# **SOC 445: Sociological Theory**

# **Instructor:** Dr. Stephanie Hilwig

**Course:** Sociology 445, Sociological Theory (3 Credit Hours)

**Time:** MWF 1:00 –1:50

**Office Hours:** All office hours will be held virtually. I will be available to meet on:

MWF 10:00 to 11:00

TTh 1:00 to 2:00

Email when you want to meet and I will send you a link to meet virtually. I will be available as much as possible beyond those hours to help you this semester. The benefit is you can even meet from the comfort of your own home.

**E-mail:** stephaniehilwig@adams.edu

**Website:** [blogs.adams.edu/stephanie-hilwig](http://faculty.adams.edu/~sjgonzales)

**PREREQUISITES:**

Soc 201

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

*Sociological Theory* 9th Edition by George Ritzer. 2010.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

Social Theory is the core of sociology and it provides the framework for studying and analyzing all aspects of our social world. Social Theory provides the context for how we choose to study a variety of topics in sociology such as crime, poverty, gender, government, and our social institutions like religion or education. In this course we will study a variety of theories and theorists who have made an attempt to explain what society is, why it exists, how it changes, and how it shapes social, political and economic relationships. This course will study both classical theorists from Marx, Durkheim and Weber to modern theorists such as Habermas, Bourdieu and Foucault.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. Identify the role of theory in sociology.
2. Recognize major historical figures in social theory.
3. Compare and Contrast the major theories in sociology.
4. Apply major theories to modern social issues.
5. Apply social theory to personal and professional life
6. Develop effective writing skills

### FORMAT OF THE COURSE

1. This course will include a great deal of interesting and thought-provoking, informative, and discussion provoking reading. There will also be a good deal of writing conducted both in and out of class in response to the readings.
2. The class format will include a mixture of lectures, activities, discussions, and films. The more active the class, the better experience everyone will one will have, and consequently the more we will learn.
3. This semester, class format will be slightly different than most semesters. First, videos of all lectures will be posted in Blackboard. All lectures will be held in person on Mondays and Wednesdays. Fridays, I will post a review lecture in Blackboard so no in-person lectures on Friday, only video. These will be a review of the material to help you master the theories and prepare for the exams. You can watch these videos as many times as necessary to master the material.
4. Additionally, all assignments and exams will be taken in Blackboard. I will pass out a study guide for both major exams, but will not hold a review session. Video recorded lectures can be reviewed for that purpose.
5. Because the semester is on a shortened timeline and we will need to meet “contact hours” required by HLC. We will meet these hours with the exams, video lectures, and activities outside of regularly scheduled class time. I will make these flexible so you can work with your work, family and homelife schedules. It comes to about 3 hours over the course of the semester

### ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

**Test: (40% of grade)**

Two tests will be given throughout this course, each worth 20% of your final grade. The tests will be a combination of multiple choice, short essay (one paragraph responses.)

**Essays: (30% of grade)**

A good portion of what you will do in this class is designed to encourage you to make the most out of the material from the readings, lectures, and class discussions. A secondary, but just as important goal, is to help with your writing and communication abilities, a skill useful in any occupation. To help facilitate this process, you will each be required to write three papers in response to the readings, each worth 10% of your grade (30% combined). Each essay should be about 2 pages in length clearly analyzing a particular issue based on concepts, facts, and knowledge learned in other courses.

**Reading Explanations: (30% of grade)**

In order to ensure students are completing the reading assignments and working to understand the material, each week students will have to complete a short one-page summary of some concept, idea or theory in the chapter assigned for readings that week. They will be due the following Monday. These summaries will be graded on how well you understood the concept, how well you understood difficult vocabulary and new ideas, and finally how well you were able to communicate that understanding. The primary objective is to ensure students are working through the difficult readings and spending the time to dissect the concepts in each chapter. The chapter readings for Social Theory are difficult, introducing new and complicated ideas and concepts that can be daunting for many students. This assignment is helped to aid in the process of working through that material.

**Late Papers:** Any paper that is turned in late will receive 5 points deducted for each day it is late, including Saturdays and Sundays. I will not accept late papers beyond 2 weeks late.

**Grading:**

A 90 % and above

B 80 – 89 %

C 70 – 79 %

D 60 – 69 %

F 59 % and below

**Persons with Disabilities:**  
Adams State University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Adams State University is committed to achieving equal educational opportunities, providing students with documented disabilities access to all university programs, services and activities. In order for this course to be equally accessible to all students, different accommodations or adjustments may need to be implemented. The Office of Accessibility Services (OAS) is located in Richardson Hall 3-100, or available at OAS@adams.edu, and 719-587-7746. They are your primary resource on campus to discuss the qualifying disability, help you develop an accessibility plan, and achieve success in your courses this semester. They may provide you with letters of accommodation, which can be delivered in two ways. You may give them to me in person, or have the Office of Accessibility Services email them. Please make an appointment with their office as early as possible this semester so that we can discuss how potential accommodations can be provided and carried out for this course. If you have already received letters of accommodation for this course from OAS, please provide me with that information privately so that we can review your accommodations together and discuss how best to help you achieve equal access in this course this semester.

