

Course Outline – Survey of Contemporary Theory

School of Behavioural and Social Sciences

General Information

Course #: Sociology 2271B
Section #: 530
Term: Winter
Year: 2021
Delivery: Online asynchronous

Instructor Information

Name: Dr. Lina Sunseri (she/her)
E-mail: lsunseri@uwo.ca
Office hours for students: On Zoom on Thursdays 10:00 am to 11:00 am, or by appointment.

Course Description

Continuities in Sociological thinking will be stressed by building upon the insights of the discipline's founding thinkers, while simultaneously exposing students to the rich variety that characterizes contemporary theorizing. Among other approaches, structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, Marxism, critical theory, feminist theory, and post-modernism will be discussed.

Antirequisite(s): Sociology 2240E

Prerequisite(s): Sociology 2270 A/B

Required Course Materials

1. George Ritzer and Jeffrey Stepnisky. *Contemporary Sociological Theory and Its Classical Roots*. 2019. 5th edition. [RTZ].
2. Peter Kivisto. *Social Theory: Roots and Branches*. 2021. 6th edition. [PK]

Students can order through the Western [Book Store's](#) and the books can be shipped directly to them.

There is an e-text version available for each text, but unfortunately, the Peter Kivisto one is not available through Western's Bookstore. Here is the link through which you can order it, if you wish.

<https://www.vitalsource.com/en-ca/products/social-theory-peter-j-kivisto-v9780190060404?term=9780190060404>

The books are also available at the Brescia's library.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the basic theoretical perspectives of major contemporary social theorists like Parsons, Merton, Marcuse, Goffman, and Foucault.
2. Describe how the major contemporary social theorists strove to explain the social changes happening in late modernity and in our current social world.
3. Compare critical perspectives on modernity, to more conservative approaches, such as structural functionalism.
4. Evaluate and apply contemporary social theorists to understanding contemporary social phenomena and own everyday life.
5. Demonstrate competency in written communication skills by composing essay style answers in assignments.

Students may vary in their competency levels on these outcomes. They can expect to achieve these outcomes if they honor course policies, attend classes regularly, complete all assigned work in good faith and on time, and meet all other course expectations of them as students. (Linda Nilson, Teaching at its Best, 2010: 37).

Brescia Competencies

1.Communication includes the articulation of one's ideas, developing informative and persuasive arguments in all forms of communication, understanding the communication context. Students will also develop interpersonal communication skills including working with others in groups, sharing opinions, resolving conflicts, offering ideas, listening to others, asking questions, and demonstrating effective nonverbal behaviours. (Level 3)

2.Inquiry and Analysis involves the methodical practice of exploring issues and posing questions to seek information, knowledge, or clarity in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of what is true. Inquiry and analysis begins with the collecting of information, the examination of the knowledge, and then converting the material into valuable new knowns. Knowledge is therefore discovered over time because investigation is continual, as is the testing of new knowledge. Once the evidence has been organized and synthesized, conclusions about the question or problem are developed that logically follow from the inquiry process. (Level 3)

3.Critical Thinking involves reasoning, a process where we create arguments by connecting thoughts together so that some thoughts (premises) provide support for other thoughts (conclusions). There are three basic skills involved in critical thinking: interpretation, verification and reasoning. The

first skill comprises understanding how words express or fail to express thoughts, expressing clearly what we mean, and discerning an argument's structure. The second skill involves determining whether premises are acceptable. And the third skill encompasses evaluating whether premises make it reasonable accept the conclusion. (Level 3)

4.Social Awareness and Engagement involves the “the ability to understand and respond to the needs of others” (Daniel Goleman). To do so, students need to develop an understanding of the interrelationship between individual and society. They come to see how their actions influence, and are influenced by, other people, social institutions, and social structure. They appreciate the diverse standpoints and cultural experiences of others, and attempt to see things from different perspectives. Socially aware and engaged students demonstrate knowledge of contemporary social problems, and propose solutions for dealing with these issues. They have the ability to reflect on the impact they have on others. They are able to work with a diverse group of people in intercultural contexts to develop and implement social justice initiatives and enact positive social change. (Level 3)

Teaching Methodology and Expectations of Students

This course will be run online asynchronously (non real-time). I will post mini-lectures, videos, applied thinking questions, assignments on our course OWL site. Lectures and course readings are meant to be reviewed at your own pace each week. I will post new lectures (called modules in our OWL site) at beginning of that week, likely on the Monday. It is recommended you review the lectures, do any embedded learning activity and assigned readings early in the week and if needed, join me during our zoom office hours (see above) if you need any clarification or elaboration. You will also use our OWL site for engaging with classmates in discussions through the Forum tool, for uploading your completed assignments, and for checking your marks.

