



Sociology 2240e (570, 571)
Survey of Sociological Theory
Fall/ Winter 2026-2027

Instructor: A. Ning
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Course Information

Calendar Description:

A survey of sociological theory from the historical roots of social science to the present.

Antirequisite(s): [Sociology 2270A/B](#) and [Sociology 2271A/B](#).

Prerequisite(s): At least 60% in 1.0 from Sociology courses at the 1000 level.

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours. Note for Main campus: [Sociology 2240E](#) or [Sociology 2270A/B](#) and [Sociology 2271A/B](#) are mandatory for students registered in Yr 2 of an Honours Specialization offered through the Dept. of Sociology.

Course Weight: 1.00
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.



Survey of Sociological Theory
Sociology 2240E (570)
Fall/Winter 2026-2027

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Professor: Dr. Ana Ning

E-mail: aning@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Mondays, 1:00-2:00 pm and Wednesdays, 10:30-11:30 am or by appointment, in-person or virtual
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Sociological theory is known to be an ongoing effort to systematize and to illuminate our understanding of social life. Theorists have asked questions about the nature of the social world and have reflected upon its many dimensions including customs and beliefs, forms of social interaction, institutions, types of socio-economic organization, and relations of power. Drawing upon the theme of modernity as a backdrop, this course examines some of the main bodies of classical and contemporary sociological theory that help explain the character of modern society. The course aims to combine a survey of canonical and less traditional works of sociological theory with an in-depth analysis of recurring questions and problems faced by theorists. It will examine conversations and debates amongst different theorists across the modern era, regarding the social world as fixed or changeable, law-governed, or unpredictable, shaped by impersonal forces or by human agency. By becoming familiar with these debates, students are encouraged to develop critical thinking to examine contemporary social issues, and to propose their own theoretical interpretations of social reality.

Format: In-person lectures, readings, films and seminar discussions and student presentations.

Assessments: 1 Short Quiz: 10% (**Timed via BRIGHTSPACE, Oct. 5, 2026**)
2 In-Class Critical Reflections: 10% each, total 20% (**Nov. 23, 2026 and Feb. 1, 2027**)
1 Essay: 15% (**Due Apr. 5, 2027 via BRIGHTSPACE submission**)
1 Final Exam: 15% (**Official April Exam Period**)
2 Group Facilitations and Discussions: 15% each, total 30% (**See BRIGHTSPACE course site**)
Attendance and Participation: 10% (**See BRIGHTSPACE course site**)

Required Readings:

- 1) Selected **scholarly articles** and **chapters** available in course's **Brightspace site** under "Course Readings" (**No Cost**)

Academic Integrity:

Within this course, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools [such as ChatGPT] is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation as this constitutes a form of academic plagiarism. It is expected that you will submit work that is truly your own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial). Written work may be subject to submission for similarity review by software such as Turnitin that will check for unusual coincidences in exam answer and essay writing patterns that may indicate cheating.

NB: Please refer to our **BRIGHTSPACE course site** for details regarding course assessments, expectations and policies.

Course Learning Outcomes

This course introduces and/or reinforces key sociological skills, namely, the ability to:

1. Demonstrate a holistic understanding of societal and cultural processes.
2. Situate past and present social issues both at local and global levels.
3. Identify, contrast, and compare theoretical positions in sociology, recognizing the provisional status of knowledge.
4. Distinguish and build connections between schools of thought.
5. Employ a decolonizing lens to social issues.
6. Demonstrate creative, analytical, and critical thinking skills.
7. Advocate for equity, diversity, inclusivity, and different ways of being, doing and knowing beyond Western systems of thought.
8. Identify and explain the role of power and social inequities in shaping people's lives.
9. Design and develop persuasive arguments.
10. Write using academic language and argumentation.
11. Demonstrate self-awareness and appropriate interpersonal skills.
12. Demonstrate capacity to work independently and collaboratively in groups.
13. Link theory to practice, applying sociological skills and knowledge to real life situations.
14. Engage in problem-based and inquiry-based learning to propose meaningful changes/solutions to pressing issues within diverse communities.

