





Sociology (SOCI) 335

Classical Sociological Theory and Its Relevance Today (Revision 4)

Status:

Replaced with new revision, see the [course listing](#)  for the current revision 

Delivery mode:

Individualized study online 

Credits:

3

Areas of study:

Arts or Social Science

Prerequisites:

SOCI 287 and **SOCI 288** are strongly recommended.

Precluded:

None

Challenge:

SOCI 335 has a challenge for credit option.

Faculty:

[Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences](#) 

Overview

Sociology 335 introduces you to some of the founding figures of social theory. Each of the theorists covered in this course came from a distinctive intellectual background. Ibn Khaldun, for example, provides a very early medieval example of social theory from the perspective of an Arab philosopher and historian whose ideas still have relevance for an understanding of current social changes in the Middle East and North Africa. Some theorists, like Adam Smith and Vilfredo Pareto, are best known for their contributions to the discipline of economics—or “political economy”—as it was originally called. Other theorists, like Thomas Hobbes, David Hume, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau, are better known as philosophers. Auguste Comte, Emile Durkheim, and Herbert Spencer, however, saw themselves as pioneer sociologists; each tried to win respectability and legitimacy for the new discipline of sociology. Yet other theorists, such as Karl Marx and Max Weber, encompassed such a broad range of intellectual interests that it is difficult to know whether to classify them as political economists, economic or social historians, political philosophers, or social theorists. So wide was their breadth of learning and so broad was their intellectual scope, that each has resisted any simplistic classification or categorization. They walked like giants through the late 19th- and early 20th-century worlds of learning and scholarship.



Outline

Sociology 335 is organized primarily along historical lines. The ideas of the theorists covered in this course are sequenced according to when these theorists lived and published their works. The course comprises 12 units and the epilogue as outlined below.

- Unit 1 Introduction
- Unit 2 Ibn Khaldun
- Unit 3.1 The Enlightenment
- Unit 3.2 The Enlightenment
- Unit 4 The Romantic Conservatives and the Counter-Enlightenment
- Unit 5 Auguste Comte
- Unit 6 Herbert Spencer

- Unit 7.1 Classical Women of Social Thought
- Unit 7.2 First Wave Feminists
- Unit 8.1 Karl Marx
- Unit 8.2 Karl Marx
- Unit 8.3 Karl Marx
- Unit 9.1 Max Weber
- Unit 9.2 Max Weber
- Unit 9.3 Max Weber
- Unit 10.1 Emile Durkheim
- Unit 10.2 Emile Durkheim
- Unit 11 Georg Simmel
- Unit 12 Vilfredo Pareto
- Epilogue

Evaluation

To **receive credit**  for this course, you must achieve a grade of 60 percent or better on the final examination and an overall course composite grade of at least **60 percent** . Should you obtain less than the required grade on the final examination, or if you wish to attempt to increase your overall grade, you may write a supplemental final examination. A passing grade of 60 percent is also required for the supplemental examination.


Activity	Weight
Assignment 1	20%
Assignment 2	20%
Assignment 3	20%
Online Quiz	10%


Activity	Weight
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

The **final examination** for this course must be requested in advance and written under the supervision of an AU-approved exam invigilator. Invigilators include either ProctorU or an approved in-person invigilation centre that can accommodate online exams. Students are responsible for payment of any invigilation fees. Information on exam request deadlines, invigilators, and other exam-related questions, can be found at the [Exams and grades](#) section of the Calendar.

To learn more about assignments and examinations, please refer to Athabasca University's [online Calendar](#).

Materials

Ritzer, George and Jeffrey Stepnisky. *Classical Sociological Theory*. 8th ed. Sage Publications. 2020.  (Print)

Simmons, Tony. 2013. *Revitalizing the Classics: What Past Social Theorists Can Teach Us Today*. Fernwood Publishing: Halifax and Winnipeg.  (Print)

Other material

The course materials include a study guide and a reading file and a video: Brook, Peter, dir. 1963. *Lord of the Flies* (online). All other materials will be accessed online.

Challenge for credit

Overview

The challenge for credit process allows you to demonstrate that you have acquired a command of the general subject matter, knowledge, intellectual

and/or other skills that would normally be found in a university-level course.

Full information about [challenge for credit](#) can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Evaluation

To **receive credit** for the SOCI 335 challenge registration, you must achieve a grade of at least **C- (60 percent)** on the challenge examination. The two parts of the exam must be written on the same day.

 **Challenge for credit course registration form**

Important links

- > [Academic advising](#)
- > [Program planning](#)
- > [Request assistance](#)
- > [Support services](#)

Athabasca University reserves the right to amend course outlines occasionally and without notice. Courses offered by other delivery methods may vary from their individualized study counterparts.

Opened in Revision 4, October 1, 2014

Updated June 12, 2024

View [previous revision](#)
