

C2B: Sociology

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Credits and contact hours: 3 credits, 48 hours.

Class Schedule: Tuesday (10-11 AM), Wednesday (14:00-15:00) & Thursday (12:00-13:00)

Prerequisites: The willingness to consider human life more holistically, that is, being interested in the historical and contemporary interactions between the social, cultural, economic and political realms.

Course Description (Topics and outcome): The course introduces students to the most holistic, self-critical and reflexive of social scientific disciplines- sociology. Itself a product of modernity, sociology's disciplinary debut lay in the need to understand profound intellectual and social changes that accompanied the industrial revolution and enlightenment. Classical sociological foundations were laid by thinkers who sought to assess the possibilities for order amidst disorder, critique capitalism as that form of economic organization of society that profited from such disorder, and impart cultural corrections to tendencies that accorded causal primacy to the economic realm. After such foundational introduction, students will be exposed to contemporary sociological thought. While modern sociology is vast repertoire of early and mid-20th century micro (interactionist) and macro (structural) theorizing, this course will focus instead on more contemporary and relevant sociological theorizing over. This includes critical, poststructural and feminist standpoint theorizing over power, inequality and difference. This sets stage for student encounters with the most 'unlearning' and introspective body of sociological thought: feminist or gender sociology. Besides exposing students to radical critiques of structural and institutional patriarchal prejudice and practice, it also provisions a reflexive gendered critique of the discipline of sociology itself. The course ends by introducing students to Indian sociology. The stratified nature of traditional Indian society, its encounter with modernity, the culture of Indian publics, the structure of and changes in rural India, and Indian democracy's character are foundational areas that students gain insight into.

The readings are a combination of sociology texts that interpret classical sociological work, and original extracts from works of contemporary European, American and Indian sociologists.

The evaluation scheme is a combination of written and oral/ppt assignments and a visual project.

Course Evaluation:

1. **Class participation:** 10 Marks.
2. **Multiple choice/ short answer format exam:** 40 marks. This will cover introduction to sociology, classical sociology, and contemporary sociology, specifically power and inequality theory only. 8 multiple choice questions (8 x 2 =16) and 8 (from a choice of 10) one-word/ limited sentence type questions (8 x 3= 24). Duration- 1 hour. One class at the end of Part III (A) will be allotted for the exam.

3. **Assignment.** 20 marks. A power point presentation (15 minutes) on any feminist theory. Use feminist/gender theory and concepts to discuss patriarchal worldviews and assumptions, discriminatory practice and sexist attitudes in rural and urban India. Using conservation and sustainability contexts to discuss gender is useful and encouraged. Topic to be decided in consultation with instructor at the initial or mid stages of feminist sociology classes. Assignment to be worked on during course of the feminist sociology classes. Two classes after the gender and feminist sociology component is completed will be allotted for presentations.

4. **Project.** 30 marks. A multimedia (audio-visual) project on any one or more aspect of Indian society (candidly/naturally captured street life; interviews of rural folks in distress; juxtaposing tradition vs. modern life in rural/urban contexts etc) as covered in Indian sociology (Part IV). Students can undertake photography for a photo narrative/story project, or make a documentary. A photo project must involve a minimum of 10 and maximum of 15 images accompanied by brief sociological (interpretive and insightful) narrative text. A documentary must be minimum 5 minutes long and not more than 7 minutes. Visuals must be self-explanatory and of sociological significance or a voice over or scrolling/imposed text must bring out the sociological significance. Students are free to also draw from parts I to III of the syllabus in interpreting or contextualising their visual media. Students must form 5 groups of 2 persons each. Mobile phones with advanced cameras (12+ mega pixels) can be used. Use of DSLR or advanced fixed lens zoom cameras is recommended. The Academy office will facilitate borrowing of equipment. This project and its class presentation is the equivalent of 1 credit (i.e. 16 hours = 16 classes). Project to be initiated at the end of Part IV, which in terms of credit hours (FYI 1 credit=16 contact hours/classes) would stand at 2 credits or 32 classes completed.

Students must cumulatively –across all 4 of these components- score 55 percent to qualify this core course. Additional qualifying clause: the exam component involves a compulsory pass i.e. 20 marks. A failure in the exam will involve a re-exam. In case of failure in the overall evaluation scheme, the instructors will decide which component the student will need to attempt again.

