This course explores modern sociological theory as well as the history of sociology from the end of WWI through the present. The aim of the course is to not only to provide insight on the evolving theoretical trends in the discipline but to situate those trends in historical context. The course begins by exploring why sociologists have felt it necessary to provide ‘theory’ and looks at the importance of theory to the ‘Chicago School’ in the 1920s and 1930s. The course then goes on to look at the neo-positivist revolution in the 1940s and 1950s, the ‘crisis’ in sociology and positivism in the 1970s and the anti-positivist theoretical revolutions and the ‘linguistic turn’ of the 1980s-present.

Requirements:

Paper 1: Due March 10 (30%)

Paper 2: Due May 2 (30%)

In- Class Presentation (30%)

Participation & Attendance (10%)

January 13: Introduction

January 20: No Class


February 3: Parsons’ Structural Functionalism


February 10: The Revolt against Parsons

- C. Wright Mills. The Sociological Imagination. 4th edition. Chapters 3 and 4

February 17: Merton’s ‘Theories of the Middle Range’


February 24: Symbolic Interactionism, Ethnomethodology, Behaviorism


March 3: No Class. Spring Break

March 10: Gouldner and the ‘Coming Crisis’


March 17: Perspectives on Neo-Marxism


March 24: Perspectives on Rational Choice and Network Theory


March 31: Bourdieu


April 7: Poststructuralism & Postmodernism


April 14: Colonialism & Post-colonialism


April 28: Feminism and Sexuality