

**Sociological Theory**  
Soc 335, Fall 2010  
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:10-2:20; Reeves 212

*Professor Daniel Jasper*  
*PPHAC 316*

*Office Hours: T & Th, 11:30 -1:00; other times by appointment*  
[djasper@moravian.edu](mailto:djasper@moravian.edu)  
610.625.7882

**Course Overview:** This course is designed to introduce students to the dynamic field of social theory. On one hand, theory is a distinct subfield of sociology. On the other hand, theory is a mode of inquiry, analysis, thinking and debate that spans all sociological subfields. Through this course, students will engage both of these traditions of sociological theory. To this end, we will trace the historical development of social theoretic thought and identify some of the current issues and debates that shape the field.

**Course Goals:** By the end of the course students will:

- Develop a familiarity with theoretical logic and argumentation in sociology
- Read and become familiar with key social thinkers from both the classical and contemporary periods.
- Understand and be able to analyze key issues in the field.
- Cultivate their sociological imaginations as they learn to apply the theories.
- Develop their own theoretical contributions.
- Improve their ability to construct and analyze academic arguments
- Further develop their writing and oral presentation skills
- Further develop their ability to read closely
- Further develop their ability to debate intellectual and contemporary issues

**Course Requirements and Expectations (and Repressive Policies):** It is expected that all students will participate in this course as theorists. This means that the focus will be on *reading* texts closely, *analyzing* these texts and the arguments made in them, and *constructing* theoretic arguments. It is expected that students regularly consult outside resources to assist them in these tasks. I will be happy to suggest additional texts on particular topics or theorists of interest to any student. **NB:** Not all websites are of equal value. If you are consulting a website, make sure that it is a reputable one, such as the site established by Jim Spickard (<http://www.socialtheory.info/index.htm>). If you are unsure how to evaluate the scholarly *bona fides* of a website consult with a reference librarian.

As a professional and collective endeavor, there should be no need for repressive policies. That is, we all share the responsibility for the success of this course. Therefore, we should plan on attending all class sessions. We shall arrive on time, having completed the shared readings, and be prepared to collectively explicate, interrogate, and expand the arguments. We should arrive with the texts, our notes on the texts, and the necessary tools of scholarship. We should leave unnecessary distractions, such as cell phones, in our private 'backstage' regions.

The most important part of conducting oneself as a professional scholar involves following the conventions of scholarly citation. All members of this course should read, re-read, and familiarize themselves with the college policy on Academic Honesty included in the student handbook. All written work must include full and proper citations. There are **no exceptions**, including ignorance. Cheating and plagiarism will result in failing this course.

There is a blackboard site for this course. Assignment guidelines, supplemental readings, and course announcements will be posted to the site. Students are expected to check the site regularly.

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

**Student Assessment:** This course is a collective exercise in textual explication and theoretical argumentation. Assessment mechanisms are designed to measure (1) how well students are able to read, comprehend, and engage with theoretic arguments; (2) the contributions of each student to the collective work of the class; (3) how well students develop their own theoretic arguments. Students will be assessed on informal and formal written work (assignments and essays); their ability to recall, present, and analyze important information and arguments (quizzes); and through presentations and contributions to the collective work of the class (participation). It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for the course. A detailed grading sheet is appended to this syllabus.

**Students should expect to spend approximately 10 hours per week on this course.**

**Required Texts:** The following text is required and available in the bookstore.

Kivisto, Peter. 2011. *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*, 4E. New York: Oxford University Press.

### **Course Schedule**

Please note, the outline below is merely a guide. Changes are possible as the semester progresses.

*Week 1* (August 31<sup>st</sup> & September 2<sup>nd</sup>): An Introduction to the Course, and to Social Theory

**Read:** Kivisto, Introduction

*Week 2* (September 7<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>): Karl Marx

**Read:** Kivisto, Ch. I

*Week 3* (September 14<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup>): Emile Durkheim

**Read:** Kivisto, Ch. II

*Week 4* (September 21<sup>st</sup> & 23<sup>rd</sup>): Social Theory and Asia

Fall Convocation on Thursday September 23<sup>rd</sup> @ 10:30 – All students are expected to attend.

**Read:** Calhoun

*Week 5* (September 28<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup>) Max Weber

**Read:** Kivisto, Ch. III

*Week 6* (October 5<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup>): Other Classical Foundations

**Read:** Kivisto, Chs. IV-VI

*Week 7* (October 12<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>): Taking Stock I

No Class on October 12<sup>th</sup> for Fall Recess

**Quiz 1** on October 14<sup>th</sup>

*Week 8* (October 19<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup>): Conflict & Critical Theory

**Read:** Kivisto, Chs. VIII & XIII

*Week 9* (October 26<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup>): Functionalism & Symbolic Interaction

**Read:** Kivisto Kivisto, Ch. VII & IX

*Week 10* (November 2<sup>nd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup>):

No Class on November 2<sup>nd</sup> – Work Day

**Essay 1 Due** on November 4<sup>th</sup>

*Week 11* (November 9<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup>): Theorizing Differences: Gender

**Read:** Kivisto, Ch. XI

*Week 12* (November 16<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>): Theorizing Differences: Race, Ethnicity, Nation

**Read:** Kivisto, Ch. XII

*Week 13* (November 23<sup>rd</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup>): Taking Stock II

**Quiz 2** on Tuesday November 23<sup>rd</sup>

No Class on November 25<sup>th</sup> for Thanksgiving Break

*Week 14* (November 30<sup>th</sup> & December 2<sup>nd</sup>): Theorizing Our World Today

**Read:** Kivisto, Chs. XV - XVI

*Week 15* (December 7<sup>th</sup>): Final Class Meeting, Course Conclusion

**Essay 2 Due** on December 7<sup>th</sup>

Scheduled Final Exam: Friday December 17<sup>th</sup> @ 8:30 am.

### Grading Sheet

Assignments: (1)  $\frac{\quad}{2}$  (2)  $\frac{\quad}{2}$  (3)  $\frac{\quad}{2}$  (4)  $\frac{\quad}{2}$  (5)  $\frac{\quad}{2}$  =  $\frac{\quad}{10}$

Quizzes: (1)  $\frac{\quad}{15}$  (2)  $\frac{\quad}{15}$  =  $\frac{\quad}{30}$

Essays: (1)  $\frac{\quad}{15}$  (2)  $\frac{\quad}{15}$  =  $\frac{\quad}{30}$

Seminar Participation: (Midterm)  $\frac{\quad}{15}$  (End-term)  $\frac{\quad}{15}$  =  $\frac{\quad}{30}$

**Total:** **Possible points** =  $\frac{\quad}{100}$

### Final Grades

	87-89.9 = B+	77-79.9 = C+	67-69.9 = D+
94-100 = A	83-86.9 = B	73-76.9 = C	63-66.9 = D
90-93.9 = A-	80-82.9 = B-	70-72.9 = C-	60-62.9 = D-
Below 60 points = F			