

C2B: Sociology

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Credits and contact hours: 3 credits, 48 hours.

Class Schedule: Tuesday (10-11 AM; 11:30 AM– 12:30 PM), & Thursday (10:00 AM - 11:00 AM)

Course Description: 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. In concluding the course, the sub-discipline of environmental sociology will be introduced through the development and environment debate.

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 assignment or quiz, exams and a visual project.

Course Evaluation:

- 1. 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. Including in study/academic and work environments. Using conservation and sustainability contexts, both theoretical and practical 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.

2. Mid-term multiple choice type test: 20 marks. This test will be conducted on Part I and II, namely, introduction to sociology and classical sociology.

4. Final-term written format exam: 30 marks. This short and essay type exam covers Part III (A), namely, contemporary sociology, specifically power and inequality theory only. 5 essay type questions (5 x 5 =25) from a choice of 8.) Duration- 1.5 hours. A Tuesday class at the end of Part III (A) will be allotted for the exam.

5. 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 groups, which will be decided. 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 11 lecture hours. 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 37 classes completed.

Students must cumulatively –across all 4 of these components- score 55 percent to qualify this core course. Additional qualifying clause: the final exam component involves a compulsory pass i.e. 13 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
- Social-ecological research in India: Ramachandra Guha
- Environment and development in India: Amita Baviskar

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.
5. Guha, Ramachandra. 1997. 'Social-Ecological Research in India: A 'Status' Report'. Economic and Political Weekly. February 15: 345-352.
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(Additional readings will be identified by instructors before and during each of the four parts).

Course Schedule

Class No.	Date	Module	Lecture	Teacher
1-2.	13th August, 2019	Part I: Introduction to Sociology	Sociology as science/ the sociological imagination/ the enlightenment and sociology/ sociology as social physics. / Emile Durkheim: Social facts- Suicide and division of labour as non-material examples.	Siddhartha Krishnan (SK)
3-4.	20 th August	Part II: Classical Sociology	Karl Marx: Human potential, labour and alienation/ The structures of capitalist society	SK
5.	22 nd August		Max Weber: historical sociology of ideas/ substantive sociology	SK
6-7.	27 th August		Rationalization and rationality	SK
8.	29 th August	Multiple choice test	(Introduction to sociology/classical sociology)	SK
9-10.	3 rd September, 2019		Antonio Gramsci: Hegemony	SK
11.	5 th September	Part III: Contemporary Sociology (A): Theorizing power and inequality.	Foucault: Genealogy of power	
12-13.	10 th September		Disciplining	SK
14.	12 th September		Spare/spill over class	SK
15-16.	17 th September		Habermas: Communicative Action	SK
17.	19 th September		Dorothy Smith: Feminist standpoint	SK
18-19.	24 th September	'Final'-term essay type exam	Contemporary sociology (Part III A)	

Class No.	Date	Module	Lecture	Teacher
20.	26 th September	Contemporary Sociology (B): Feminist Sociology	Feminist standpoint-Contd./	SK
21-22.	1 st October 2019		Introducing feminism, sociology and gender/ Gender difference	SK
23.	3 rd October		Gender inequality	SK
24.	10 th October		Gender oppression/ Structural oppression	SK
25-26.	15 th October		Postmodernism	SK
27	17 th October		Caste, class and gender .	SK
28-29	22 nd October		Spare/ Spill over class	SK
30	24 th October	Gender	Presentations.	SK
31	31 st October	Part IV: Indian Sociology: Concepts and institutions	Modernization	SK
32-33.	5 th November 2019		Social Stratification/ Public culture Modernization	SK
34.	7 th November		Agrarian structures & transformation	SK
35-36.	12 th November		The nature of Indian democracy/ Socio-ecological research in India	SK
37	14 th November		Development and environment in India	SK
38-48	PROJECT	WORK	SOCIOLOGY	LABORATORY
	28 th November	Project	Presentations	