Although thinking questions posted on Forum won't be graded, it is highly recommended you do them as they will assist your comprehension and application of course material, as well it will facilitate the sense of community which is harder to achieve in an online course format.

Written assignments are to be done **individually**, I fully expect that you will complete them with **academic integrity** and submit them **on time**. They will be submitted to Turnitin (Assignments tab in OWL), which includes a plagiarism check. Late penalties are 5 points (out of 100) per day.

There will be **3 Written Assignments** throughout the term. I will post the Assignments on our OWL site and you will be given **14 days** to submit them from the posted date. Assignment 1 is worth 30% of your total course mark, while Assignment 2 and 3 are each worth 35%. Course material to complete assignments 2 and 3 is slightly lengthier and more challenging than that for the first, hence the difference in their weight.

Please e-mail me with administrative questions or a question that would require minimal text, or to set up a zoom meeting. For a more elaborate discussion, please join me during zoom office hours. I do my best to respond to e-mail within 24 hours from Monday to Friday. I do not reply to

e-mails during the weekend. Please use your UWO e-mail account and check your account regularly for course announcements sent through OWL.

Zoom is a webconferencing app that is free to Western students; instructions for downloading and running Zoom can be found at <https://wts.uwo.ca/zoom/> I will set up Zoom meetings for Thursdays 10-11 am, and will send you the link information you will need to join (ID and passcode) through OWL announcements at beginning of term. Please keep that information for your own record for later. You will be placed in a Waiting Room when you join, and I will then let you in. Please notice that others will be in the Zoom meetings so they will be able to hear what each participant says. If you need to share some confidential matter with me, please set up an individual zoom meeting with me. Please ensure that you are in a private location during zoom meetings, to protect the confidentiality of discussions in the event that a class discussion deals with sensitive or personal material. When there are multiple participants during a zoom meeting, to minimize background noise, kindly mute your microphone for the entire meeting until you are invited to speak. When you wish to speak, use the “raise hand” function and wait for the instructor to acknowledge you before beginning your comment or question. Remember to unmute your microphone and turn your video camera before speaking, and then remember to mute your microphone and turn off your video camera after speaking.

Due to privacy regulations, I am unable to send marks or discuss issues regarding grades by email. Please see me during my zoom office hours or make an appointment. Grades will be posted to the OWL site when they become available. PLEASE NOTE: There will be NO extra work assigned for the purpose of improving grades. It is unfair to other students in the class who are not given the same opportunity. Also, I am unable to increase marks unless warranted.

Copyright and Intellectual Property

PowerPoint lecture slides and notes, lists of readings, in-class activities, assignment guidelines, and other components of the course materials are typically the intellectual property of the instructor. Unauthorized reproduction through audio-recording, video-recording, photographing, sharing on social media, or posting on course-sharing websites is an infringement of copyright and is prohibited. Such action may be considered a Code of Conduct violation and lead to sanctions.

Evaluation

Evaluation Breakdown:

Component	Weight	Date/ Deadline	Learning Outcome	Brescia Competencies
Written Assignment 1	30%	February 8	All listed above	All listed above
Written Assignment 2	35%	March 8	All listed above	All listed above
Written Assignment 3	35%	April 9	All listed above	All listed above

The instructor will post each Written Assignment on our OWL site, in the “Assignments” Tool. You will have 14 days from the day each assignment was posted on OWL to complete it. You will need to submit it on our OWL site. You will need to apply course readings and lecture material to the questions posed in the Assignment. You will not need to research outside of your required readings, except to locate a news article, or video song or other cultural artefact if applicable to the assignment.

Academic Accommodation

For course components worth 10% or more of the total course grade, please see the Academic Policies and Regulations section at the end of this course outline or consult the Academic Calendar.

Course Content

All “mini-lectures” and course activities are contained in the “Course Content” on the OWL site. These follow the schedule shown below.

Weekly Organizer:

Class/Topic	Date	Description	Assignments and/or Readings Due
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Week 1	Jan 11-15	Module 1: Introduction to the course	Read syllabus; Skim chapter 1 in RTZ
Week 2	Jan 18-22	Module 2: Structural Functionalism Part one	Chapter 4 in RTZ Chapter 26 in PK
Week 3	Jan 25-29	Module 3: Structural Functionalism Part two	Chapter 25 in PK Assignment 1 will be posted on OWL
Week 4	Feb 1-5	Module 4: Symbolic Interactionism	Chapter 6 in RTZ pp. 151-167 Chapter 31 in PK
Week 5	Feb 8-12	Module 5: Ethnomethodology	Chapter 6 in RTZ pp. 168-173 Chapter 33 in PK Assignment 1 due on February 8
Week 6	Feb 15-19	Module 6: READING WEEK –No class	NO READINGS
Week 7	Fe. 22-26	Module 7: Critical Theories	Chapter 5 in RTZ, pp. 117-126 Chapter 47 in PK Assignment 2 will be posted on OWL
Week 8	Mar 1-5	Module 8: Globalization Theories	Chapter 11 in RTZ
Week 9	Mar 8-12	Module 9: Feminist Theories Part One	Chapter 8 in RTZ Assignment 2 due on March 8
Week 10	Mar 15-19	Module 10: Feminist Theories Part Two	Chapters 39 & 42 in PK
Week 11	Mar 22-	Module 11: Postmodernism: Bauman	Chapter 10 in RTZ pp. 291-307

