

Comparative Sociology

Course Syllabus

Fall 2011

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Course description: this course explores the many facets of contemporary sociology and its historic tendency towards multiplicity. Throughout the course we will do the following:

- look at sociological theory evolution, historicism of social research, and the scope of contemporary social studies, including classical sociology, marxian, parsonian, wright millsian, realism, postmodernism, urban and rural sociology, sociology of gender and kinship, sociology of conflict and social movements, globalisation of sociology or making sense of the global, cross-country comparisons, etc.
- while brushing over some of the greatest thinkers across time we will attempt to make sense of the vastness of the topic, yet making sure that methodologically and theoretically we remain within the boundaries of sociological imagination;
- while aware of the historical development of sociological studies we will do a quick overview of the contemporary focuses of sociological studies drawn upon contemporary topics and debates

Class format: 15 lectures, 14 seminars, 1 in-class essay exam. Seminars will address class questions from previous lectures, and students will be expected to prepare presentations attempting to answer the class questions; individual or team format will be used depending on the subject.

Evaluation: students will be evaluated based on their a) exam essay at the end of the course; b) mid-term in-class essay based on provided questions; c) reflection essays (2) group and individual presentations (2), d) seminar presentations and class participation.

Group presentations: Twenty-minute group presentations are done during seminars or lectures chosen by groups. Each group will be assigned a presentation topic and will be expected to rely on both class literature as well as additional literature, determine theoretical framework and present a case study. Students must inform the course instructor regarding presentation date no later than one week in advance. Each presentation will be followed by a discussion question addressed to the class. Group members are expected to facilitate a discussion.

Individual presentations: Fifteen-minute individual presentations are done during seminars chosen by students; there should be no more than 2 presentations per seminar. Students must inform the course instructor regarding presentation date no later than one week in advance. Each presentation will be followed by a discussion question addressed to the class. Group members are expected to facilitate a discussion.

Reflection essays: Should be at least 700 words long. They should not only present a short summary of chosen articles (from among class literature) but also critically assess class literature. Reflection essays should be handed in before the seminar on the week when they are assigned. Assignments will lose one letter grade for every day they are turned late.

Final examination essays: Should be at least 2200 words long. Should reflect upon course literature, usage of supplementary literature is encouraged, but should show knowledge and understanding of assigned readings. Should present a critical review of the readings and could be done in the form of "research essays". Should clearly state research question, have a theoretical framework, and also findings from the course literature, e.g., case studies of countries (if applicable).

Grading: 25% End of semester examination; 20% Mid-term test (in-class essay); 10% Group presentation; 10% Individual presentation; 20% Reflection essays (2); 15% Seminar and lecture participation (does not only imply presence in class, but active participation in discussions; more than three unexcused absences results in grade "X" for the course)

All written assignments must be completed to pass the course. Students who do not complete the assignments on time will have their grades down-graded, or will be dropped from the course. Students are expected to attend all lectures and seminars, to be well prepared, and to have read their readings.

Citations: It is crucial that you use proper citation style in your papers. Please use <http://www.easybib.com/> Points will be decreased from your reflection and final papers if proper citations are not used. Students have the option to make up for two missed classes with a prior notice by turning in a reflection essay of 400 words before the next class. The essay should be based on the course literature for the missed class.

Grades will be assigned based on the following ranges:

Grade	Percent	Grade	Percent
A	93% and more	C	73 – 76%
A-	90 – 92%	C-	70 – 72%
B+	87 – 89%	D+	67 – 69%
B	83 – 86%	D	63 – 66%
B-	80 – 82%	D-	60 – 62%
C+	77 – 79%	F	59% and less

WEEK – READINGS – ASSIGNMENTS

1. Course overview and introduction: Why comparative sociology?

Syllabus discussion, requirements and important milestones

Class question: What do we know about sociology? Durkheim, Weber, Marx, Giddens, Bourdieu...

Lecture (Thursday): discussion on what is sociology, most common names, theories, famous quotes. Why need comparative sociology?

Outhwaite, William 2000. *Social theory at the end of the century*, William Outhwaite School of European Studies, University of Sussex, global library www.theglobalsite.ac.uk

2. Timeline in sociology: History and evolution of social thought

Charles, Tilly 1979. *Sociology, meet history*. University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI

Class question: Do we know what is the reality and what is society, do we know ‘why’?