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility: for courses that do not involve students in research:**

Academic freedom is a cornerstone of the University. Within the scope and content of the course as defined by the instructor, it includes the freedom to discuss relevant matters in the classroom. Along with this freedom comes responsibility. Students are encouraged to develop the capacity for critical judgment and to engage in a sustained and independent search for truth. Students are free to take reasoned exception to the views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled.\*

**Academic Misconduct:**  
Students should abide by all student ethical conduct, especially those rules pertaining to cheating and plagiarism. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Any student engaging in academic dishonesty in this course can expect a failing grade for the course and formal charges to be brought before the Department Chair.

**Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting**

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus.  I also have a mandatory reporting responsibility related to my role as a responsible employee as designated under Title IX . It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share information regarding sexual misconduct or information about a crime that may have occurred on

Adams State University Campus or that may be impacting an ASU student. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting Adams State University Counseling Center at the Adams State University Counseling Center located in Richardson Hall 3100 or contacted at 719-587-7746. You may also fill out an anonymous “concern form” at <https://www.adams.edu/students/ccc/>. Crisis support can be found in the San Luis Valley community 24/7 at San Luis Valley Comprehensive Mental Health Center: 719-589-3671 or Tu Casa: 719-589-2465. Tu Casa offers services for victims of sexual assault and domestic violence.

Alleged violations can be reported to the Adams State University Title IX Office, Director Ana Guevara, at 719-587-8213 or at anaguevara@adams.edu. The ASU Title IX Office is located in the Student Union Building (SUB) room 327. Reports to law enforcement can be made to Adams State University Police Department at #1 Petteys Hall or contacted at 719-587-7901, 911, or 24 hour dispatch at 24 hour dispatch: 719-589-5807 (State Patrol).

**Face coverings and social distancing in the classroom**

Students are required to correctly wear face coverings at all times (covering nose and mouth) and maintain social distancing (minimum of six feet between individuals in traditional classrooms, or, in instructional laboratories and similar settings, only a few minutes in closer proximity when absolutely necessary to achieve learning objectives). In addition, students should not share pens, phones or other personal items. Students who are feeling ill or experiencing symptoms such as sneezing, coughing, or a higher than normal temperature will be excused from class and must stay at home.

Instructors have the right to and will ask individuals who do not comply with mask and social distancing requirements to leave class in the interest of everyone's health and safety. In the event that a student refuses to comply, they will be considered in violation of the student code of conduct and will be reported to Student Affairs.

Additionally, students may be asked to wipe down areas/common equipment when necessary, including, but not limited to, during class and/or after classes end. Again, this will be in compliance of the student code of conduct.

The University asks that we all demonstrate the Grizzly spirit by following these and all health guidelines and requirements. We expect our university community  to set the example and keep ourselves and the members of the SLV community in which we live, work and learn, safe.

**COURSE OUTLINE: (Schedule is Tentative and likely to change)**

**Topic Readings**

**Week 1 – Aug 24th**

Social Theory and its Origins Chp 1

Good Theory?

Development of Sociology

**Week 2 – Aug 31st**

Emile Durkheim Chp 3

Additional video lectures will be posted

**Week 3 – Sept 7th**

Functionalism Chp 7 (pages 237 – 261)

**Week 4 – Sept 14th**

Karl Marx Chp 2

**Week 5 – Sept 21st**

Conflict Theory Chp 7 (pages 266 – 277)

**Essay 1 Due Monday Sept 28th**

**Explain Marx’s critiques of capitalism? What problems does he argue will lead to the failure of capitalism?**

**Week 6 – Sept 28th**

Max Weber Chp 4

Additional video lectures will be posted

**Essay 2 Due Monday Oct 12th**

**Compare and contrast the role of religion in society between Durkheim, Marx, and Weber.**

**Midterm Exam will open during the weekend of Oct 10th and 11th**

**Week 7 – Oct 5th**

Herbert Mead Chp 5

**Week 8 – Oct 12th**

George Simmel Chp 5

Symbolic Interactionism Chp 9

**Week 10 – Oct 19th**

Modern Social Theories Chp 6

**Week 11 – Oct 26th**

Neo-Marxian Theories and Critical Theory Chp 8

**Week 12 – Nov 2nd**

Structure and Agency Chp 13

Modernity Chp 14

**Week 13 – Nov 9th**

Feminist Theories Chp 12

**Essay 3 Due Monday Nov 16th**

**How have modern theories attempted to improve on their more classical roots?**

**Week 14 - Nov 16th**

Poststructuralism and Postmodernism Chp 16

***FINAL EXAM – Modern Social Theories***

***Scheduled online after Thanksgiving Break***

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