San José State University
Department of Sociology
SOCI 201A, Sociological Theory I, #48368 Fall 2013

Instructor: Preston Rudy, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 10:20-11:15, Tues 19:15-20:15, Wed 5-5:45, & by appointment
Class Days/Time: Wednesdays 18:00 – 20:45
Classroom: DMH 235B
Prerequisites: Pass undergraduate social theory course with a B or better and be of graduate standing

“It is much easier to point out the faults and errors in the work of a great mind than to give a distinct and full exposition of its value.” — Schopenhauer, Criticism of the Kantian Philosophy

“...as a medical doctor I might cure the afflictions of a few, but not those of hundreds of millions engendered by an irrational society. What ails society must be cured first. ... To be a doctor we have to learn physiology first; likewise, to cure society we have to study social theories first.”
Fei Xiaotong, From the Soil 1981

“Do not allow public issues as they are officially formulated, or troubles as they are privately felt, to determine the problem that you take up for study. Above all, do not give up your moral and political autonomy by accepting in somebody else’s terms the illiberal practicality of the bureaucratic ethos or the liberal practicality of the moral scatter. Know that many personal troubles cannot be solved merely as troubles, but must be understood in terms of public issues—and in terms of the problems of history-making. Know that the human meaning of public issues must be revealed by relating them to personal troubles—and to the problems of the individual life.
Know that the problems of social science, when adequately formulated, must include both troubles and issues, both biography and history, and the range of their intricate relations. Within that range the life of the individual and the making of societies occur; and within that range the sociological imagination has its chance to make a difference in the quality of human life in our time.”
C. Wright Mills, The Sociological Imagination 1959

Faculty Web Page
www.sjsu.edu/faculty/preston.rudy
Course Description

We will be exploring the initial statements and explanations of sociology as developed by some of the main theorists for today’s study of society. Three of these theorists, Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber are important in numerous social science disciplines. What we want to learn in this course are the main themes of each theorist, their ideas and explanations and to see how these theories help us explain contemporary social reality.

A second part of this course will consist of practicing our writing and using that to help us read social theory and sociology more generally. This writing work fulfills the Graduate Writing Assessment Requirement. One portion of this writing component will consist in learning how to format academic social science paper, for which the ASA Style Guide will serve as the primary guide. You will also be expected to be fully familiar with the directions on the SJSU Library web site regarding formatting, plagiarism, and standard American English usage. The second portion of the writing component will provide us with templates and a model for writing in academic settings. This does not mean learning how to use a specialized vocabulary so much as it means how to engage in a dialogue by means of written texts. Well-established rhetorical tools are available to facilitate our writing and we will be learning how to use them in our writing. Additionally, we want to develop our ability to read by looking for dialogue where we often have difficulty detecting conversations. This should have the effect of making you a better theorist and enliven the reading of abstract texts.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbook
This textbook will be used in both Fall and Spring semesters


Recommended Books:

Learning Objectives

The Master’s program has the following objectives that will be addressed by means of the assignments in this course:

1. To evaluate theoretical explanations by using them as explanations of historical and contemporary issues such as race/ethnic relations, inequalities, work and organizations;
2. To critically interpret and evaluate published research, and to engage in theory-driven social research;
3. To communicate effectively, orally and in writing, and by means of diverse technological platforms;
4. To be able to participate in meaningful and thoughtful dialogue and conversation as educated people;
5. To be able to participate in a democratic society as engaged civic actors.

Classroom Protocol

We want to facilitate vigorous discussion and debate. The point of discussion in a graduate seminar is to learn how to make an argument and to learn what you believe by making an argument. Therefore, in our discussion, we want to address the points being made and not impugn the person making those points. Each one of us is responsible for helping others in the course speak their minds, ask questions, and develop their theoretical imagination.

Please turn off your cell phones and be prepared to stay in the class until we close up the discussion.

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drops, academic renewal, etc. Information on add/drops are available at http://info.sjsu.edu/web-dbgen/narr/soc-fall/rec-324.html. Information about late drop is available at http://www.sjsu.edu/sac/advising/latedrops/policy/. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for adding and dropping classes.

Assignments and Grading Policy

You must complete all written assignments to pass this class.

20% for a) participation in oral and written discussion, contributing insights, comments and questions for debate and for b) oral presentations of an article, summarizing the argument and posing questions for discussion by the class as a whole.

30% for ten 4-page papers (3% each). These papers will consist of discussions of the theory readings in conjunction with the writing exercises in Graff/Birkenstein.

DUE DATES: Everyone must write paper for September 4. Everyone must then write two papers on Marx, Durkheim and Weber, and one paper on every other theorist. 4 September, 11 September, 18 September, 2 October, 9 October, 16 October, 23 October, 30 October, 6 November, 13 November, 20 November, 4 December

25% for Midterm in-class exam.

25% for Final in-Class exam.

PARTICIPATION:

For each class, come to class with at least one passage or paragraph from each of the readings that you find meaningful, significant, or important for our understanding of the article. In our discussion, we want to explore what the theories contribute to developing productive and useful insights about the world, and carefully consider their limitations, in light of other theoretical positions.