Seminar: Harding, Sandra (2000) ‘Difference, Democracy and Philosophies of Science’, Draft Manuscript, Graduate School of Education and Information Studies, UCLA

Giddens, A. and Ch. Pierson (1998) ‘The Sociological Classics and Beyond’ In ‘Making Sense of Modernity: Conversations with Anthony Giddens’, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California 1998

3. Modernity, Postmodernism, and Pomo Flips

Sayer, Andrew (2000) ‘Part 3 – Postmodernism and the Three ‘Pomo Flips’. In ‘Realism and Social Science’, SAGE Publications Ltd, 2000

Class question: What is Risk Society, how does it represent modernity and postmodernism?

Seminar: Giddens, A. and Ch. Pierson (1998) ‘The Politics of Risk Society’ In ‘Making Sense of Modernity: Conversations with Anthony Giddens’, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California 1998

4. Structure of Social Action and Neglected Element of Emotion

Parsons, Talcott (1937) *Introductory, The Problem*. In ‘The Structure of Social Action’, publ. McGraw Hill, 1937

Fish, Jonathan S. (2004) ‘The Neglected Element of Human Emotion in Talcott Parsons’s *The Structure of Social Action*’. In *Journal of Classical Sociology*, SAGE Publication London, University of Leeds

Class question: What is structure, action, and unit of action?

Seminar: Adler, Patricia A. and Adler, Peter (1997) *The Gloried Self: The Aggrandizement and the Construction of Self* Chapter 5 – ‘Building Identity: the Social Construction of Self’ In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) ‘Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life’, Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

Smith, Allen C. and Kleinman, Sherry (1997) ‘Medical Students, Contacts with the Living and the Dead’ ‘Chapter 5 - Building Identity: the Social Construction of Self’ In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) ‘Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life’, Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

5. Group presentations replace lecture and seminar

Each group will choose among topics of previous lectures and seminars and make presentations for 20 minutes based on course literature and supplementary literature chosen by students. Each presentation will be followed by a discussion.

6. Realism and the doubting scientists

Sayer, Andrew (2000) 'Part 1 – Introducing Critical Realism (Introduction and Key Features of Critical Realism in Practice: A Brief Outline'. In 'Realism and Social Science', SAGE Publications Ltd, 2000

Class question: Why critical realism is important? Are you aware of limits to critical social science?

Seminar: Sayer, Andrew (2000) 'Part 7 – Critical Realism and the Limits to Critical Social Science'. In 'Realism and Social Science', SAGE Publications Ltd, 2000

7. Social Structure, from classicists to postmodernists

Outhwaite, William (2000a) 'Social Structure', In Sakwa, Richard and Stevens, Anne(eds) Contemporary Europe (London: McMillan), 2000 Global Library www.theglobalsite.ac.uk, School of European Studies, University of Sussex

Chambliss, Daniel F. (1997) 'The Routinization of Disaster' Chapter 9 – 'The Structure of Society: Organisations and Social Institutions' In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

Class question: How has the vision and understanding of socials structure changed over time, what is 'social structure' in today's social science speak?

Seminar: Weston, Kath (1997) 'Exiles from Kinship' Chapter 8 – 'Building Social Relationships: Family and Groups' In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

Gerson, Kathleen (1997) 'No Man's Land' Chapter 8 – 'Building Social Relationships: Family and Groups', In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

8. Lecture: Academic Writing workshop linked to Week 4

Wright Mills, C. (1959) Appendix 'On Intellectual Craftsmanship, 'The Sociological Imagination', Oxford University Press 2000

Seminar: Mid-Term Test (Academic writing)

Write an essay on a given subject in class. Mid-term test questions will be distributed on the day of the exam.

NOTES: 1st reflection essay is due in week 8

9. No classes: Mid term break

10. Urbanism as a way of life

Wirth, L. (1938) 'Urbanism as a Way of Life', American Journal of Sociology, XLIV 1-24 [reprinted in A J Reiss (ed) (1964), Louis Wirth: On Cities and Social Life, London, The University of Chicago Press.

Class question: Is Urbanism a way of life? Have there been any other alternatives?

Seminar: Castells, Manuel (1976) Introduction and Part 1 - Conclusion: The Historical Production of Urban Meaning'. In 'The City and the Grassroots'

Castells, Manuel (1976) 'Chapter 20 - The Social Making of the Dependent City'. In 'The City and the Grassroots'.

11. Urban Sociology with Rural at the background:

Tacoli, Cecilia (1998), 'Rural-urban interactions: a guide to literature', Environment and Urbanization, Vol. 10, No.1, April 1998

Class question: Why dividing into rural and urban sociology? What differs them and is it useful in understanding society?

