

SOCI 330: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY

Fall 2016

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 1:35 PM-2:25 PM. Leacock 219

Instructor: John A. Hall
Office: Leacock 725
Email: john.a.hall@mcgill.ca
Telephone: 514-398-6842
Office Hours: Thursdays 10-12 and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Major sociological theoretical traditions are seen in their historical contexts, as the background to current theoretical issues. Emphasis is placed on Smith, Tocqueville, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber. This course is based on and requires detailed knowledge of the original texts assigned. To that end, there are days when I take questions on particular theorists. More important are the discussion groups with the teaching assistants; these will allow for the close analysis that is required.

REQUIRED TEXTS

This is a reading-intensive course. All students are expected to complete weekly readings so as to have a better grasp of the subject matter and to participate in conference discussions.

The following required books are available at the *Word Bookstore*, located near McGill on Milton. The course reader may be purchased at the *McGill Bookstore*. The course reader and the books are also available on reserve at the Library.

Montesquieu	<u>Persian Letters</u> (Penguin edition)
Tocqueville	<u>The Old Regime and the French Revolution</u>
Marx	<u>The Marx-Engels Reader</u> (Norton edition)
Durkheim	<u>Selected Writings</u> (Edited A. Giddens)
Weber	<u>Selections</u> (Edited W.G. Runciman)
Giddens	<u>Capitalism and Modern Social Theory</u>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade will be based on two different elements. First, there will be three in-class exams (each comprising 15% of the grade) requiring you to recognize and comment on quotations from the texts: each exam will be cumulative, and will cover all thinkers discussed until that point. There will also be a cumulative final exam of three hours, asking you to write four essays from a list of twelve, where you will be asked to compare the thinkers. The final exam makes up 55% of the final grade.

Discussion Groups: Discussion groups are designed to further your understanding of course material and give you the chance to participate in class discussion. Attendance is not mandatory and attendance will not be taken. However, all students are strongly encouraged to attend conferences, as they provide an opportunity for more in-depth analysis of the texts and theorists.

Assessment	Percentage	Date
Midterm Exam 1	15%	October 5, 2016
Midterm Exam 2	15%	October 28, 2016
Midterm Exam 3	15%	December 30, 2016
Final Exam	55%	To be announced
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>	

Please Note:

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information). (approved by Senate on 29 January 2003)

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded." (approved by Senate on 21 January 2009 - see also the section in this document on Assignments and evaluation.)

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté (sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue).

September 7: Introduction

September 9: **Montesquieu:** *The Voice of Fear*

The Persian Letters, entire book **except** for letters: 15-18, 25, 32, 39, 41-3, 80, 84, 91, 108-9, 112-22, 133-7

September 12: **Rousseau:** *Progress and Disillusion*

'A Discourse on the Sciences and Arts'in course pack, page 1

'Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality among Men'.....in course pack, page 15

September 14: **Smith:** *The Propensity to Truck and Barter*

Wealth of Nations.....in course pack, page 55

September 16: **Smith:** *Vanity in the Creation of Commercial Society*

Wealth of Nations.....in course pack, page 77

September 19: **Discussion Groups**

September 21: **Smith:** *The Importance of Illusion*

Wealth of Nations.....in course pack, page 103

The Theory of Moral Sentiments.....in course pack, page 141

Also recommended: *The Equalizing Hand: Why Adam Smith Thought the Market Should Produce Wealth without Steep Inequality* by Deborah A. Boucoyannis in *Perspectives on Politics* 2013

(<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract?fromPage=online&aid=9122037>)

September 23: **Tocqueville:** *The Peculiarities of America*

Democracy in America.....in course pack, page 167

September 26: **Discussion Groups**

September 28: **Tocqueville:** *The Politics of Transition, or, England vs. France*

The Old Regime and the French Revolution (Part 1: chapter 2-5; Part 2: chapters 1-3, 5-6, 8-12; Part 3: chapters 1-4, 7-8; Appendix)

September 30: Review, Comparisons, Questions

October 3: **Discussion Groups**

October 5: **FIRST MIDTERM EXAM**

October 7: No class

October 10: No class

October 12: **Marx:** *The Early Marx*

Giddens: *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*, part 1

Marx-Engels, pp. 70-93, 101-5, 126-32, 143-5

October 14: **Marx:** *The Materialist Conception of History*

Marx-Engels, 146-200, 261-76, 653-8

October 17: **Discussion Groups**

October 19: **Marx: *The Crisis of Capitalism***

Marx-Engels, pp. 203-17, 302-308, 319-361, 376-384, 397-403, 417-438

October 21: **Marx: *Revolution and Socialism***

Marx-Engels, pp. 471-500, 525-48, 594-617

October 24: **Discussion Groups**

October 26: Review, Comparisons, Questions

October 28: **SECOND MIDTERM EXAM**

October 31: **Weber: *The Two Theses***

Giddens: *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*, part 3

Selections (ed. Runciman) pp. 135-73, 331-40

November 2: **Weber: *Sources of Social Power. Methodology***

Selections (ed. Runciman) pp. 7-32, 43-61, 111-131, 174-191, 359-69

November 4: **Weber: '*Bourgeois Rational Capitalism in the West*'**

Selections (ed. Runciman) pp. 192-205, 315-30, 341-354

Anthony Giddens: '*Marx, Weber and the development of capitalism*'in course pack, page 263

November 7: **Discussion Groups**

November 9: **Weber: *Politics and Disenchantment***

Selections (ed. Runciman) pp. 69-98, 212-225, 251-262, 263-284

'*Science as a Vocation*'in course pack, page 277

November 11: **Durkheim: *The Division of Labour***

Giddens: *Capitalism and Modern Social Theory*, part 2

Selected Writings, chs. 5-6, pp. 162-172, chapter 8

- November 14: **Discussion Groups**
- November 16: **Durkheim: *Suicide and The Rules***
Selected Writings, chapter 2, 111-115, 264-6
- November 18: **Durkheim: *Religion, Morality and Politics***
Selected Writings, pp. 7-16, 92-107, and chapters 4, 11
- November 21: **Discussion Groups**
- November 23: No class
- November 25: No class
- November 28: **Discussion Groups**
- November 30: **THIRD MIDTERM EXAM**
- December 2: The Condition of Sociological Theory: Regress and Progress
- December 5: Review: General Comparisons