



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL STUDIES
Te Kura Mahinga Tangata

Sociology and Social Policy

SOSC 401

Rethinking the Social

30 POINTS

TRIMESTER 1 and 2, 2014

Important dates

Trimester dates: 3 March to 16 November 2014

Teaching dates: 3 March to 17 October 2014

Easter/Mid-trimester break: 18 April to 4 May 2014

Mid-year break: 3–13 July 2014

Mid-trimester break 2/3: 25 August to 7 September 2014

Last assessment item due: 17 October 2014

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Seminars are held weekly on Fridays 2:10 pm - 4:00 pm in Room 201, 24 Kelburn Parade.

Names and contact details

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Chamsy el-Ojeili
Murphy Building, MY 1016
Phone: 04 463 6740
E-mail: Chamsy.el-Ojeili@vuw.ac.nz
Office hours: TBA

Communication of additional information

Additional information will be provided in class and by email.

Prescription

This course explores a number of key debates and paradigms in contemporary sociological theory. Students will explore the development of social theory, from the work of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, up until the contemporary thinkers such as Latour, Alexander, Butler, Urry, and Beck. This course will also focus on crucial themes and influential paradigms in social theory.

Course content

An outline of seminar topics and set readings will be given to students in class.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students will be expected to follow the work of one thinker very closely and produce a critical essay on this body of work, drawing on the major themes and competing paradigms covered in the course.

Students who pass this course will be able to:

1. be familiar with the major transformations, challenges, and debates within social theorizing
2. be familiar with the work of major contributors to these debates
3. evaluate these contributions.

Teaching format

Weekly 2-hour seminars, focussed on group discussion of set readings from the course textbook.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. submit essay one and two.

Workload

The expected workload for this course is at least 300 hours over the duration of the course. This includes seminar attendance, reading, and set text and class preparation and at least 90 hours per essay.

Assessment

This course is 100% internally assessed. Assessment consists of two essays, both worth 50 % of your final grade.

Topics for both essays should be discussed with the course co-ordinator.

Assessment items		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Essay 1 (5000 words)	50%	1,2,3	4 July
2	Essay 2 (5000 words)	50%	1,2,3	Oct 17

Essay 1

Weighting: 50%

Word limit: 5,000 words

Due date: Friday 4 July, by 4pm

Write a critical essay on a central sociological debate or theme covered in the first part of the course.

Essay 2

Weighting: 50%

Word limit: 5,000 words

Due date: Friday 10 October, by 4pm

Select a contemporary theorist and write a critical essay examining their work in the context of challenges posed to sociological theory.

Marking Criteria

Essays will be graded on the breadth and depth of research, on the clarity of understanding of thinkers and subjects treated, on the strength of the evaluative-critical work done, and on the quality of the writing.

Submission and return of work

Essays are to be submitted at the School of Social and Cultural Studies essay box on the 9th floor of the Murphy Building. Essays will be returned in class.

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

Students must speak to the course coordinator before the due date if seeking an extension.

Penalties

Late submissions for student assignments in all Sociology and Social Policy courses are subject to a penalty, unless a medical certificate is provided or an emergency prevents submission on due date. The exact deduction will be calculated on the basis of one half mark per day late for each 10 marks, i.e. 1 mark will be deducted each day for an assignment worth 20% of the total course mark.

Note: assessment work will not be accepted for marking more than 7 days after the due date or 7 days after an approved extension date. Work must still, however, be submitted to meet the mandatory course requirements.

You are advised to always keep a copy of any work you submit for assessment.

Set texts

The course text is Lemert, C. (ed.) 2013. *Social Theory: The Classical and Multidimensional Readings*, Fifth Edition (Westview Press).

This text will be available from Vic Books. Students can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz.

Recommended reading

A list of recommended readings will be sent to students by email.

Some useful social theory texts include: Allen, K. *The Social Lens*; Allen, K. *Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory*; Calhoun, C. et al (eds) *Contemporary Sociological Theory*; Sage *Handbook of Sociology*; Callinicos, A. *Social Theory: A Historical Introduction*; Clark, S. *From Enlightenment to Risk: Social Theory and Contemporary Society*; Collins, R & Makowsky, M. *The Discovery of Society*; Craib, I. *Classical Social Theory; Modern Social Theory*; Elliott, A. *Contemporary Social Theory: An Introduction*; Elliott, A. & Ray, L. (eds) *Key Contemporary Social Theorists*; Garner, R. (ed.) *Social Theory* (Two Volumes); Hughes, J. et al *Understanding Classical Sociology*; Latour, B. *Reassembling the Social*; Layder, D. *Understanding Social Theory*; McLennan, G. *Story of Sociology*; O'Donnell, M. *Classical and Contemporary Sociology*; Outhwaite, W. *The Future of Society*; Ray, L. *Theorizing Classical Sociology*; Ritzer, G. *Sociological Theory*; Ritzer, G. (ed) *Encyclopaedia of Social Theory*; Ritzer, G. & Smart, B. (eds) *Handbook of Social Theory*; Ritzer, G. and Stepnisky, J (eds) *Major Social Theorists, Vols I and II*; Roberts, B. *Micro Social Theory*; Scott, J. *Social Theory*; Scott, J. (ed) *Fifty Key Sociologists*; Seidman, S. *Contested Knowledge: Social Theory in the Postmodern Era*; Stones, R. (ed.) *Key Sociological Thinkers*; Swingewood, A. *A Short History of Sociological Thought*; Tucker, K. *Classical Social Theory*; Turner, B. (ed) *Blackwell Companion to Social Theory*; Urry, J. *Sociology Beyond Societies; Mobilities*.

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Student feedback

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin

- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library/resources/subjectcontacts.html>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz

School Contact Information

Head of School: Dr Allison Kirkman, MY1013

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School of Social and Cultural Studies: www.victoria.ac.nz/sacs/