

<b>DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR: SO 4461 CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY</b>	
(Updated Spring 2022)	<b>UK LEVEL: 6</b> <b>UK CREDITS: 15</b> <b>US CREDITS: 3/0/3</b>
<b>PREREQUISITES:</b>	SO 1000 Introduction to Sociology SO 3260 Classical Sociological Theory <b>plus</b> 2 additional courses in sociology
<b>CATALOG DESCRIPTION:</b>	The development of sociological theory in Europe and the United States since Parsons. Functionalism and systems theory. Critical Theory. Feminist Social Theory. Interactionism and Ethnomethodology. Post-modernity. Current developments
<b>RATIONALE:</b>	As a continuation of SO 3260 <i>Classical Sociological Theory</i> , this course covers major theoretical trends in sociology since the 1920s. It seeks to familiarize sociology students with the various schools of thought, a knowledge of which is an indispensable resource for grasping the ongoing development of concepts in sociology. Offering a wide theoretical background, the course contributes to refining students' theoretical capabilities and makes them aware of the diversity of contemporary sociological theories. Since theories are interwoven with social change, an important dimension that emerges is the need to reconstruct sociology's theoretical categories in order to achieve greater adequacy in explanation.
<b>LEARNING OUTCOMES:</b>	As a result of taking this course, student should be able to:  1. Build detailed knowledge of the main theoretical schools of thought in sociology, from Parsons' attempt at a general theory of society to current debates.  2. Critically evaluate meta-theoretical problems, which still shape sociological theory, like the "action-structure" dualism.  3. Interpret advanced texts in contemporary sociological theory.  4. Discuss current theoretical and normative trends and their relevance for the legacy of contemporary sociological theory.
<b>METHOD OF TEACHING AND LEARNING:</b>	In congruence with the teaching and learning strategy of the college, the following tools are used: ➤ Classes consist of lectures, discussions of selected issues, showing of video documentaries and in-class illustrations of various issues. ➤ Office hours: students are encouraged to make full use of the office hours of their lecturer, where they can address issues and ask questions pertinent to the course material. ➤ Use of a blackboard site, where instructors post lecture notes, assignment instructions, timely announcements, as well as additional resources.

**ASSESSMENT:****Summative:**

<b>First assessment:</b> 24-hrs Take-Home Mid-term examination (unseen text interpretation/informative/critical response; 1,700 +/-10% words)- <b>summative</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Final assessment:</b> Term Paper (3,500 +/-10% words) - <b>summative</b>	<b>60</b>

**Formative:**

Interpretive in class exercises on selected texts – <b>formative</b>	<b>0</b>

The formative assignments test Learning outcomes 1, 2, with emphasis on 3, plus writing skills.

The first assessment (24-hrs mid-term examination) tests Learning outcomes 1, 3, 4,

The final assessment (term paper) tests Learning outcomes 1,2, 3 and 4.

*The final grade for this module will be determined by averaging all summative assessment grades, based on the predetermined weights for each assessment. If students pass the comprehensive assessment that tests all Learning Outcomes for this module and the average grade for the module is 40 or higher, students are not required to resit any failed assessments.*

**INDICATIVE READING:****Required material:**

1.Joas, H. and Knöbl, W (2009), *Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures*, Cambridge: Cambridge.

**On Reserve Status in the JSB Library (required):**

(chapters will be assigned by the lecturer in order to complement the main source with a view to sharpen interpretive skills on primary sources)

1. Bourdieu, P. (1984), *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
2. Buroway, M (2005), ‘For Public Sociology’, *American Sociological Review*, 70: 2-28.
3. Foucault, M ([1976] 1984), *The History of Sexuality, Vol. I*, London: Penguin Books.
4. Giddens, A (1987), *Social Theory and Modern Sociology*, Cambridge: Polity Press.
5. Goffman, E, ([1974, *Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience*. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press,
6. Habermas, J. ([1962] 1992), *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
7. Harding, S. (1987) (ed.), *Feminism and Methodology*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
8. Mouzelis, N. (2008), *Modern and Postmodern Social Theory. Bridging the Divide*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

9. Parsons, T (1966), *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
10. Parsons, T (1969). *Politics and Social Structure*. New York: The Free Press.
11. Turner, S. (ed.) (1997), *Social Theory and Sociology: The Classics and Beyond*. Wiley-Blackwell.
12. Susen, S. (2020), *Sociology in the Twentieth-First Century: Key Trends, Debates and Challenges*. Basingstoke, Houndmills: Palgrave.

