

SOCIOLOGY 3404F (001)  
Modern Sociological Theory  
Course Outline 2016  
Mondays, 1:30-4:30pm  
Location: SSC 5230

**INSTRUCTOR:** R. NONOMURA

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**OFFICE:** SSC 5415

**OFFICE HOURS:** TBD

***BELOW IS A TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF THE COURSE STRUCTURE, ASSIGNMENTS, AND GRADE BREAKDOWN FOR SOCIOLOGY 3404F-001. A FINALIZED COURSE OUTLINE, WITH FULL SCHEDULE AND WEEKLY READING LIST, WILL BE POSTED TO OWL PRIOR TO OUR FIRST CLASS.***

**Course Description:**

This course is designed to refine your understanding of key theoretical ideas, problems, and debates within contemporary sociology. In addition to obtaining a more in-depth understanding of the theories developed by influential social researchers, we will also explore the ways that sociological thinking can help us engage more incisively with the “big” social and political issues of our time. Tensions between structure and agency, power and knowledge, oppression and resistance, conformity and critique, theory and practice, will be recurring themes throughout the semester, as will the emphasis on developing a “reflexive” understanding of sociological inquiry itself. Please note that this course will be run as a kind of “junior seminar”: a guided examination of the course content that emphasizes student-led discussion over traditional lecture. Consistent preparation, focus, and participation will therefore be crucial to your success in the course and to the effectiveness of the course itself. Class time will generally be divided into a short segment of direct instruction by me, a seminar discussion led by a designated presenter (or presenters) for the week, and a recap session where we will review key takeaways from the readings and draw broader connections to course themes.

**Antirequisites:** Sociology 4404F/G

**Prerequisites:** Sociology 2240E or both Sociology 2270A/B and 2271A/B and enrolment in third year of Honors Specialization or Honors Double Major in Sociology or Criminology.

**Note:** Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## **COURSE TEXT**

The following text will serve us throughout the course. It is available at the UWO Bookstore, and can also be found (often at significantly lower prices) at various online book retailers. There will also be a number of required readings on OWL.

Hier, Sean (ed.), *Contemporary Sociological Thought: Themes and Theories*. 2005. Canadian Scholars' Press. ISBN: 1551302888.

*Additionally, it is recommended that you obtain a good sociological or philosophical dictionary and a good sociology writer's manual. If you are in need of either of these, or of identifying secondary examinations of the theorists we're reading this term, please ask and I can provide you a list.*

## **GRADE BREAKDOWN**

Seminar Presentation 23%  
Final Paper 40%  
Term Paper Proposal 10%  
Notes 11%  
Participation 16%

### **Seminar Presentation:**

**23% of course mark**

You will be expected to give one oral presentation in which you will not only summarize the key ideas from the readings but also engage the class in discussion about the works' theoretical, social, and sociological significance. A tentative outline of your presentation should be submitted to me via email no later than **36 hours before the start of class**. A written synopsis of your presentation, including main points, and concluding thoughts and arguments will be due one week after the presentation is given (1500 words, 5-6 pages, double spaced). Points and analyses should be developed in relation to primary texts as much as possible. Specific expectations and grading rubric for this assignment will be provided in class.

### **Final Paper:**

**40% of course mark**

The major assignment for this course will be a term paper of 3000 words (12 pages) on a theoretical topic of your choice, due no later than **Dec. 6, 11:59pm**. Further details about this assignment will be provided in class.

### **Term Paper Proposal: 10% of course mark**

You must submit an outline of the proposed term paper, of minimum two pages, worth 10% of the grade, to OWL by **Nov. 8, 11:59pm**. The outline of the proposed paper may be in point form, but the assignment should include a tentative thesis statement and at least two paragraphs stipulating the main issues and ideas you intend to address. The proposal should also include a bibliography listing at least six publications you intend to use in the essay. I am happy to help you devise a viable essay topic and/or to assist in identifying appropriate research materials.

### **Notes**

**11% of course mark**

It is expected that you will complete all weekly readings prior to class, and arrive prepared with a full set of notes (typed or handwritten), including a summary (minimum one page, maximum two pages) of the assigned readings to use during seminar discussions. These notes, each worth 1% of your overall mark for a total of 11%, will be collected at the end of class each week for grading, and will be available to you for pickup in office hours or at the start of class the following week.

