Syllabus  
SC215 Social Theory  
Fall 2015  

Monday, Wednesday: 9:00-10:15am  
Lyons Hall 202  
Professor Bates – batesju@bc.edu  
Office: McGuinn 410A  
Office Hours: Monday 10:15-11:45am and Wednesday 10:15-11:45am, ALSO by appointment  

Social Theory is designed to introduce students to three major historical theorists in the social sciences: Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. It will also introduce students to contemporary theories, such as functionalism, interactionism and poststructuralism. The theories will be examined chronologically and conceptually; highlighting the historical context in which the theories were written as well as key concepts that can be applied to social issues today.

Course Expectations  
1. This is a reading and participation intensive course. Readings are due on the date they are listed. Come to class with HARD COPIES of the readings and be ready to discuss them. THERE WILL BE READING POP QUIZES.  
2. If you miss class, you are responsible for getting notes from a classmate  
3. A doctor, school administrator or other certified official must verify an absence in order for it to be excused. Notes from parents or other legal guardians will not be accepted  
4. DO NOT come to class more than five minutes late unless you have permission from the professor. After the class has been in session for five minutes the door will be shut. DO NOT ENTER IF THE DOOR IS CLOSED  
5. YOU MUST BE CONSCIOUS IN CLASS TO BE MARKED IN ATTENDANCE.  

NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES IN CLASS  
1. No computers will be allowed out in class. If you have a special reason why you need to use a computer to take notes, please schedule a meeting with me.  
2. No phones are allowed out in class. If you have a phone out in class it will negatively impact your attendance grade.  

Grades  
1. 15% Class Participation/Attendance  
   Class attendance is obligatory and is a part of your participation grade. This grade will also include contributions to class discussion, and pop-quizzes (if needed). Two of the pop-quiz grades will be dropped.  
2. 40% Exams
Exam 1 will be worth 20% of your grade and will be an in class short-essay exam on 10/21/15. Exam 2 will be worth 20% of your grade and will also be an in class short essay exam on 11/18/15.

3. 15% Final Project Outline
   This assignment will be due on 11/23/15

4. 30% Final Project – Will be due on the day of the final.

**Grade Scaling**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<td>86-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>82-85</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>78-81</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>74-77</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-73</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>66-69</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<td>62-65</td>
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<td>58-61</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>54-47</td>
<td>D-</td>
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**Lateness Policy**

Extensions on assignments will only be given in exceptional circumstances with documentation from a coach or dean. For every day late, a half letter grade will be taken from the total grade. Assignments will not be accepted more than a week late.

**Make-up Assignments/Exams**

The university requires that make-up exams be given only in exceptional circumstances. They may be negotiated only in the event of an excused absence constituted by: (1) an EMERGENCY, defined as a death in the family or a contagious/incapacitating illness, or (2) an out-of-town sports event for athletes. In such cases, you will need to produce a note from your dean, or coach.

**Extra Credit**

There will be opportunities for extra credit for each section of the syllabus (i.e. “Karl Marx” “Alternative Ways of Knowing”). You may only turn in one extra credit for each section (i.e. one extra credit for the Marx section) and it must be turned in before we move on to the next section of the syllabus.

For extra credit, you may email me a video, or article on a topic, or current event, you think is relevant to the section’s theorist and a two-page write up summarizing the content and how it is relevant to the section’s theory. If you get credit, the video or article will be posted to the canvas module corresponding to your extra credit (unless you would not like it posted).

For each extra credit given, you will get a point added to your final grade. **NO EXTRA CREDIT WILL BE GIVEN AT THE END OF THE SEMESTER.**

**Academic Integrity**
Academic integrity is a standard of utmost importance in this class. Guidelines for academic integrity in written work are posted on the Boston College website at:

bc.edu/bc_org/avp/enmg/stserv/acd/univ.html#integrity

If you have any questions pertaining to the academic integrity guidelines, please come and talk with me. If you are caught violating Boston College’s policies on academic integrity, you will receive a failing grade for the assignment and the appropriate Dean will be notified.

Disability Policy

Boston College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations and integrated access for students with disabilities to all available academic, social and recreational programs and activities. Appropriate support and referral services are provided by the Disability Services Office, which serves students with hearing, visual, mobility, medical and psychiatric concerns.

If you are a student with a documented learning disability or ADHD and want accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connor Family Learning Center. If you are seeking accommodations for any other disability, including temporary disabilities please contact Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-2470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.

The Classroom as a Safe Space/Ally

Social theory is a welcoming, supportive and safe environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, transsexual, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) students. When expressing your sentiments you should use “I think…” statements, and be sure to not cut off or belittle other students sentiments.

Books To Buy


Readings marked with an (*) indicates that it is from one of these books

Books on Reserve:

 Reserve Readings: To access e-reserve readings either go to the canvas website or (a) go to the libraries home page; (b) click on “more catalog search options;” (c) click on “Course/On-line Reserves;” and (D) Search by my last name, Bates.