Syllabus

Part I. Introducing sociology

- Understanding our world, our place in it, and ourselves
- Is sociology a science?
- The sociological imagination: Historical sensibility, anthropological insight and critical sensitivity
- The enlightenment and sociology: Sociology's origins in a conservative reaction against intellectual and economic change

- Sociology as social physics: Auguste Comte's 'positivist' critique of the enlightenment and French revolution

Part II. Classical sociology: The founding triumvirate

A. Emile Durkheim: Social order and disorder

- Suicide and division of labour as non-material 'social facts'

B. Karl Marx: Historical Materialism

- Human potential, labour and alienation
- The structures of capitalist society: Commodities and fetishism; capital, capitalists and proletariat; exploitation
- The structures of capitalist society (contd.): Class conflict and capitalism as good; critique of capitalist culture: ideology and religion

C. Max Weber: Substantive Sociology

- Historical sociology of ideas: Verstehen, causality, ideal types, values and research
- Substantive sociology: Stratification; Ideal types of authority
- Rationalization, and Ideal types of rationality.

Part III. Contemporary sociology

A. Theorizing power and inequality

- Introducing neo-Marxism; Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony
- Introducing poststructuralism; Michel Foucault's Genealogy of power; Discipline and punishment
- Introducing critical theory; Jurgen Habermas' theory of communicative action
- Introducing feminist standpoint; Dorothy E. Smith's conceptual practices of power

B. Feminist Sociology

- Introducing feminism, sociology and gender
- Feminist Theories: Gender difference; inequality; oppression
- Feminist Theories (Contd.): Structural oppression; postmodernism
- Theorising the interaction of caste, class and gender

Part IV. Indian Sociology

- Concepts and institutions: Andre Beteille
- Social stratification: Dipankar Gupta
- Modernization: Satish Deshpande
- Public Culture: Arjun Appadurai
- Agrarian structures and transformation: Surinder Jodhka
- The nature of Indian democracy: Sudipta Kaviraj

Readings

1. Sociological Theory. George Ritzer. New York. McGraw-Hill. (8th edition).
2. Contemporary Sociological Theory (2012). Craig Calhoun, Joseph Gerteis, James Moody, Steven Plaff and Indermohan Virk (eds). Wiley Blackwell. (3rd edition).
3. Handbook of Indian Sociology (2012). Veena Das (eds). Oxford University Press. (10th edition).
4. Theorising the interaction of caste, class and gender (2016). Padma Velaskar. Contributions to Indian Sociology.

(Additional readings will be identified by instructors before and during each of the four parts).

Course Schedule

Class No.	Date	Module	Lecture	Teacher
1.	8 th August, 2017	Part I: Introduction to Sociology	Sociology as science/ the sociological imagination/ the enlightenment and sociology/ sociology as social physics.	SK
2.	9 th August, 2017	Part II: Classical Sociology	Emile Durkheim: Social facts- Suicide and division of labour as non-material examples.	SK
3.	10 th August		Karl Marx: Human potential, labour and alienation	SRK
4.	16 th August		The structures of capitalist society	SRK
5.	17 th August		Max Weber: historical sociology of ideas/ substantive sociology	SK
6.	18 th August (Friday, special class)		Rationalization and rationality	SK
7.	22 nd August	Part III: Contemporary Sociology (A): Theorizing power and inequality.	Antonio Gramsci: Hegemony	SRK
8.	23 rd August		Hegemony-Contd.	SRK
9.	24 th August		Foucault: Genealogy of power	SRK
10.	29 th August		Disciplining	SRK
11.	30 th August		Habermas: Communicative Action	SRK
12.	31 st August		Communicative action-Contd.	SRK
13.	5 th September		Dorothy Smith: Feminist standpoint	SRK
14.	6 th September		Feminist standpoint-Contd.	SRK
15.	7 th September		Part 3: Revision/extra class	SRK
16.	12 th September	Exam (9:30 to	Introduction/classical &	SRK

		10:50 am)	contemporary sociology	
Class No.	Date	Module	Lecture	Teacher
17.	13 th September	Contemporary Sociology (B): Feminist Sociology	Introducing feminism, sociology and gender	RL
18.	14 th September		Gender difference	RL
19.	19 th September		Gender inequality	RL
20.	20 th September		Gender oppression	RL
21.	21 st September		Structural oppression	RL
22.	26 th September		Postmodernism	RL
23.	27 th September		Caste, class and gender	RL
24.	28 th September		Part 3 (B) Revision/extra class	RL
25.	3 rd October		Gender presentations	RL
26.	4 th October		Gender presentations-Contd.	RL
27.	5 th October	Part IV: Indian Sociology	Concepts and institutions Modernization	SK
28.	10 th October		Social Stratification	RL
29.	11 th October		Public culture	RL
30.	12 th October		Modernization	SK
31.	17 th October		Agrarian structures & transformation	SK
32.	18 th October		The nature of Indian democracy	SK
33.	19 th October		Section revision and project finalization	SRK/SK
	PROJECT	WORK	SOCIOLOGY	LABORATORY
34.	29 th November		Project presentation	
35.	30 th November		Project presentation	