SYLLABUS – LECTURE SCHEDULE

SECTION I – THE INTERFACE BETWEEN THEORY AND PRACTICE

- Sept. 14 **Introduction and Overview of the Course**
Read: Course Outline
- Sept. 21 **Relevance of Sociological Theory: Different Ways of Knowing and Doing**
Read: Go, J. (2023). Thinking against empire: Anticolonial thought as social theory.
The British Journal of Sociology, 74(3), 279–293. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-4446.12993>
Groups A and B seminars

SECTION II – THE EARLY ORIGINS OF SOCIOLOGY

- Sept. 28 **Enlightenment, Conservative Reaction: Martineau, Kellogg, Comte, and Spencer**
Read: Delaney (2014) Chapter 1: The Early Roots of Sociological Theory in **Classical and Contemporary Social Theory: Investigation and Application**, New York, USA: Pearson Education Inc. (pp 13-29).
- FILM:** *Human Zoos: America's Forgotten History of Scientific Racism*
Groups A and B seminars
- Oct. 5 **SHORT QUIZ TIMED IN BRIGHTSPACE**

SECTION III – EXPANDING THE CLASSICAL TRADITION

Oct. 12 **FALL READING WEEK – NO CLASS**

Oct 19 **Conflict Theory and the Critique of Society: The Marxist Tradition and Early Decolonial Approaches (Mabini, Kellogg)**

Read: **Ritzer** and **Stepnisky** (2018) Chapter 2: Karl Marx
Introduction to Fetishism of Commodities in **Sociological Theory**, 10th Edition,
Los Angeles, USA, Sage Publications, Inc. (pp. 82-100).
<https://cssplatformbytha.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sociological-Theory-George-Ritzer.pdf>

Group A Seminar begins

Oct. 26 **The Structures of Capitalist Society: Marx's Critique, Strengths & Limitations (Fanon, Kellogg & Mukerjee)**

Read: **Ritzer** and **Stepnisky** (2018): Chapter 2: Karl Marx: Capital, Capitalists, and the Proletariat to Summary in **Sociological Theory**, 10th Edition, Los Angeles, USA, Sage Publications, Inc. (pp. 100-122). <https://cssplatformbytha.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sociological-Theory-George-Ritzer.pdf>

Group B Seminar begins

Nov. 2 **Social Facts and Social Order: Critiques of Durkheim's Legacy (Firmin, Fanon & Cabral)**

Read: **Ritzer** and **Stepnisky** (2018): Chapter 3: Emile Durkheim: Introduction to Justice in **Sociological Theory**, 10th Edition, Los Angeles, USA, Sage Publications, Inc. (pp. 126-143). <https://cssplatformbytha.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sociological-Theory-George-Ritzer.pdf>

Group A Seminar

Nov. 9 **Early and Late Durkheimian Theory, Pros & Cons**

Read: **Ritzer** and **Stepnisky** (2018): Chapter 3: Emile Durkheim: Suicide to Summary in **Sociological Theory**, 10th Edition, Los Angeles, USA, Sage Publications, Inc. (pp. 144-167). <https://cssplatformbytha.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sociological-Theory-George-Ritzer.pdf>

Group B Seminar

Nov. 16 **Conflict and Analysis: The Legacy of Weber to Interpretive Sociology**

Read: **Dillon** (2014): Sociology: Understanding Social Action: Culture and Economic Activity: in **Introduction to Sociological Theory: Theories, Concepts, and their Applicability in the Twenty-First Century**, 2nd Edition, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. (pp. 160-178).

Group A Seminar

Nov. 23 **IN-CLASS FALL CRITICAL REFLECTION**

Nov. 30 **Substantive Sociology: Weber's Contributions and Limitations**

Read: **Dillon** (2014): Power, Authority and Domination in **Introduction to Sociological Theory: Theories, Concepts, and their Applicability in the Twenty-First Century**, 2nd Edition, John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. (pp. 178-194).