**Reading Schedule**

*Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus at any point during the course*

**I. Introduction to Social Theory**

- **Monday 8/31** – A Review of the Syllabus, Canvas and Thoughts on Social Theory

**II. Karl Marx**

- **Wednesday 9/2** – An Introduction to Marxist Theory
  Reading:
  1. *Marx, Durkheim, Weber* – “The Historical Context of Karl Marx’s Work” (pp. 35-42)*

- **Monday 9/7** – LABOR DAY NO CLASS

- **Wednesday 9/9** – Historical Materialism
  Reading
  1. *Marx, Durkheim, Weber* – “The German Ideology” (pp. 42-61)*
  2. *Marx-Engels Reader* – “Ideology in General, German Ideology in Particular” (pp. 148-155)

- **Monday 9/14** – Development of Capitalism
  Reading
  1. *Contested Knowledge* – “Das Kapital: The Logic of Social Revolution (pp. 22-26)
Wednesday 9/16 - Capitalism and Class Struggle Continued
2. *Social Theory*, “The Manifesto of Class Struggle” (pp. 43-50)*

III. Emile Durkheim

- **Monday 9/21** - An Introduction to Durkheim’s Theory
  Reading

- **Wednesday 9/23** – Mechanical and Organic Societies
  Reading
  2. *Social Theory* - “Mechanical and Organic Solidarity” (pp. 73-77)*

- **Monday 9/28** – Anomie
  Reading
  1. *Marx, Durkheim, Weber* – “The Transition from Segmental Societies to Advanced Societies” (pp. 176-185)*
  2. *Social Theory*, “Anomie and the Modern Division of Labor” (pp. 77-78)*

- **Wednesday 9/30** – Social Facts
  Reading
  2. *Social Theory*, “Sociology and Social Facts” (pp. 78-81)*

- **Monday 10/5** - Suicide as a Social Fact – Viewing of “The Life and Death of People’s Temple”
  Reading
  1. *Marx, Durkheim, Weber* – “Durheim’s Study of Suicide” (pp. 199-231)*

- **Wednesday 10/7** – Suicide – Viewing of “The Life and Death of People’s Temple
  Reading
  1. *Social Theory* - “Suicide and Modernity” (pp. 81-89)*

IV. Max Weber
- **Monday 10/12** – COLUMBUS DAY NO CLASSES

- **Wednesday 10/14** – An Introduction to Weber’s Theory
  Reading
  1. *Contested Knowledge* – “The Ironic Theory of Max Weber” (pp. 42-54)

- **Monday 10/19** - The Protestant Ethic and Capitalism
  Reading
  2. *Social Theory* – “The Spirit of Capitalism and the Iron Cage” (pp. 104-108)*

**Wednesday 10/21 Exam 1**

V. **Functionalism and its Critics**

- **Monday 10/26**– Functionalist Theory
  Reading
  1. *Contested Knowledge* – (pp. 64-73)

- **Wednesday 10/28** – Mills Critique of Functionalist Theory
  Reading
  1. *Social Theory* – “The Sociological Imagination” (pp. 354-358)*
  2. *The Sociological Imagination* – Chp. 1 “The Promise” (pp. 3-24)

VI. **Interactionism**

- **Monday 11/2** – Symbolic Interactionism
  Reading

- **Wednesday 11/4** – Writings of Goffman
  Reading
  1. *The Goffman Reader* – Chapter 6 “The Mortified Self” (pp. 55-73)

- **Monday 11/9** – Film Screening of “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest”

VII. **Poststructuralism – Knowledge as Power**
Wednesday 11/11 Introduction to Foucault
Reading
1. *Contemporary Social and Sociological Theory* – Chp.12
   “Defining the Possible and Impossible: Michel Foucault (1926-1984)” (pp. 275-284)

Monday 11/16 Creating the “Other”, Film Viewing of “Foucault-Chomsky Debate”
Reading
1. *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, “Panopticism” (pp. 410-417)

Wednesday 11/18 Exam 2

VIII. Alternative Ways of Knowing

Monday 11/23 – Gynocentric Feminism
Project Outline Due
Reading
1. *Contested Knowledge* – “Revisions and Revolts: Identity Politics and Theory” (pp. 197-208)*
2. *Social Theory*, “Knowing Society from Within: A Woman’s Standpoint”

Wednesday 11/25 – THANKSGIVING NO CLASSES

Monday 11/30 – Postmodern Feminism
Reading
1. *Contested Knowledge* “Postmodern Feminism: Judith Butler” (pp. 211-217)
2. *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, “Subversive Bodily Acts” (pp. 342-350)

Wednesday 12/2 Critical Race Theory
Reading
1. *Contested Knowledge*, “Critical Race Theory” (pp. 222-227)
2. *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, “Toward an Afrocentric Feminist Epistemology” (pp. 350-360)

Monday 12/7 Critical Race Theory Continued
Reading
1. Lipsitz, George “The Possessive Investment in Whiteness”

- **Wednesday 12/9** - Last Day of Classes – Viewing of “Cracking the Codes”