Seminar: Nientied, P. and van der Linden, J. (1985) 'Approaches to low-income housing in the Third World', The Urbanisation of the Third World, Edited by J. Gugler, Oxford University Press

Gilbert, A. and van der Linden, J. (1987), 'The Limits of a Marxist theoretical framework for explaining state self-help housing', Development and Change, SAGE London

NOTE: First drafts of final course papers are due in Week 11. At least 60% of your final course paper should be completed by week 11.

12. Opposition seminar

This is the first step to writing your final course paper.

Each student will be assigned a paper written by a fellow student. S/he is expected to have read the paper before coming to class; in class the opponent is making a five-minute summary of the paper's main points followed by

presentation of weak and strong points of the paper. The author has 5 minutes to respond; after that the floor is open for a quick discussion by the rest of the class including the course instructor. Presentation and discussion of one paper should not exceed 20 minutes. After the opposition sessions students have till the end of the course to make minor changes in their papers and turn in the final drafts.

13. Gender, Action and Social Justice

Noponen, H. (1987) 'Organising women petty traders and home-based producers: A case study of Working Womens Forum, India'. In A.M. Singh and A.Kelles-Vitanen (eds.) *Invisible Hands: Women in Home-Based Production*, London: SAGE 1987

Kingsolver, Barbara (1997) 'Holding the Line: Women in the Great Arizona Mine Strike of 1983' Chapter 15 – 'Architects of Change: Reconstructing Society' In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

Class question: How does gender represent social issues at home, work, and larger societal interactions?

Seminar: Thorne, Barrie (1997) 'Boys and Girls together...But Mostly Apart' Chapter 5 – 'Building Identity: The Social Construction of Self' In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

14. Social Constructionism, Institutions and Culture

Sayer, Andrew (2000) 'Part 4 – Essentialism, Social Constructionism and Beyond'. In 'Realism and Social Science', SAGE Publications Ltd, 2000

Class question: What institutions and processes have there been historically that draw up the rules of the game, produce collective narrative and cultural norms?

Seminar: Walton, John (2000), 'Narrative Action and Collective Memory: The Production of California History', Draft Manuscript, University of California, Davis, December 2000

Snow, David and Anderson, Leon (1997) 'The Subculture of Street Life' Chapter 11- 'The Architecture of Disadvantage' In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

Mitford, Jessica (1997) 'Fashions in Childbirth' Chapter 4 – 'Building Order: Culture and History' In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

NOTE: 2nd Reflection essay is due in week 14

15. Society, Security, and the State

Kaldor, Mary (2000), *Cosmopolitanism and Organised Violence*, Paper prepared for Conference on 'Conceiving Cosmopolitanism', Warwick, 27-29 April 2000 Mary Kaldor Centre for the Study of Global Governance, London School of Economics, 2000 first press, www.theglobalsite.ac.uk

Class question: What are the basic demands of the society when it comes to security? How does the state take over the basic functions for security and is there anything wrong with it?

Seminar: Castells, Manuel (1976) 'Chapter 19 Squatters and the State: The Dialectics between Social Integration and Social Change (Case Studies of Lima, Mexico, and Santiago de Chile)', In 'The City and Grassroots'

Barnes J.A. (1997) 'A Pack of Lies. Towards the Sociology of Lying' Chapter 4 – 'Building Order: Culture and History' In David M. Newman (1997) (ed) 'Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life', Second Edition, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, DePauw University, Pine Forge Press 1997

16. Global society, myth and reality for regulating social interaction

Lipschutz, Ronnie D. (2005) 'Regulation for the Rest of Us? Global Social Activism, Corporate Citizenship, and the Disappearance of the Political', 2000 Global Library www.theglobalsite.ac.uk, University of California, Santa Cruz

Class question: What is the thinking behind global regulation, the pro's and con's for regulating society.

Seminar: Centeno, Miguel Angel (2002) 'Isomorphic Neoliberalism and the Creation of Inevitability of Mapping Globalisation', Draft Manuscript, Princeton University

NOTE: Exam essay is due in week 17

Guide to essay and examination marking

Below you will find our guidelines for evaluating essays and examinations. Please note that these are *guidelines*. No two essay questions, let alone two essay answers, are the same. In addition, students are expected to improve across their years of study.

Students are encouraged to submit draft essays for instructor's comments (with a note Draft visibly on top page), re-worked essays can be submitted as final for grading.

Statement of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a very serious offence and is considered as cheating under University rules. Plagiarism includes the following:

- Submission of work that is identical or substantially similar for assessment in more than one course, whether in the same department or in other departments.
- Passing off work as yours that is really the work of others (whether other students, text from a web page you have found or from a published source).
- Duplicating sentences or paragraphs from other works in whole or in part without accurate citation of the text being quoted and proper referencing of the source in the bibliography.

