This course is the second portion of the two-semester theory sequence required of all sociology department graduate students. The goals of this course are:

(1) to examine, compare, and contrast the ways different classical and contemporary theorists approach several core problems in the discipline, including the nature of society, the individual-society relation, culture, and social structure;

(2) to explore how theories are put into practice by examining how different theorists approach key substantive areas in sociology, including organizations, collective action, and various forms of inequality; and

(3) to introduce students to classical and (in particular) contemporary works, theories, and traditions that were not covered in the first part of the course.

Whereas the focus of the first semester was on sociological traditions, the focus of the second semester is on the relation between theories and the practice of sociology. We shall devote two class sessions to each topic. The first session will consist primarily of lecture and commentary by the instructor. The second session will consist of a discussion led by students, probably in groups of two. Student participation will also be encouraged during the lecture sessions.

Requirements

Requirements for this course include nine required reaction papers (maximum three pages) on the readings, a presentation along with leading a given week's discussion, and class participation. Each week students will prepare at least one question for discussion, based on the readings. These questions will be circulated to that week's discussion leaders, who will use the questions to help plan their discussion. Along with the narrative
remarks on your reaction papers, you will also provide at least one testable hypothesis
that flows from one or more of the readings for that week.

Readings

There is no primary text for the class. The readings come from two sources: three books
(listed below), and the class Ctools site. The Ctools site includes articles from scholarly
journals, as well as selections from published books. All readings on the Ctools site are
subject to the “fair use” rule. I have ordered the following books:

Durkheim, Emile, *Suicide*
Freud, Sigmund, *Civilization and Its Discontents*
Wilson, William Julius, *The Truly Disadvantaged*

COURSE OUTLINE

January 10: Introduction to the course

January 15, 17: How is society possible?

Garfinkel, "Studies of the Routine Grounds of Everyday Activities," pp. 35-75 in
108-114; Durkheim, *Suicide*, pp. 152-276; Recommended: David L. Sallach,
“Class Domination and Ideological Hegemony,” *Sociological Quarterly*, 1974,
15:38-50.

January 22, 24: Individual and society: Agency and structure, micro and macro

Readings: Dennis H. Wrong, "The Oversocialized Conception of Man in Modern
52-65; Randall Collins, "On the Micro-foundations of Macro-sociology," *AJS*,
1981, 86:984-1014; James S. Coleman, "Social Theory, Social Research, and a
Theory of Action," *AJS*, 1986, 91:1309-1335; Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and
its Discontents*, pp. 64-112; Recommended: Neil Fligstein, “Social Skill and the
January 29, 31: Social interaction and language


February 5, 7: Culture and cultural analysis


February 12, 14: Social structure and structural sociology


February 19, 21: The sociology of organizations

February 26, 28: Economic sociology and the sociology of markets


March 12, 14: Occupations and the professions


March 19, 21: Social status and inequality

March 26, 28: Social class


April 2, 4: Race and ethnicity


April 9, 11: Gender and feminist theory

Readings: Judith Butler, Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity, pp. 134-149; Candace West and Don Zimmerman, "Doing Gender," Gender and Society, 1987, 1:125-151; Cecilia L. Ridgeway, “Framed Before We Know It: How Gender Shapes Social Relations,” Gender and Society, 2009,

April 16, 18: Group solidarity and collective action


April 23: What is social science?

Readings: none