SOCIAL THEORY

CLASS MEETING: Tuesdays and Thursdays 10:30 - 11:45 a.m., DMH 164
COURSE WEBSITE: https://sjsu.instructure.com
PREREQUISITE: SOCI 1 Introduction to Sociology and junior-level standing
CO-REQUISITE: SOCI 100w Writing Workshop
RECOMMENDATION: Completion of at least one other sociology courses to appreciate fully the issues and debates discussed in this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an upper-division introductory course in sociological theory. It is an innovative course that focuses on the ways sociologists and others use social theories to address substantive issues and problems in our society. It goes beyond the standard coverage that surveys the major perspectives in sociology and presents the historical development of social theories, which has promoted often student boredom and disengagement. Instead, this course emphasizes how sociological theories can develop appropriate solution-based interventions to social problems once we understand properly the generative mechanisms causing these problems.

We will start by examining problems related to deterministic arguments related to biology, psychology, and “culture.” We will then examine theories to address general problems related to situational injustice, institutional and systemic crisis, and empirical research questions.

This course offers you the opportunity to hone your skills in reading, analyzing, comparing, and critically evaluating major social theories. That is, we will be asked to develop further your skills of critical analysis and self-expression by applying theories appropriately, and presenting clear written arguments about our social surroundings.
STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (SLOs)

Upon successful completion of this course, participants will be able to:

SLO1: Understand—in a comparative manner—the major theoretical concepts and perspectives in sociology

SLO2: Assess the strengths and weaknesses of interpretive and critical perspectives and the weaknesses of out-of-date perspectives in sociology

SLO3: Enact appropriate personal and social change activities by using the best sociological perspective to address a range of likely events related to situational injustice, institutional crisis, and systemic crisis

SLO4: Deepen your recognition of how sociology differs from non-sociological inquiries

REQUIRED READINGS

- Sociology 101: Social Theory Readings, Spring 2016. Readings available at the Canvas site in PDF format for course participants.