *Separate and Unequal* and review for Exam 2

Friday, March 24<sup>th</sup>:

**Exam 2**

**Week #12:**

Monday, March 27<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Structural Functionalism-Robert K. Merton

Wednesday, March 29<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Structural Functionalism-Robert K. Merton

Readings: *Manifest and Latent Functions*

**Due: Video Analysis- *Separate and Unequal***

Friday, March 31<sup>st</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Group 6

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #8: Robert K. Merton *Social Structure and Anomie***

Reading: *Social Structure and Anomie*

**Week #13:**

Monday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>:

Topic: Symbolic Interactionism-Erving Goffman

Wednesday, April 5<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Symbolic Interactionism-Erving Goffman

Reading: *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*

Friday, April 7<sup>th</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Group 7

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #9: Erving Goffman *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life***

Reading: Review *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*

**Week #14:**

Monday, April 10<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Feminist and Gender-Patricia Hill Collins

Wednesday, April 12<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Feminist and Gender-Patricia Hill Collins

Reading: *Black Feminist Thought*

Friday, April 14<sup>th</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Professor Whitley and Xiaoqu Huang

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #10: Patricia Hill Collins *Black Feminist Thought***

Reading: Review *Black Feminist Thought*

**Week #15:**

Monday, April 17<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Contemporary Theoretical Synthesis-Pierre Bourdieu

Wednesday, April 19<sup>th</sup>:

Topic: Contemporary Theoretical Synthesis-Pierre Bourdieu

Reading: *Social Space and the Genesis of Groups*

Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>:

Group Led Discussion: Professor Whitley and Xiaoqu Huang

**Due: Blackboard Discussion #11: Pierre Bourdieu *Social Space and the Genesis of Groups***

Reading: Review *Social Space and the Genesis of Groups*

**Week #16:**

Monday, April 24<sup>th</sup>:

Video-Stickup Kid

Wednesday, April 26<sup>th</sup>:

Video-Stickup Kid

Friday, April 28<sup>th</sup>:

Review for Exam 3-optional

**Final:**

**Exam 3**

Wednesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> from 8:00-10:00am