

Miyazaki International College
Course Syllabus
Spring 2022

Course Title (Credits)	SOC 302: Sociological Theory
Course Designation for TC	N/A
Content Teacher	
Instructor	Prof. Erik Bond
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Office/Ext	MIC 1-212 / ext. 3720
Office hours	M/W 14.30-16.00

Course Description:

In this course, we will explore the major theories in contemporary sociology, including symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, conflict theory, neo-Marxism, and feminist theory.

Course Objectives:

Sociology allows us to approach aspects of everyday life in human society from many analytical orientations; by examining various theories we can come to understand these perspectives' utility and limitations. Students will be exposed to the foundational theories of the discipline of Sociology, as well as to a variety of theoretical frameworks that are relevant to the contemporary state of the discipline. The class encourages students to develop and synthesize their own perspectives. A mix of projects, readings, discussions, writings, and quizzes will require students' active participation, with the end goal that they be able to form and communicate their own critical thoughts using sociological perspectives.

Critical thinking skills:

- Be able to identify the core theories of sociology.
- Be able to articulate what makes each theory unique.
- Be able to apply theories to real-world situations or events.
- Be able to identify flaws or criticisms of sociological theories.

Communication-related skills:

- Be able to consume (read/watch/listen to) sociological material and express its content.
- Be able to form and articulate examples or ideas related to sociological topics.
- Be able to express ideas on sociological topics clearly in speech and writing.
- Be able to identify proper questions to ask to improve their own understanding.

Tentative Course Schedule		
Day	Topic	Content/Activities
1	Introductions & Syllabus What is sociology? Thinking Theoretically The Industrial Revolution	Syllabus; Moodle enrollment; Developing good explanations;
2		Learning to think theoretically. What is a good theory?;
3		Soc. vocab; Sociological Imagination; Perspectival thinking;
4		Quiz ; The importance of the Industrial Revolution
5	Symbolic Interactionism The Socialization Process	What is socialization? How do we learn to be social? How do
6		we construct meaning? How does meaning (re-)create society?
7	Structural Functionalism Emile Durkheim Anomie & Suicide	Introduction to Structural Functionalism and Suicide
8		Emile Durkheim, Positivism, and Structural Functionalism;
9		Anomie & Suicide, the first sociological research;
10		Anomie in the modern world; Hikikomori; Quiz
11	Conflict Theory pt. 1 Karl Marx Alienation & Consciousness	Theory Review & Discussion of Inequality
12		'Getting Ahead' Discussion; Conflict & Monkeys;
13		Historical Materialism; Stages of History;
14		The working poor and homeless: theoretical explanations;
15		Poverty and Inequality Note-taking discussion
16	Midterm	Midterm
17	Week	Project
18	Midterm Reflection	Turn in midterm reflection + discuss results; alienation;
19		Second chance at midterm
20	Conflict Theory pt. 2 Social Class; WPP Model Rationalization	Marx/Weber differences; social construction & WPP model;
21		Work, Overwork, and The Protestant Ethic;
22		Rationalization, Disenchantment, and the Iron Cage; Quiz
23	Contemporary Theory Feminisms Queer Theory Intersectionality	Classical/Contemporary Distinctions; Feminist Theory
24		Four waves of Feminism
25		Social Construction and Deconstruction; Identity
26		Quiz ; Intersectional perspectives: how to apply them
27	Final Project	Final Assignment Work
28	Preparation	Preparation + Review Period
29	Final Project Week	Final
30		Projects
Final Period	Final Exam	Final Exam
Notes: N/A		

Required Materials:

Pen/pencil, paper, **tablet*****, binder, access to Moodle, and assigned readings.

*****Important Note***:**

- It is *extremely important* that you bring a tablet or laptop to *every class*.
- This class will use mobile devices often, including to type assignments.
- Each class period will begin with a writing prompt that you must answer on Moodle
- If you do not have a device that is charged, connected to the internet, and allows you to type, you may be unable to complete some assignments, affecting your grade.
- If you do not have access to a tablet, please talk to me in the *first week* of class so we can find a solution.

Course Policies (Attendance, etc.)

You should plan to attend ALL class meetings and complete ALL readings and assignments by the due date given. **Students are allowed a maximum of 5 absences before they must withdraw.** I will not accept late assignments, quizzes, and exams except in cases of extraordinary excused absences. I will evaluate exceptions on a case by case basis. When you miss class, you should be sure to check Moodle for new assignments. If you are aware ahead of an upcoming assignment due date that you will be absent, you should submit the assignment early, either in person or by email.

Your professors will not tolerate academic dishonesty (i.e., plagiarism, cheating, etc.) in this course. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F in the course. Please see pages 9-12 of the College Bulletin for a description of college expectations and pages 203-206 for actions considered unacceptable with reasonable cause.

Your professors retain the right to alter the course schedule as necessary. Students will be given adequate notice of these changes.

Class Preparation and Review

Students are expected to spend at least one hour reviewing and doing homework and one hour preparing for every hour of lesson time.

Grades and Grading Standards

You will be evaluated upon your performance in (1) Participation, (2) Quizzes and Homework, (3) a Midterm Project, (4) a Final Presentation, and (5) a Final Exam.

Grades		Grading Scheme		
Participation (see Memo)	20%	A	90-100%	Greatly exceeds minimum requirements
Quizzes & Homework	20%	B	80-89%	Exceeds minimum learning requirements
Midterm Project	20%	C	70-79%	Meets minimum learning requirements
Final Presentation	20%	D	60-69%	Almost meets minimum requirements
Final Exam	20%	F	0-59%	Fails to meet minimum requirements
Total	100%	*I will provide specific assignment rubrics as assigned.		

Methods of Feedback:

In principle, graded work will be returned within one week of submission with appropriate feedback (i.e., grade, comments, etc.). In practice and due to the nature of course material, some feedback will be given via discussion in-class and (where necessary) during office hours.

Diploma Policy Objectives:

Work completed in this course helps students achieve the following Diploma Policy objective(s):

1. Advanced thinking skills (comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) based on critical thinking (critical and analytical thought).
2. The ability to understand and accept different cultures developed through acquisition of a broad knowledge and comparison of the cultures of Japan and other nations.
3. The ability to identify and solve problems.
4. Advanced communicative proficiency in both Japanese and English.
5. Proficiency in the use of information technology.

Notes:

