



Social Theory (2) | SOU22062

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| Year | Senior Fresh |
| ECTS Credits | 5 |
| Contact Hours | |
| Pre-requisite | |
| Semester | 2 |
| Module Leader & Lecturer | |
| Contact Email | |

Module Outline:

The objective of the social theory course is to provide students with an analytical framework and a set of concepts that can be used to understand and explain social and economic processes. The course identifies core issues in the theory of the social sciences and particularly sociology and the conceptual devices which have emerged to solve them. We begin by examining what we mean when we talk about social theory and the role it plays in the explanation of social patterns and processes. What are the 'objects' of social analysis and what role should the 'subjectivity' of individuals play in social explanation? Can we regard societies as organisms with 'systems' and 'needs' and if not, why not? Should all social explanation be grounded in the intentions and behaviours of individuals or can we identify structured patterns in social life which should also play a role? If so, what are these structures and how do we conceptualise them and use them in social explanation?

Learning Outcomes:

On successful completion of this module students should be able to:

- Understand the different forms of explanation used in the social sciences.
- Know the components of explanations formed using macro-micro-macro links.
- Understand the different forms of structural explanation.
- Critically assess different models of human rationality and choice.
- Understand the role of resources, power and social interests in explanation.
- Understand the dynamics of choice and uncertainty in social interaction.
- Explain the bases of cooperation between unrelated people and group solidarity.
- Deploy the different concepts presented in the explanation of novel sociological problems.

Co-Requisite

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Assessment Details:

Coursework 100%



Recommended Reading List:

Students will be expected to have read the articles and book chapters listed under 'required reading' and are strongly urged to read the literature listed under 'suggested readings'. Obviously, the list of recommended readings is not comprehensive and you are free, indeed encouraged, to read beyond the reading list.