In other words, the only time you should use the words of somebody else in your work is in the form of a direct quote. This should be either indented or should clearly be in quotation marks and should include a direct reference immediately after the quote ends (name, date: page number) e.g. (Harvey, 1989: 64). Direct quotes are accepted academic practice but should be used sparingly in your work. The reference from which the quote comes should then appear in your bibliography. e.g.

Harvey, D. (1989) *The Condition of Postmodernity*, Oxford, Blackwell.

Plagiarism does not include:

- Summarising the arguments of someone else in your own words and citing them as a reference
- Using published academic work to help you develop your own argument

In each case, though, you should still include a reference in your text to the things that you have read at the end of the relevant sentence or paragraph if you are referring directly to their work e.g. (Harvey, 1989).

Penalties for Plagiarism

First offence, minor (a few unconnected sentences). The lecturer will confront the student with the evidence and if an adequate explanation is not forthcoming they will deduct some marks (to be decided by the lecturer but normally up to 10% overall) from the piece of work in question and a note will be put on the student's file recording they have been caught plagiarising.

First offence, major (substantial plagiarism of more than a few isolated sentences). The lecturer will confront the student with the evidence and if an adequate explanation is not forthcoming the matter will be referred to the Head of Department for action. This will normally result in the piece of work in question being given a mark of zero. A note will be put on the student's file explaining the actions taken and the reasons for them.

Second or further offence. Once evidence has been presented the matter will be referred to the Head of Department for disciplinary action to be taken under University Rules.

Fail (F)

Inadequate work in most relevant aspects, with many very serious weaknesses

1. The essay has no introduction and no coherent structure throughout;
2. There is no understanding of relevant approaches, the essay is incoherent on major themes and shows no understanding of the question;
3. There is no understandable argument or proper synthesis;
4. Structure is non-existent, the essay is very short, unclear and wholly lacking in conclusions;
5. There is no supporting data, or an entirely inappropriate methodology has been used;
6. No bibliography is presented

Poor (F)

Inadequate work in most relevant respects, with many very serious weaknesses.

- the essay has a weak introduction, if any, providing little or no frame for the essay as a whole;
- there is little mention or understanding of relevant approaches so that they are presented in a highly restricted and unclear manner and/or with no sense of context;
- the relevant arguments and evidence are scarcely related together, and there is no proper synthesis;

- the essay lacks structure, is too short, is unclear, and conclusions are lacking or inadequate and ungrounded;
- no data, irrelevant data, or otherwise flawed data with inadequate rationales, if any, for data selection and overall methodology (applies where empirical analysis is required);
- the bibliography is non-existent or minimal and/or entirely unclear and inadequately presented.

Marginal / bare pass (D-)

EITHER generally unsatisfactory, inadequately planned and presented, with no or poor understanding but with some redeeming features. OR properly organised but more or less wholly irrelevant. In the former case, the work would have the following features

- the introduction is very weak, barely providing a frame for the essay as a whole;
- there is some mention of relevant literatures or approaches, but this outline is very patchy, unclear, and/or very inadequately placed in context with the result that the essays reveals little or no knowledge of their significance and fails to engage in critical discussion;
- the relevant arguments and evidence are not properly related together, resulting in an unsystematic approach, significant weaknesses in understanding and rigour, and no attempt at synthesis;
- the essay is poorly organised, with little or no structure, serious weaknesses in clarity, and little or no attempt to draw conclusions;
- limited ability to gather and summarise relevant data and other material or to interpret it (applies where empirical analysis is involved);
- the bibliography is very limited and/or unclear and poorly presented.

Not very satisfactory (D and D+)

Limited work in most relevant respects, with several significant weaknesses.

- the introduction is weak, providing only a limited frame for the essay as a whole;
- some relevant literatures are outlined, but this is limited, patchy, unclear, and/or not adequately contextualised so that, although some major points are brought out, there are significant gaps, misunderstandings, and/or little grasp of detail or subtlety;
- the relevant arguments and evidence are related together in a weak manner and thus the essay conveys neither a critical understanding nor a reasonable synthesis;
- the essay is poorly organised, with a poor balance between context, literatures, discussion, and synthesis but some attempt is made to draw conclusions ;
- there are significant problems with methodology for gathering material and its interpretation (applies where empirical analysis is required);
- the bibliography is limited and/or unclear and poorly presented.