ORAL PRESENTATIONS:

Prepare a one-page summary of the main concepts, the main points, and some of the important details about the theorist each time you present to the class.
The most important questions to answer in your oral presentations are: What is the author trying to explain for us? What is the causal explanation? What are the author’s main concepts? With whom does the author seem to be in dialogue and debate and how does the author distinguish his/her theory?

**PAPERS:**

For each writing assignment you will receive a prompt addressed to the readings for that week. In addition to being asked in each assignment to use the templates from each successive chapter in Graff & Brikenstein, you must follow the formatting outlined in the ASA *Style Guide* (see also libguides.sjsu.edu/ASAguide?hs=a for a short version of the *Style Guide*) and also make use the the SJSU Library LibGuides <libguides.sjsu.edu/writeandcite> on citations and plagiarism. Some weeks we will include writing in class as part of the process of writing these papers.

**University Policies**

**Academic integrity**

Students should know that the University’s Academic Integrity Policy is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/download/judicial_affairs/Academic_Integrity_Policy_S07-2.pdf. Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University and the University’s integrity policy, require you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The website for Student Conduct and Ethical Development is available at http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html.

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person’s ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU’s Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

**Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act**

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the DRC (Disability Resource Center) to establish a record of their disability.

**SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Room 126 in Clark Hall. It is staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists from each of the seven SJSU colleges. Our writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. The Writing Center website is: http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/about/staff/.
# SOCI 201A / Sociological Theory I, Fall 2013

## Course Schedule

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<tr>
<th>Week</th>
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<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
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| 1    | 21 August| Introduction to the course: What is theory? How to write sociological explanations?  
Read C. Wright Mills “On Intellectual Craftsmanship” Appendix to *The Sociological Imagination*.  
Read George Orwell “Politics of the English Language”  
[http://www.george-orwell.org/Politics_and_the_English_Language/0.html](http://www.george-orwell.org/Politics_and_the_English_Language/0.html)  
Read Edles & Appelrouth: Introduction pp. 1-16  
On Mills, see Stanley Aronowitz “A Mills Revival?” 2003  
[http://www.logosjournal.com/aronowitz.htm](http://www.logosjournal.com/aronowitz.htm) |
| 2    | 28 August| **Karl Marx — Materialism, Labor, and Alienation**  
Giddens: pp. 1 – 34 Early writings and Historical Materialism  
Edles & Appelrouth: Introduction pp. 1-16  
Edles & Appelrouth: introduction to Marx pp. 20-31  
“German Ideology” pp.32-41; “Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts” pp. 41-50.  
**WRITING:** Academic conversations and Classroom discussion  
**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**  
Marx’s writings are available at [http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/](http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/) |
| 3    | 4 September| **Karl Marx— Capitalism, Classes, and Class Struggle**  
Giddens 35-45 Relations of Production and class structure  
In Edles & Appelrouth *Communist Manifesto* pp. 50 – 63.  
**WRITING**  
**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**  
| 4    | 11 September| **Karl Marx—Commodities, Value, Capital**  
Giddens 46 –64 Capitalist Development  
In Edles & Appelrouth: *Capital* pp. 63-79.  
**WRITING**  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 2 “Her Point is” pp. 30-41.  
**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**  
See David Harvey’s introductory lecture on Marx’s *Capital*  
[http://davidharvey.org/2008/06/marxs-capital-class-01/](http://davidharvey.org/2008/06/marxs-capital-class-01/) |
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| 5    | 18 September | **Emile Durkheim—Functionalism, Positivism, and Method**  
Giddens 65 – 94 Early works and Sociological Method  
In Edles & Appelrouth intro pp. 77-84; Durkheim *The Rules of Sociological Method* pp. 85-92.  
**WRITING**  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 3 “As He Himself Puts It” pp. 42-51. |
| 6    | 25 September | **Emile Durkheim—The Division of Labor, Crime, Norms, and Suicide**  
Giddens 95 – 104 Individualism, Socialism, Occupational Groups  
In Edles & Appelrouth: *The Division of Labor in Society* 92-100; *Suicide* 100-113.  
**WRITING**  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 14 “Analyze This” pp. 175-192.  
**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**  
Robert Bellah (7 March 1995) – “Individualism and Commitment: ’America's Cultural Conversation’”  
| 7    | 2 October  | **Emile Durkheim—Religion**  
Giddens 105 – 118 Religion and moral discipline  
In Edles & Appelrouth: *Elementary Forms of Religious Life* pp. 113-124.  
**WRITING**  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 4 “Yes/No/Okay, But” pp. 53-67.  
**ADDITIONAL READINGS**  
Robert Bellah et. al. *Habits of the Heart* |
| 8    | 9 October  | **Midterm Exam in Class**                                                                                                                                             |
| 9    | 16 October | **Max Weber—Protestantism and Capitalism**  
Giddens 119 – 132 Protestantism and Capitalism  
Edles & Appelrouth intro pp. 125-137  
*The Protestant Ethic & The Spirit of Capitalism* pp. 137-150; *World Religions* pp. 150-159.  
**WRITING**  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 5 “And Yet” pp. 68-77. |
| 10   | 23 October | **Max Weber—Social Science Method; Power, Domination and Authority**  
Giddens 133 – 168 Methodology and Fundamental Concepts  
**WRITING**  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 6 “Skeptics May Object” pp. 78-91.  
**ADDITIONAL MATERIALS**  
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| 11   | 30 October | **Max Weber—Rationalization, Bureaucracy and Social Organization**  
Giddens 169 – 184; Rationalization & Bureaucracy  
WRITING  
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS  
| 12   | 6 November | **Georg Simmel—Groups, interactions, and City Life**  
Edles & Appelrouth intro 218 - 232  
“The Exchange” from *Philosophy of Money* pp. 232-241; “The Stranger” pp. 241-244; and “The Metropolis and Mental Life” pp. 245-254.  
WRITING  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 8 “As A Result” pp. 103-120. |
| 13   | 13 November| **Charlotte Perkins Gilman—Gender, Women, Social Structure**  
WRITING  
Graff & Birkenstein: Chapter 9 “Ain’t So / Is Not” pp. 121-128. |
| 14   | 20 November| **W.E.B. DuBois—Race, Urban Life, and White Blindness**  
Edles & Appelrouth intro pp. 255-267  
WRITING  
| 15   | 4 December | **George Herbert Mead—Self, Society, and the Other**  
Edles & Appelrouth intro pp. 289-298  
ADDITIONAL MATERIALS  
*Social Psychology Quarterly* December 52/4: 299-310 |
| Final| 11 Dec.    | **FINAL EXAM @ 17:15 until 19:30 in DMH 235** |
GRADE SCALE:

