



Module Title: Social Theory 1

Module Code: SOU22061

Module Name: Social Theory 1

- **ECTS Weighting:** 5
- **Semester/Term Taught:** Michaelmas Term
- **Contact Hours:** 22
- **Module Personnel:** **Dr Roderick Condon**

Module Learning Aims: This module introduces the field of social theory through a consideration of key sociological theorists and traditions. Starting from classical and extending to contemporary social theory, the module explores how different theorists have approached modern society and sought to understand, explain, and criticise particular aspects and dimensions. Core themes are considered, including: the constitution of society; the nature of social change, its dynamics and directions; the problem of social order; social action and social systems; social consensus and social conflict; the relationship between society and the individual; the aspects and dynamics of social structure and agency; the micro and the macro and their interrelations. The course aims to introduce students to broader questions of sociological inquiry through different perspectives within the tradition and to awaken a critical consideration of our understanding of society.

Module Learning Outcomes:

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

- Know the main theorists and traditions in social theory and understand how they relate to each other.
- Identify key differences between social theories and conduct comparative analysis of their core ideas.
- Critically assess the texts considered during the course.
- Demonstrate awareness of central debates in social theory.
- Apply the perspectives of different social theories to various aspects of social life.
- Critically consider how to think about society and its dynamics and processes.

Module Content:

Please note: the module structure may change slightly as the course progresses.



The module structure is as follows:

- Week 1: Introduction to Social Theory
- Week 2: Classical Social Theory I
- Week 3: Classical Social Theory II
- Week 4: Neoclassical Social Theory: Talcott Parsons
- Week 5: The Functionalist Legacy and Conflict Theory
- Week 6: Symbolic Interactionism 4
- Week 7: Reading Week
- Week 8: Critical Theory and Jürgen Habermas
- Week 9: Feminist Social Theories
- Week 10: Pierre Bourdieu and Michel Foucault
- Week 11: Anthony Giddens and Critical Theories of Race and Racism
- Week 12: Conclusion

Recommended Reading List:

The module will make use of both primary and secondary readings in its exploration of different social theories. Each week will have required and recommended readings related to the lecture content available on Blackboard. Throughout the course, students are expected to prepare for lectures and contribute to tutorial discussions by drawing from these readings. The list of readings is far from comprehensive, however, and you are encouraged to read beyond.

The following texts are recommended as core course text books:

• Joas, H. and Knöbl, W. (2009) *Social Theory: Twenty Introductory Lectures*. Cambridge:

Cambridge University Press.

• Ritzer, G. (2011) *Sociological Theory*. 8th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

The following are also recommended for supplemental reading:

• Calhoun, C. et al. (eds.) (2002) *Contemporary Sociological Theory*. Oxford: Blackwell.

• Calhoun, C. et al. (eds.) (2007) *Classical Social Theory*. 2nd ed. Oxford: Blackwell.

• Lemert, C. (2017) *Social Theory: The Multicultural, Global, and Classic Readings*. 6th ed.

London: Routledge.



Required chapters will be provided. All books are available in the Lecky Library.

Module Pre-Requisite:

Module Co-Requisite: SOU22062

Assessment Details:

The module is assessed through two components:

- An end of term essay (worth 80% of the final grade)
- A student presentation (worth 20% of the final grade)

Module Website: