

SOC 574

Sociological Theory

Fall 2026

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Instructor: Dr. Julia Meszaros
Office Location: Ferguson 230
Office Hours: Online By Appointment
University Email Address: Julia.Meszaros@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: Email
Communication Response Time: Within 48 hours

COURSE INFORMATION

Required Text: None! All readings posted on D2L

Course Description

This course focuses on the classical foundations of sociology and its contemporary extensions. The course features in-depth reading of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, Du Bois, and Mead as well as works representative of Functionalism, Symbolic Interactionism, Critical Theory, and other major strands of sociological thought.

Student Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, you should be able to...

1. Identify and explain major sociological theorists and the significance of their work
2. Describe, synthesize, and explain theoretical arguments based on the reading of primary source materials
3. Apply a theoretical lens to the world around you

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Minimal Technical Skills Needed

You must be able to access a computer with Microsoft Word and use D2L

Grading

Grades will be assessed out of a total of 1000 points. Final grades in this course will be passed on the following scale:

A=90-100%

B= 80-89%

C= 70-79%

D=60-69%

F=59% and below

Assessments

- Discussion (15 discussions X 40 points each)- Each week you must post at least one discussion question regarding one of that week's assigned readings by Monday at 11:59pm. You must also provide a minimum 200-word substantive response to another student's question by Saturday at 11:59pm. These responses should cite any relevant readings using in-text citations.
- Essays (2 essays X 200 points each) There will be two essays, one on classical theory and the other on contemporary theory. These are modeled after past comps questions to help prepare you for the comprehensive exam. More details about the essays are posted to D2L.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS All courses offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements.

LMS Requirements: <https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903-468-6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulties with any part of Brightspace (D2L), please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here: <https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>.

Interaction with Instructor Statement

I am available through email during business hours (and, let's be honest, a lot of time outside of business hours). You can also drop into my Zoom office hours any time and, if you are local, my in-person office hours as well.

CORE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Policies

- I provide a 72-hour grace period for all assignments, no questions asked. After the 72-hour period, however, I will not accept late work.
- If you experience a health in the family, serious illness, or other life trauma, please speak with me and I will work with you to do my best to help you keep up with the course
- All students must behave respectfully toward everyone else on the discussion boards and avoid offensive language and personal insults. I will not tolerate any kind of harassment in this class and offensive posts or comments will be removed from the discussion board
- I take plagiarism and academy dishonesty very seriously. All of your written work will be run through Turnitin and assessed for both plagiarism and use of generative AI. I am interested in YOUR thoughts and understandings of the reading, not what someone else or Chatgpt says. Work that is plagiarized or generated by AI will receive an automatic zero.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for me to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook:

http://www.tamuc.edu/student_guidebook/Student_Guidebook.pdf?_ga=2.174666466.139137986.1597081037-785048279.1537547496

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy, please visit the [Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99R0.01](#)

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty, see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

[Graduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

Students with Disabilities- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protections for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, or veteran status. Further, and environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill- 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also

permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns on Campus](#) document.

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

COURSE CALENDAR

All readings are posted on D2L

	Readings	Due
Week 1: Introduction to Sociological Theory	"The Meaning of Theory"	Introductions
Week 2: Marx and Social Stratification	"Manifesto of the Communist Party," "Estranged Labor," "The General Formula for Capital"	Marx and Social Stratification Discussion
Week 3: Extending Marx	"Working-Class Power, Capitalist-Class Interests, and Class Compromise," "The Forms of Capital," "The Power Elite"	Extending Marx Discussion
Week 4: Durkheim and Social Solidarity	"Division of Labor, Crime and Punishment," "The Rules of Sociological Method," "Suicide"	Durkheim and Social Solidarity Discussion
Week 5: Extending Durkheim	"Social Structure and Anomie," "Social Change and Anomie"	Extending Durkheim Discussion
Week 6: Weber and Modernity	"Bureaucracy," "Class, Status, Party"	Weber and Modernity Discussion
Week 7: Extending Weber	"An Introduction to McDonalidization," "The Uniqueness and Normality of the Holocaust"	Extending Weber Discussion

Week 8: Du Bois and Race	First 2 chapters of <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>	Du Bois and Race Discussion
Week 9: Contemporary Theories on Race	“Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation,” “A Theory of Racialized Organizations”	Contemporary Theories on Race Discussion, Essay #1
Week 10: Symbolic Interactionism	“The Social Self,” “The Methodological Position of Symbolic Interactionism” (ch 1 of <i>Symbolic Interactionism: Perspective and Method</i>)	Symbolic Interactionism Discussion
Week 11: Presentation of Self	Introduction and ch 1 from <i>Presentation of Self in Everyday Life</i> , “Feeling Rules”	Presentation of Self Discussion
Week 12: Postmodernism	<i>Discipline and Punish</i> ch 1, <i>Simulacra and Simulation</i> ch 1	Postmodernism Discussion
Week 13: Theorizing Gender	“Doing Gender,” “Gender as Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism,” “Intersectionality’s Definitional Dilemmas”	Theorizing Gender Discussion
Week 14: THANKSGIVING		
Week 15: The Value of Theory	“How Can Theories Represent Social Phenomena?”	The Value of Theory Discussion, Essay #2