



The University of Western Ontario
SOCIOLOGY 2263B-001
Thinking Sociologically
Winter 2025
In-Person

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Course Description: An in-depth examination of many of the core ideas that sociologists use in their analyses, including the social, society, subjectivity, institutions, and others. Involves questions regarding how we approach these theoretically, in terms of empirical observations, and in terms of evaluating their impact on our current social order

Prerequisite(s): 0.5 Sociology course at the 1000 level.

Unless you have either the prerequisites or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in the course, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The 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.

Anti-requisite(s): Sociology 2240E, Sociology 2270A/B, Sociology 2271A/B.

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

This course is designed to provide you with a foundational understanding of the ideas, perspectives, concepts, and paradigms that have shaped, and continue to shape, the discipline of sociology. This involves not only surveying the “theories” of influential classical and contemporary social researchers but also considering how their ideas developed in the context of particular political, scientific, and philosophical movements. It is these theorists’ intellectual responsiveness to these various social phenomena—that is, the sociologically imaginative quality of their mode of inquiry—that makes their work especially relevant to present-day social research, and that will constitute the focus of our course.

Thus, the course will lay an intellectual foundation for sociological thinking that students can use throughout their degree program and beyond. We will explore what “sociological theorizing” can teach us about today’s society and how it might be used to gain deeper scientific and moral insight into our own beliefs, ideas, relationships, and interests. Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the historical and philosophical roots of sociological thought.
- Locate the role of theory and method in the process of social scientific inquiry.

- Critically analyze selections of primary texts written by influential 19th, 20th, and 21st century sociological theorists.
- Compare the relative strengths and limitations of various analytic frameworks for solving empirical, methodological, and epistemic problems.
- Connect core sociological concepts to “real-world” examples in contemporary society.

Course Material:

Reading assignments will consist of articles, book chapters, and knowledge mobilization resources. Links or PDFs to all resources will be provided via Perusall or linked through Brightspace. Some copyright costs may be involved in using this platform, but efforts have been made to keep these at a minimum.

There is no required textbook for this course.

Communication:

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL Brightspace site (<https://westernu.brightspace.com/d2l/login>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class.

Method of Evaluation:

The evaluation methods described in the course outline are essential requirements for the course.

Attendance/Participation: 5%

In-class attendance is vital to your success in the course. Lectures are designed to provide you with foundational tools for interpreting and mobilizing core social-theoretical concepts. The assigned readings serve as a common point of reference for developing those tools. You will need both in order to successfully pass the course. Lectures also cultivate mental focus in following long-form oral arguments, and they provide social and cognitive stimuli that enhances retention.

To incentivize engagement in these vital aspects of this course, your attendance will be recorded upon completion of a weekly attendance activity. Your attendance grade will be calculated as a proportion of your in-class attendances on Weeks 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12. If you have an unexcused absence, you can make up the missed grade by attending Office Hours the following week. If you require an extended absence (two or more weeks) on medical or compassionate grounds, consult with me once the issue is resolved and we can discuss a fair solution for your grade.

Critical Analysis Assignment 1 & 2: 12.5% each = 25%

These assignments provide students an opportunity to develop their skills in social-theoretical reading, conceptualization, analysis, and writing. Students will draw upon their understanding of the course materials (readings and lectures) to respond to a series of questions about the course materials. These assignments are to be completed using the Quizzes Tool on Brightspace. Due dates for Assignment 1 and 2 are January 27, 11:59pm ET and March 24, 11:59pm ET respectively. A 36-hour grace period will be allotted for students who encounter technical issues or minor illnesses, inconveniences, etc. After that, late submissions will receive deductions of 5%

per day from the original deadline. Assignments submitted later than 6 days past the original deadline will receive a mark of zero. *Students requiring academic accommodation for late or missed assignments beyond the allotted grace period must receive approval from Academic Counselling.*

Also, this is stated in the “Artificial Intelligence” section below but let me emphasize in this section as well: students will be expected to complete these assignments independently, without the aid of AI software, and to complete all written components using their own words. This course engages your capacity to wield *real* intelligence—creative, explanatory, theoretical, improbable. As Chomsky, Roberts, and Watumull illuminate here, reliance on AI algorithms such as ChatGPT is often inimical to that pursuit.

Perusall Online Discussion: 15%

During each week’s readings, you will have the opportunity to use the Perusall platform to comment on key passages, pose questions about the readings, and interact with peers who are doing the same. Of the ten eligible weeks in which to participate on the platform, you will be expected to participate in at least seven (7). However, you are welcome to participate in more than this. I will base this component of your grade on your top 7 assignment scores throughout the term. Your mark will be based on the consistency, quality, depth, and completeness of your engagement with the week’s materials. Specific details about expectations for this component of the course will be provided in the Week 1 slides.