**Recommended Material:**

1. Archer, M (2009) *Being Human: The Problem of Agency*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
2. Bhabra, G (2007) *Rethinking Modernity: Postcolonialism and the Sociological Imagination*. Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
3. Elias, N. (1978), *What is Sociology?* New York: Columbia University Press.
4. Gangas, S. (2020) *Sociological Theory and the Capability Approach*. London: Routledge.
5. Gouldner, A. (1970), *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*. New York: Avon Books.
6. Held, D. (1980), *Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
7. Heritage, J. (1984), *Garfinkel and Ethnomethodology*, Polity: Cambridge.
8. Homlwood, J. (2007), “‘Only connect...’: the challenge of Globalization for the social science”, *21<sup>st</sup> Century Society*, 2(1):79-93.
9. Holmwood, J. (2013), ‘Public Reasoning Without Sociology: Amartya Sen’s Theory of Justice’, *Sociology* 47(6): 1171-1186.
10. Johnson, P. (2014), ‘Sociology and the Critique of Neoliberalism: Reflection on Peter Wagner and Axel Honneth’, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 17: 516-533.
11. Layder, D. (1994), *Understanding Social Theory*. London: Sage.
12. Meštrović, S. (1998), *Anthony Giddens. The Last Modernist*. London and New York: Routledge.
13. Ritzer, G. (2008), *Modern Sociological Theory*, New York: McGraw-Hill (International Edition).
14. Sztompka, P. (1986), *Robert K. Merton: An Intellectual Profile*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Macmillan.
15. Touraine, A. (2007), “Sociology after Sociology”, *European Journal of Social Theory*, 10(2): 184-193.
16. Waters, M. (1994), *Modern Sociological Theory*, London: Sage.

**INDICATIVE MATERIAL:**  
(e.g. audiovisual, digital material, etc.)

**REQUIRED MATERIAL:**  
N/A

**RECOMMENDED MATERIAL:**

	N/A
<b>COMMUNICATION REQUIREMENTS:</b>	Verbal skills using academic / professional English.
<b>SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS:</b>	Word, ppts
<b>WWW RESOURCES:</b>	Useful specialized journals include:  <i>Sociological Theory</i> <a href="http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=0735-2751">http://www.wiley.com/bw/journal.asp?ref=0735-2751</a> <i>European Journal of Social Theory</i> <a href="http://www.est.sagepub.com">http://www.est.sagepub.com</a> <i>Journal of Classical Sociology</i> <a href="http://www.jcs.sagepub.com">http://www.jcs.sagepub.com</a> <a href="https://globalsocialtheory.org/topics/what-is-postcolonial-sociology/">https://globalsocialtheory.org/topics/what-is-postcolonial-sociology/</a>
<b>INDICATIVE CONTENT:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.What is theory?</li> <li>2.The classical attempt at synthesis: Talcott Parsons</li> <li>3.Interpretive approaches (1): symbolic interactionism</li> <li>4.Interpretive approaches (2): ethnomethodology</li> <li>5.Conflict sociology and conflict theory</li> <li>6.Habermas and critical theory</li> <li>7.Niklas Luhmann’s radicalization of functionalism</li> <li>8.Anthony Giddens’ theory of structuration and the new British sociology of power</li> <li>9.Structuralism and poststructuralism</li> <li>10.Between structuralism and theory of practice: The cultural sociology of Pierre Bourdieu</li> <li>11.Feminist social theories</li> <li>12.A crisis of modernity? New diagnoses (Ulrich Beck, Zygmunt Bauman, Robert Bellah, and the debate between liberals and Communitarians)</li> <li>13.Neo-pragmatism</li> <li>14.On ‘public sociology’ and its critics</li> <li>15. Postcolonialism, modernity and social theory</li> <li>16. Sociological theory and the capability approach</li> </ol>

17.How things stand

\*adapted from the chapter outline of Joas, H. and Knöbl, W., *Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures*, Cambridge: Cambridge, 2009.