



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

Instructor: A. Datta

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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.

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Instructor: Prof. Anisha Datta

Email: adatta22@uwo.ca

Office Hours: Fall term - Wednesdays 2:30-3:30, or by appointment

Winter term – Mondays 2:30-3:30, or by appointment

Teaching Assistant: TBA

Men [and women] make their own history, but they do not do it just as they please; they do not make it under circumstances chosen by themselves, but under circumstances directly found, given and transmitted from the past – **Karl Marx**

The problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color line – **W.E. B. Du Bois**

An alternative sociology, from the standpoint of women, makes the everyday world its problematic – **Dorothy Smith**

Truth isn't outside power...truth is produced by power – **Michel Foucault**

We all seem to know the dilemma of speaking within authorized boundaries, and yet the urge to orientalize the Oriental and to africanize the African continues to lurk behind many Westerners' well intended attempts to promote better understanding of cultural difference – **Trinh T. Minh-ha**

I. Course Overview

Welcome to the world of sociological theory. In this survey course on sociological theory, we will delve into the historical roots of sociological theory, the classical and contemporary theories of social phenomena and the human condition, and the ways they have led us to view the everyday social world and our social lives in a new and critical light. Learning about sociological theories opens a new world of social discovery and self-knowledge. Thus, through this course, we will understand why sociological theory is a fundamental life skill that needs to be learned, and how it can be a source of timeless joy that makes us curious, introspective, and questioning of the social world we inhabit.

The objective of the course is to introduce you to a wide range of classical and contemporary sociological theories, the historical context of their emergence, and some of the key and enduring theoretical concepts that we can apply to the study of social relationships, social structures, social processes, and social institutions.

Classes will include lectures, discussions, assignments, and occasional films to meet the above goals.

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II. Course Evaluation

Two In-person Class Tests: 20% (fall) + 20% (winter)

One Final Essay: 25%

Final Exam: 25%

Participation: 10%

Participation will be evaluated broadly to include lecture attendance and active participation in class discussions during the third hour.

N.B. Exam, class test, final essay and class discussions: Detailed requirements and recommendations will be provided in class.

III. Required Books and Readings

George Ritzer and Jeffrey Stepnisky. 2022. *Sociological Theory*. Eleventh edition. SAGE Publications **[Hereafter R & S]**.

<https://collegepublishing.sagepub.com/products/sociological-theory-11-259059>

E-text: https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/sociological-theory-george-ritzer-jeffrey-v9781544354798?srsId=AfmBOooxGOSSgbafKtRq_t3ZFpUWmcLm0HwViIVliQvzgtK3kVsTQ6Q

Other required and additional readings and audio/visual resources are available through the King's Library online course reserve **[Hereafter CR]**.

IV. Reading Breakdown (*The schedule may change if circumstances require it*)

Week 1 (September 11): Introduction

Overview of the course, assignments, tests and class discussions

Mini lecture: Why Theory? Why Now?

Week 2 (September 18): History and the Precursors of Sociological Theory

Chapter 1 (R & S)

Additional Learning Activity: Irving Zeitlin - Mary Wollstonecraft (CR) (From *Classical Sociological Theory*, 2019)

Week 3 (September 25): The Two Sides of Modernity – Theories from Karl Marx

Chapter 2 (R & S)

Additional Learning Activity: Beverly Silver – The Remaking of the Global Working Class (CR)

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Week 4 (October 2): The Two Sides of Modernity – Theories from Emile Durkheim
Chapter 3 (R & S)

Week 5 (October 9): The Two Sides of Modernity – Theories from Max Weber
Chapter 4 (R & S)
Additional Learning Activity: Tristram Hunt - No Rest for the Wicked (CR) (BBC 4 documentary, episode 4)

October 16 – No Class (Fall Reading Week)

Week 6 (October 23): Voices from the Margin – W.E. B. Du Bois and Charlotte Perkins Gilman
Du Bois – Double Consciousness and the Veil (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 131-134)
Gilman – Women and Economics (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 136 -139)

Week 7 (October 30): Test Day
In-person Class Test #1 (8:30-10:30 am). No Lecture.
Film watching and discussion (10:30-11:15 am): *The Great White Hoax: Donald Trump and the Politics of Race & Class in America* (2017) (CR)

Week 8 (November 6): The Individual in Society – Simmel and Freud
Chapter 5 (R & S)
Freud – Civilization and the Individual (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 116 – 118)
Additional Learning Activity: Simmel – The Stranger (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 144 -146)

Week 9 (November 13): Structural Functionalism and Conflict Theories
Chapter 7 (R & S)
Additional Learning Activity: Herbert Gans – Positive Functions of the Undeserving Poor: Uses of the Underclass in America (from *Politics & Society*, Vol. 22 No. 3, September 1994)

Week 10 (November 20): Symbolic Interactionism and Ethnomethodology
Chapters 9 and 10 (R & S)

Week 11 (November 27): Exchange, Rational Choice, and Network Theories
Chapter 11 (R & S)

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Week 12 (December 4): Systemic Oppressions – Patriarchy and Colonization

Simone de Beauvoir – Woman as Other (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 268 -270)

Aimé Césaire - Between Colonizer and Colonized (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 271 - 272)

Week 13 (January 8): Breaking with Modernity

Herbert Marcuse – One-Dimensional Man (CR) (From Peter Kivisto *Social Theory*, 2011. Pages: 426 -431)

Michel Foucault – Biopolitics and the Carceral Society (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 322 - 325)

Week 14 (January 15): Contemporary Feminist Theory

Chapter 12 (R & S)

Week 15 (January 22): Theories of Agency Structure Integration

Chapter 13 (R & S)

Week 16 (January 29): Late 20th Century Theories of Modernity

Chapter 14 (R & S)

Week 17 (February 5): Structuralism, Poststructuralism and Postmodern Social Theory

Chapter 15 (R & S)

Week 18 (February 12): Theories of Globalization

Chapter 17 (R & S)

February 19 – No Class (Winter Reading Week)

Week 19 (February 26): Test Day

In-person Class Test #2 (8:30-10:30 am). No lecture.

Film (TBA) watching and discussion (10:30-11:15 am)

Week 20 (March 5): Theories of Race, Racism, Colonialism and Decolonization

Chapter 16 (R & S)

Additional Learning Activity: Paula Gunn Allen – Who is Your Mother? Red Roots of White Feminism (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 437 - 440)

Week 21 (March 12): Nationalism, Imperialism and Violence

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Mike Follert - The Cunning of Politeness (CR) (From *Reading Sociology: Decolonizing Canada*, 2023. Pages: 346 -351)

Achille Mbembe – Necropower and the Late Modern Colonial Occupation (CR) (From Charles Lemert *Social Theory*, 2017. Pages: 485 - 487)

Additional Learning Activity: Lindisfarne and Neale – The Gendering of torture at Abu Ghraib (2023) (CR)

Week 22 (March 19): Theories of Anthropocene and Capitalocene

Chapter 18 (R & S; pages 669 - 679)

Additional Learning Activity: Jason Moore – Anthropocene or Capitalocene? On the Nature and Origins of Our Ecological Crisis (2015) (CR)

March 26 – No Class (Good Friday)

***Due Final Essay (25%): March 30 Tuesday (Upload to Brightspace)**

Week 23 (April 2): Critical Sociological Analysis of Sociological Theory

R. W. Connell – Why is Classical Theory Classical (CR) (From *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 102 No. 6, May 1997)

Week 24 (April 9): Wrap-up and Review

Looking back and Final Exam review

***April Final Exam: The date is to be determined by the University.**

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**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.