A+ ≥ 97 <100  B+ ≥ 87 < 90  C+ ≥ 77 < 80  D+ ≥ 67 < 70
A  ≥ 93 < 97  B  ≥ 83 < 87  C  ≥ 73 < 77  D  ≥ 63 < 67
A- ≥ 90 < 93  B- ≥ 80 < 83  C- ≥ 70 < 73  D- ≥ 60 < 63

“A” papers are excellent in nearly all aspects. An “A” grade:
will be given to papers that develop an interesting argument. The argument constitutes a thoughtful answer to a
question worth asking. The central argument is stated clearly in the introduction and is well supported with
evidence from the readings, lectures and other materials. Examples from readings are relevant and well chosen.
The argument draws on course concepts, which are defined, illustrated and explained. Potential counter-
arguments or negative cases are discussed and addressed. The paper includes an introduction, which is attention-
getting and gives the reader a roadmap of where the paper is going. The paper also includes a conclusion that
summarizes the main points of the argument and insightfully discusses the larger implications of the findings,
answering the question “Why does it matter?” The paper is well-organized and provides transitional sentences
between ideas. The paper contains few, if any, errors in spelling, punctuation or grammar.

“B” papers are solid in most respects. A “B” grade:
will be given to papers that develop an argument appropriate to the requirements of the assignment. The
argument constitutes an answer to a question that is somewhat interesting but may not be very significant. The
central argument is stated clearly in the introduction. The paper offers evidence from the readings, lectures and
other materials, but the evidence is not fully relevant, does not strongly illustrate the main points, or is not well
explained. Connections between the evidence and the argument need some clarifying. The argument draws on
course concepts, but they aren’t well defined, illustrated or explained. Potential counter-arguments or negative
cases are discussed but not successfully addressed. The paper includes an introduction but it either doesn’t grab
the attention of the reader or neglects to provide a roadmap of the rest of the paper. The paper also includes a
conclusion which summarizes the main points of the argument but neglects to answer the question “Why does it
matter?” The paper is organized and provides transitional sentences between ideas. The paper contains some
mechanical or grammatical errors but they do not impede understanding.

“C” papers satisfactorily fulfill the assignment. A “C” grade:
will be given to papers that develop an argument that bears little relation to the assignment or to papers that have
no clear statement of the argument. Some evidence is offered from the readings and lectures but there is a
disconnect between the evidence and the argument. Irrelevant evidence may be included or examples may be
left unexplained. The paper inaccurately defines, illustrates or explains course concepts. The paper neglects to
discuss or address counter-arguments. The argument may depend on unsupported opinion or personal
experience, or assume that the evidence speaks for itself. The paper is missing pieces of either the introduction
or conclusion. The paper has some organization but may lack transition between ideas. The paper contains
more mechanical or grammatical errors but they do not impede understanding.

“D” papers do not adequately respond to the assignment. A “D” grade:
will be given to papers that do not develop an argument or to papers in which the argument is unrecognizable.
Little or no evidence from the readings or lectures is offered; if evidence is provided, it is unconvincing or
irrelevant. The paper may include paragraphs that are unnecessary and unrelated to the assignment. The paper
neglects to draw on course concepts. The paper is missing either an introduction or conclusion. The paper has
random organization and lacks transitions. The mechanical and grammatical errors are severe or frequent
enough to impede the reader’s understanding.

An “F” grade:
Will be given to assignments that were not turned in, clearly did not meet the requirements, or had flaws that
exceed those allowed for “D” papers in any area.