Midterm Exam: 25%

The Midterm Exam will be worth 25% of the final mark. It will be administered during class time on February 26. The test will consist of multiple-choice questions. All course materials covered prior to the Midterm will be eligible for testing.

Use of electronic devices and other written aids (notes, outlines, etc.) will not be permitted during the examination, unless otherwise stated. Students with an approved absence from the Midterm will be required to write a makeup exam during the departmental Midterm make-up midterm exam period (location and date TBD). The course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test. Accommodations for the make-up exam date will be provided only with further approval from an Academic Counsellor.

Final Exam: 30%

The Final Exam will be worth 30% of the final mark. It will be administered during the Final Exam period. The exam will consist of multiple-choice questions.

As with the Midterm, use of electronic devices and other written aids (notes, outlines, etc.) will not be permitted during the examination unless otherwise stated. Students with an approved accommodations for the final exam will be required to write a makeup exam during the departmental Final Exam make-up period (date and location TBD). The course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Note: Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating. This applies to assignments, the midterm, and the final exam.

Student Absences:

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found here. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.”

Students must familiarize themselves with the [Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs](#). Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that supporting documentation is **always** required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams) and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described elsewhere in this document. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the [Student Medical Certificate](#) or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

Students with an approved absence from an in-class test or exam will be required to write a makeup exam. Course professor or teaching assistant(s) may not be available to respond to questions during the makeup exam. Students should be aware that the make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test.

Artificial Intelligence:

All assignments must be completed independently, without the aid of artificial intelligence.

Academic Policies:

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: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Plagiarism: Students must write their assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea 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 scholastic offence.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for 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 The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<https://www.turnitin.com/>).

Students are expected to retain all research notes, rough drafts, essay outlines, and other materials used in preparing assignments. In the unlikely event of concerns being raised about the authenticity of any assignment, your instructor may ask you to produce these materials; an inability to do so may weigh heavily against you.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

Copyright: Students may not record or distribute any class activity, including conversations during office hours, without written permission from the instructor, except as necessary as part of approved accommodations for students with disabilities. Any approved recordings may only be used for the student's own private use.

Absence from Course Commitments: Students must familiarize themselves with the Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs
https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Students missing course work for medical, compassionate or extenuating circumstances can request academic consideration by completing a request at the central academic consideration portal. Students are permitted one academic consideration request per course per term without supporting documentation. Note that **supporting documentation is always required for academic consideration requests for examinations scheduled by the office of the registrar (e.g. December and April exams)** and for practical laboratory and performance tests typically schedule during the last week of the term. Students should also note that the instructor may designate one assessment per course per term that requires supporting documentation. This designated assessment is described in the course outline. Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor of this course, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline. Supporting documentation for academic considerations for absences due to illness should use the Student Medical Certificate https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf or, where that is not possible, equivalent documentation by a health care practitioner.

Note: missed work can *only* be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is **not** sufficient on its own. Students should check the Western website to see what directives for Covid are to be followed. Western has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any

other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty Academic Counselling Office.

Missed Tests and Exams: Students with an approved absence from an in-class test will be required to write a make-up test. The make-up test will not necessarily be in the same format, be of the same duration, or cover the same material as the original test. Course professors may not be available to respond to questions during the make-up test/exam slots.

Students with an approved absence from a final exam in December or April will be required to write a makeup exam known as a Special Examination. Permission to write a Special Examination may be granted on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documentation provided to the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Students who fail to write a make-up test or special examination will receive a grade of zero on that assessment. No other make-up opportunities will be provided unless further academic consideration is granted by the student's Home Faculty Academic Counselling office.

Religious Accommodation: Students should review the policy for [Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) . Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning: In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL Brightspace for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

Accessibility Options: Students with disabilities or accessibility challenges should work with Accessible Education (formerly SSD) http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The accommodation policy can be found here: https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf. Information regarding accommodation of exams is available on the Registrar's website: www.registrar.uwo.ca/academics/examinations/accommodated_exams.html.

Mental Health: Students who are in [emotional/mental distress](#) should refer to Mental Health@Western <https://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender-Based and Sexual Violence: Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following

website https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html .To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca .

Additional resources:

Registrar Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <http://westernusc.ca/services>

Course Selection: Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all course prerequisites have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any antirequisite courses they may have taken.

If a student enrolls in a course for which they do not have the prerequisites, they may be removed from the course and have it deleted from their record. This decision may not be appealed. A student will receive no adjustment to their fees in the event that they are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

If a student takes a course that is antirequisite to a course previously taken, they will lose credit for the earlier course, regardless of the grade achieved in the most recent course.

Please visit your Home Faculty Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html .

Bookstore: Search for Textbook availability and cost <https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search>