Group B Seminar

- Dec. 7 **Social Interaction: The Legacy of Georg Simmel to Micro-Sociology**
 Read: **Simmel** (1904) *Fashion and The Metropolis* and *Mental Life in Peter Kivisto (Ed.) (2013) Social Theory: Roots and Branches* (pp. 104-109 and pp. 116-124).
 Group A & B Seminars

SECTION IV - SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY FROM MID-CENTURY

- Jan. 4 **Structural Functionalism: The Grand Theory of Talcott Parsons, Pros & Cons**
 Read: **Appelrouth and Edles** (2007): Chapter 7: Structural Functionalism, Systems Theory, and Conflict Theory in **Sociological Theory in the Contemporary Era**, Thousand Oaks, USA: Pine Forge Press (pp. 21-37).
 Groups A and B seminars
- Jan.11 **Structural Functionalism: The Middle-Range Theory of Robert K. Merton, Prospects and Challenges**
 Read: **Ritzer and Stepnisky** (2018): Chapter 7: Robert Merton's Structural Functionalism to Methodological and Logical Criticisms, in **Sociological Theory, 10th Edition**, Los Angeles, USA, Sage Publications, Inc. (pp. 329-337). <https://cssplatformbytha.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sociological-Theory-George-Ritzer.pdf>
 Groups A and B seminars
- Jan. 18 **Conflict and Critique: Marxism in the Interwar Period (A. Gramsci, The Frankfurt School)**
 Read: **Joseph** (2005): Introduction in **Social Theory: A Reader**, Edinburgh, UK: Edinburgh University Press (pp.63-68);
Agger (2013): The Critical Theory of the Frankfurt School in **Critical Social Theories, Third Edition**, Oxford, UK, Oxford University Press (pp: 78-93)
 Group A Seminar
- Jan. 25 **Conflict and Critique: Postwar Marxist Perspectives (C. Wright Mills, I. Wallerstein)**
 Read: **Delaney** (2014): C. Wright Mills (1916-1962) to The Sociological Imagination in **Classical and Contemporary Social Theory: Investigation and Application**, New York, USA: Pearson Education Inc. (pp. 336-343);
Allan (2006): The Essential Wallerstein to Building your Theory Toolbox in **Contemporary Social Theory and Sociological Theory: Visualizing Social Worlds**, Thousand Oaks, USA: Pine Forge Press (pp. 193-211).
 Group B Seminar
- Feb. 1 **IN-CLASS WINTER CRITICAL REFLECTION**

SECTION V - INTERACTIONISM AND PRAGMATISM

- Feb. 8 **Symbolic Interactionism (G. Cooley, G. H. Mead, E. Goffman, WEB Dubois)**
 Read: **Ritzer and Stepnisky** (2018): Chapter 9: Symbolic Interactionism in **Sociological Theory, 10th Edition**, Los Angeles, USA, Sage Publications, Inc. (pp. 419-466). <https://cssplatformbytha.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sociological-Theory-George-Ritzer.pdf>

Group A Seminar

Feb. 15 **WINTER READING WEEK – NO CLASS**

SECTION VI- SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF GENDER RELATIONSHIP AND IDENTITY

Feb. 22 **Contemporary Feminist Theory (K. Crenshaw, P.H. Collins)**

Read: Carastathis, A. (2014): The Concept of Intersectionality in Feminist Theory in *Philosophy Compass* 9/5: 304–314, 10.1111/phc3.12129

VIDEO: *Kimberlé Crenshaw - Intersectionality*

Group B Seminar

Mar. 1 **Cultural Constructions of Gender and Sexuality (G. Herdt, J. Boddy)**

Read: **Lips** (2020): Masculinity and Femininity: Myths and Stereotypes in Sex and Gender. An Introduction, 7th Edition. Illinois: Waveland Press (Pp. 3-24).