## **Participation**

**16% of course mark**

Because this course is seminar-based, your active, consistent participation (and preparation) throughout the semester is a key determinant of how well things go. Please note that *quantity* in this area does not equal *quality*, and that while making connections to information/ideas from outside the course curriculum is encouraged, it is no substitute for engaging the material assigned in *this* course. Generally speaking, your participation grade will be based on how well your contributions: (a) demonstrate your comprehension of, and critical engagement with, the course materials, and/or (b) stimulate interaction *toward* the development of such comprehension/ critical engagement. A “Midterm Participation Grade Update” will be released on OWL by **Nov. 2**.

## **GRADING POLICIES**

### **Deadlines and Late Penalties:**

Late assignments will be penalized 5% per day. If, due to medical reasons, you cannot submit an assignment by the due date, it is your responsibility to follow the University’s “Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness,” accessible at

[www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf). I also request that you inform me as soon as possible via email that you are seeking accommodation. This policy also applies to accommodations sought for compassionate circumstances.

### **Grade Disputes:**

You deserve to have your work evaluated in a competent, fair, and impartial manner. If you have questions or concerns about a grade, please come to see me and hopefully we can resolve any misunderstanding. For issues concerning written work, please submit a 1-page statement explaining why you feel your work was wrongly evaluated *no sooner than 24 hours after I have returned the work to you*. We can then meet to discuss these points and consider a re-evaluation. Please note that I reserve the right to elevate your mark, maintain the mark as applied, or lower the mark depending on that re-evaluation.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

It is crucial that you read, understand, and agree to these policies. Your continued enrolment in the course constitutes acceptance of these policies and expectations of you during the term.

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism:**

UWO promotes the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest, and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect for other students, and help maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts. Violations of academic integrity will be treated very seriously.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a **major** academic offence (see the Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar), and I take it very seriously.

All written assignments will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All

papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between UWO and Turnitin.com ([www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com)).

Students who submit work found to be substantially plagiarized (i.e., work in which plagiarism can be demonstrated in substance) will be subject to the procedures outlined in the Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students section of the Western Academic Calendar. This referral will be done without exception.

### **Accessibility:**

Please contact me if you require material in an alternate format or if you require any other arrangements to make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) at 519/661.2111 x82147 for any specific question regarding an accommodation. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: [www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

### **Attendance:**

It is expected that you will attend all class meetings. The standard provisions regarding absences excused by the Social Science Counselling Centre on medical or compassionate grounds hold. If you are unable to attend a class session for medical or compassionate reasons, you must inform me as soon as possible. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: [www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated\\_exams.html](http://www.registrar.uwo.ca/examinations/accommodated_exams.html)

If you are unable to attend a class session due to a non-medical or non-compassionate reason, it is your responsibility to catch up on all missed notes and lecture material. I am happy to meet during Office Hours to help get you up to speed in any way I can. Updates on attendance records will be provided on request.

### **Communications:**

In-person discussion is my preferred method for discussing any substantive course-related material. Feel free to approach me before or after class, during office hours, or if you run into me around campus.

When contacting me via email, please do so using your UWO email address (other email accounts tend to get caught in my Spam filter) and ensure that your message is expressed in a respectful, professional (i.e., spell-checked) manner. Also, kindly preface all subject headings with our course code, SOC3404.

### **Medical Illness:**

Western's policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness can be found at [www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf). Students must see the Academic Counsellor and submit all required documentation in order to be approved for certain accommodation: [http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical\\_accommodation.html](http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/medical_accommodation.html)

**Mental Health:**

Students who are in emotional or mental distress should refer to Mental Health @ Western ([http://uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/index.html](http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html)) for a complete list of options for how to obtain help.

**Policy on Laptops and other Electronics/Phones in Class:**

Laptops are permitted in class but if it is observed that you are using these devices for purposes unrelated to the course, or are using them in a distracting manner, you will be asked to turn them off for the remainder of the class. All phones are to be shut off at the start of class. In dire cases where you must leave your phone on please let me know at the start of class.

**Scholastic Offences:**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following web site: [www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)