Satisfactory (C- to C+)

A competent essay that shows understanding of material and presents it satisfactorily. There is a coherent argument throughout and an adequate conclusion. In short, acceptable work in most relevant respects, but with some significant weaknesses.

- the introduction is adequate, providing a reasonable frame for the essay as a whole;
- the major approaches are outlined and adequately contextualised so that the major points are reasonably brought out and interrelated to reveal an adequate grasp of the topic but with a relatively unsystematic approach and some weaknesses in understanding and rigour;
- the relevant arguments and evidence are related together adequately, there is some attempt at synthesis but no originality, and there are some weaknesses in terms of the clarity of argument;
- the essay is adequately organised, achieving some balance between context, literatures, discussion, and synthesis, with broadly satisfactory conclusions;
- weak rationale for gathering data and materials, some problems with actual data and other material collection and its interpretation (where empirical analysis is required)
- the bibliography is adequate, reasonably clear, and well-presented.

Good (B- to B+)

Shows a firm grasp of material and contextualises it, has good research and presentation skills, argues well and effectively, is able to criticise and evaluate material convincingly and appropriately. In short, good to very good work in most relevant respects, with few weaknesses.

- the introduction is good, clearly and appropriately framing the essay as a whole;
- the most important literatures are outlined and soundly located in an appropriate context with few serious omissions so that the essay presents a sound critical discussion of the topic based on a good overall grasp of the chosen readings;
- the relevant arguments and evidence are related together in a clear manner that achieves a good overall synthesis without being original;
- the essay is well organised, achieving a good balance between context, literatures, discussion, and synthesis with valid conclusions grounded in evidence;

- generally competent rationale and use of data collection methodology and good use of data, including specialised resources and/or some original data (empirical analysis is required);
- the bibliography is quite extensive and well presented.

Very Good (A-)

Very good understanding of material and contextualises it well; shows facility in the handling of ideas/theories/concepts/data; communicates clearly and effectively; shows insight and perceptiveness, a well-developed critical faculty and good judgement. A fresh and original, unusual or substantial contribution to the debate. Therefore, excellent work in all relevant respects, with only marginal weaknesses.

- the introduction is excellent, clearly and appropriately framing the essay as a whole;
- extensive and relevant readings are identified, outlined and located in an appropriate context with no serious omissions so that the essential points are identified and interrelated in a very good overall grasp of the topic in question and very good command of both the detail and the subtlety of the arguments;
- the relevant arguments and evidence are related together in a clear and critical manner that achieves a convincing overall synthesis, and also reveals elements of originality;
- the essay is very well organised, achieving an excellent balance between context, literatures, discussion, and synthesis, with convincing and well-argued conclusions;
- sound rationale for collecting data and other material, including use of specialised resources and/or gathering of original data; very good use of the data and material (where empirical analysis is required);
- the bibliography is extensive and well-presented.

Outstanding (A)

- A mark in this range is given for an accomplished piece of work that offers a thorough, imaginative or highly original but appropriate answer to the question;
- Reading is demonstrated to be comprehensive and going beyond standard course material, bibliography is comprehensive;
- The essay is written in faultless prose with a convincing argument, structure and synthesis;
- A high degree of originality is shown in argument, methodology or presentation of data;
- The answer is imaginative and offers a novel and effective interpretation of the question;
- In rare cases where an essay makes an original contribution to sociological knowledge and is written to a publishable standard, a recognition of outstanding distinction will be given.

Grading Guidelines for Seminar and Lecture Participation

Active participation means that students are ready to articulate and explain their ideas, and listen and respond to others' ideas.

'A' – Students attend each lecture and seminar with questions about the lectures and readings. In engaged dialogues, they raise these questions for other students to discuss, and listen to contrary opinions. They initiate and develop critical issues concerning the seminar activities. They are well-structured and well-organised for the completion of their research projects.

'B' – Students complete their readings, but do not always reflect on the questions and issues raised during the lectures and seminars. Though they articulate their own views, they passively wait for others to initiate interesting issues. They are reasonably well organised for their own projects.

'C' – Students attend, prepare and listen attentively, but rarely enter into discussions. They are adequately prepared for their own projects.

'D' – Students are inconsistent in their attendance and preparations. They do not respect others' contributions. They are also poorly prepared for their own projects.

'F' – Students are consistently ill-prepared and have poor attendance. They are rude and disruptive. They also fail to show any signs of organising their own projects.

Please note that we reserve the right to change the schedule of the meetings and topics as and when necessary.

Additional course information will be given during the semester.