FILM: *Intersexion*

Group A Seminar

SECTION VII – GLOBALIZATION AND POSTMODERNITY

Mar. 8 **Globalization: (A. Appadurai, A. Giddens)**

Read: **Ritzer and Stepnisky** (2018): Chapter 16: Globalization Theory in **Sociological Theory, 10th Edition**, Los Angeles, USA, Sage Publications, Inc. (pp. 728-763).
<https://cssplatformbytha.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Sociological-Theory-George-Ritzer.pdf>

Group B Seminar

Mar. 15 **Class Cancelled**

Mar. 22 **Poststructuralist and Postmodern Social Theory (F. Jameson)**

Read: **Delaney** (2014): Postmodern Theory: Chapter 15 in **Classical and Contemporary Social Theory: Investigation and Application**, New York, USA: Pearson Education Inc. (pp. 545-562).

Group A Seminar

Mar. 29 **Poststructuralist and Postmodern Social Theory (M. Foucault)**

Read: **Delaney** (2014): Postmodern Theory: Chapter 15 in **Classical and Contemporary Social Theory: Investigation and Application**, New York, USA: Pearson Education Inc. (pp. 562-583).

Group B Seminar

Apr. 5 **Final Exam Review**

Group A & B Seminars

NB: ESSAY DUE by 11:59 PM IN COURSE BRIGHTSPACE, ASSIGNMENTS TOOL

NB. FINAL EXAM DURING OFFICIAL APRIL EXAMINATION PERIOD

N.B. Course syllabus is subject to changes at the instructor's discretion

**KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2026-27**

1. Academic Accommodations (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 at [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

2. Academic Consideration for Student Absences

Students must be approved to write a makeup exam or for an extension of the assignment deadline. If you need to miss an exam or the deadline for the assignment, please follow these instructions.

There are two ways to seek academic consideration:

(i) Academic consideration based on medical or compassionate grounds

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate grounds), they should contact the Academic Advising Office. As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration.

For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate (SMC) is the appropriate documentation. The SMC is available at <https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/pdfs/student-medical-certificate.pdf>

- King's students: The Academic Advising Office website is located in DLH 104. The Academic Advising website is <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>.
- If your home faculty is Huron or at Western, please submit your documentation to your faculty's academic counselling office.
- Requests must be made as soon as possible, and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

You may submit requests for academic consideration through the **Student Absence Portal**, linked on this website: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>.

(ii) Academic consideration through an undocumented absence

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per half-course (0.5) weight.

- Note that instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline to confirm this which assessment has been designated as requiring documentation for consideration (that is, exempt from undocumented absences).
- Undocumented absences can not be used as the basis for academic consideration for December or April exams.

If an instructor has built flexibility into their assessments (e.g., “complete 8 of 10 quizzes”), this flexibility will already address consideration needs and thus academic consideration may be denied.

For further information on the academic consideration policy, please see

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

c) Absences from Final Exams

If you miss the Final Exam, **contact your Academic Advising Office** 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 (i.e., you are scheduled to write 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](#)).

d) Religious Accommodations

Students should consult the University’s list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and their 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.

3. Support Services

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

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/accessibility-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/campus-life/student-supports/>

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

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

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental-health/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College: <https://kings.uwo.ca/academics/academic-supports/>

4. Statement on Gender-Based Sexual Violence

King's and Western are committed to reducing incidents of gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website: [Mental Health and Wellness at King's](#).

You can reach supports at King's by emailing 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 (health@uwo.ca) or by calling 519-661-3568. Additional support services can be found <https://www.uwo.ca/health/gbsv/support/index.html>

5. 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://kings.uwo.ca/sites/2025/assets/files/campus/Kings_Code_of_Student_Conduct.pdf

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.

6. 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 https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.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 you instructor to check which tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in each course.** Note that although some courses may permit the use of such tools, it does not mean use of such tools 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.

7. 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.

8. 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.

9. 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.