



**Sociology 4404f (570)**  
**Sociological Theory I**  
**Fall/ Winter 2025-2026**

**Instructor:** C. Lavrence  
**Email:** [clavrenc@uwo.ca](mailto:clavrenc@uwo.ca)

---

**Course Information**

**Calendar Description:**

This course will survey major trends in modern sociological theory.

**Antirequisite(s):** [Sociology 3404F/G](#).

**Prerequisite(s):** [Sociology 2240E](#) or [Sociology 2270A/B](#) and [Sociology 2271A/B](#), and enrolment in fourth year of one of the Honours Specializations offered in Sociology or Criminology, or Honours Double Major in Sociology or Criminology.

**Extra Information:** 3 seminar hours.

**Course Weight:** 0.50  
**Breadth:** Category A  
**Subject Code:** SOCIOLOG

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's College at the University of Western Ontario  
Sociology 4404/F  
Sociological Theory 1- Fall 2025

**Course Information:**

Sociological Theory 1

Dr. Christine Lavrence

[clavrenc@uwo.ca](mailto:clavrenc@uwo.ca)

Office hour: Thursday 1-2pm in person or Zoom by appointment.

**Course Description:**

This course builds on previous courses on sociological theory, exploring a range of theorists who continue to revisit and rethink key sociological texts, ideas and questions in relationship to the social phenomena of our times. Key issues that will be examined include the production of self and identity within capitalism and neoliberalism, gender and the “crisis of care”, sociological interventions into climate change, to name a few. These texts will be examined in relation to the everyday social relations, power differentials and practices that animate them.

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

- Critically assess, interpret and compare a range of classical and contemporary theoretical orientations within the discipline of Sociology
- Make connections between different theorists and schools of thought
- Employ these theoretical frameworks to think through social issues and practices.
- Develop a decolonial lens for social theory and social issues
- Enhanced ability to engage complex theoretical ideas both orally and through conversation with others, as well as in written form.

**Mode of Instruction:** In-person

**Course Requirements:**

Prerequisite(s): [Sociology 2240E](#) or [Sociology 2270A/B](#) and [Sociology 2271A/B](#), and enrolment in fourth year of one of the Honours Specializations offered in Sociology or Criminology, or Honours Double Major in Sociology or Criminology.

**Course textbook/readings:**

Available online through library course reserves and linked through Brightspace course site, at no extra cost.

**Method of Evaluation:**

- 1) Participation: 15% (5% each for attendance, participation, and short reflections written in class)
- 2) Presentation: 15% Presentations based on an assigned reading with the purpose of generating class discussion on key ideas
- 3) In class Critical reflection 1: 20% (October 16) In class written assignment based on

selected reading from course material (750 words)

- 4) In-class Critical Reflection 2: 25% (November 13) In class written assignment based on selected reading from course material (750 words)
- 5) Final Written Assignment: 25% (due by end of the day December 9<sup>th</sup>) final written assignment focusing on synthesizing course readings, identifying key themes and critically engaging course material. (1750 words)

### **Academic Considerations:**

Students will have 72-hour window for the Final Essay (due December 6) before late marks are taken off.

Students are permitted one academic consideration per semester per course without formal supporting documentation.

### **Academic Integrity:**

Link to Western Scholastic Discipline policy:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

Within this course, use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT, translation tools, and grammar-checking tools) is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline.

### **Schedule of Classes and Readings:**

**Sept 4:** Introduction

**Sept 11:** Addressing the Canon

Burawoy, M. "Why is classical theory classical? Theorizing the canon and canonizing DuBois"

Go, J. "Thinking Against Empire: Anticolonial Thought as Social Theory"

**Sept 18:** Settler Colonialism and the politics of recognition

Coulthard, G. "Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the 'Politics of Recognition' in Canada"

Fraser, N. "Rethinking Recognition"

**Sept 25:** The Spirit of Digital Capitalism

Nachtwey, O and Seidl, T. "The Solutionist Ethic and the Spirit of Digital Capitalism"

Lemert, C. "Weber: The Spirit of Capitalism and the Iron Cage"

**Oct 2: Capital and Care**

Fraser, N. "Contradictions of Capital and Care"

Fraser, N. "Taking Care of Each Other is Essential Work"

**Oct 9: Sociology and Climate Change**

Ismail, F. "Averting Catastrophe: Crisis, Class and Climate Change"

Noorgard. "Sociology in a Time of Climate Change"

**Oct 16: In class reflection**

**Oct 23: Late Modernity and Choice**

Schwarz, O. "The Post-Choice Society: Algorithmic Prediction and the Decentering of Choice"

**Oct 30: Sociology and AI**

Smith-Doerr and Shetakofsky, "Toward a Sociology of Artificial Intelligence: A Call for Research on Inequalities and Structural Change"

Farina, M. and Lavazza, A. "ChatGPT in society: emerging issues"

**Nov 6: Reading Break**

**Nov 13: In class reflection # 2**

**Nov 20: Theorizing the Image**

Susan Sontag "On Photography" excerpts

Benjamin, W. "Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction"

**Nov 27: Labour and Happiness**

Ahmed, S. "Introduction" in *The Promise of Happiness*

Berardi, F. "The Soul at Work" from *The Soul at Work*, (pages 74-96)

Tokumitsu, M. "In the name of Love"

**Dec 4: Wrap Up**



# KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

## GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

### 2025-2026

#### **1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences**

##### **Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)**

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

##### **Academic Consideration for Student Absence**

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses\\_enrollment/exams\\_and\\_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/academic\\_consideration\\_Sep24.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf)

##### **Absences from Final Examinations**

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

## **Religious Accommodation**

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

## **2. Support Services**

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King’s University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

Academic Support Services at King’s University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

### **GBSV Support:**

King’s is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing [Care@kings.uwo.ca](mailto:Care@kings.uwo.ca) or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western’s Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also [https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html)

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

### 3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

**Use of Electronic Devices:** Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

**Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom:** King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

### 4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at [http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with your instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

### **5. Copyright of Course Material**

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

### **6. Use of Recordings**

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

### **7. Policy on Attendance**

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.