	26		Chapter 63 in PK Assignment 3 will be posted on OWL
Week 12	Mar. 29-Apr. 2	Module 12: Postmodernism: Foucault	Chapter 70 in PK
Week 13	Ap. 5-9	Module 13: WRAP UP	NO READINGS Assignment 3 due on April 9

2020-21 BRESCIA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES AND REGULATIONS

1. POLICY REGARDING ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

The complete policy regarding [Accommodation for Illness - Undergraduate Students](http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12) can be found at http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12.

Students who have long-term or chronic medical conditions which may impede their ability to complete academic responsibilities should seek Academic Accommodation through Student Accessibility Services (http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?PolicyCategoryID=1&Command=showCategory&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_10).

Personal commitments (e.g., vacation flight bookings, work schedule) which conflict with a scheduled test, exam or course requirement are **not** grounds for academic accommodation.

Students who experience an illness or extenuating circumstance sufficiently severe to temporarily render them unable to meet academic requirements may submit a request for academic consideration through the following routes:

1. Submitting a **Self-Reported Absence** form provided that the conditions for submission are met;
2. For medical absences, submitting a **Student Medical Certificate (SMC)** signed by a licensed medical or mental health practitioner;
3. For non-medical absences, submitting **appropriate documentation** (e.g., obituary, police report, accident report, court order, etc.) to their Academic Advisor. Students are encouraged to contact their Academic Advisor to clarify what documentation is acceptable.

Requests for Academic Consideration Using the Self-Reported Absence Portal

Students who experience an unexpected illness or injury or an extenuating circumstance of 48 hours or less that is sufficiently severe to render them unable to meet academic requirements should self-declare using the online Self-Reported Absence portal. This option should be used in situations where the student expects to resume academic responsibilities within 48 hours. Note that the excused absence includes all courses and academic requirements within the up to 48 hours, it is not intended to provide an excused absence from a single course while students fulfill their academic responsibilities in other courses during that time.

The following conditions are in place for self-reporting of medical or extenuating circumstances:

1. Students will be allowed a **maximum of two self-reported absences** between September and April and one self-reported absence between May and August;

2. The duration of the absence will be for a maximum of 48 hours from the time the Self-Reported Absence form is completed through the online portal, or from 8:30 am the following morning if the form is submitted after 4:30 pm;
3. The excused absence will terminate prior to the end of the 48 hour period if the student undertakes significant academic responsibilities (writes a test, submits a paper) during that time;
4. Self-reported absences will **not** be allowed for scheduled final examinations; midterm examinations scheduled during the December examination period; or for final lab examinations scheduled during the final week of term;
5. Self-report absences may **not** be used for assessments worth more than 30% of any course;
6. Any absences in excess of 48 hours will require students to present a Student Medical Certificate (SMC), or appropriate documentation;
7. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours after the end of the period covered by the Self-Reported Absence form** to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence.

Request for Academic Consideration for a Medical Absence

When a student requests academic accommodation (e.g., extension of a deadline, a makeup exam) for work representing 10% or more of the student's overall grade in the course, it is the responsibility of the student to provide acceptable documentation to support a medical or compassionate claim. All such requests for academic accommodation **must** be made through an Academic Advisor and include supporting documentation.

Academic accommodation for illness will be granted only if the documentation indicates that the onset, duration and severity of the illness are such that the student could not reasonably be expected to complete their academic responsibilities. Minor ailments typically treated by over-the-counter medications will not normally be accommodated.

The following conditions apply for students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds:

1. Students must submit their Student Medical Certificate (SMC) along with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested no later than two business days after the date specified for resuming responsibilities. An SMC can be downloaded from http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf ;
2. In cases where there might be an extended absence or serious issue, students should submit their documentation promptly and consult their Academic Advisor for advice during their recovery period;
3. Whenever possible, students who require academic accommodation should provide notification and documentation in advance of due dates, scheduled tests or examinations, and other academic requirements;
4. Students **must** communicate with their instructors **no later than 24 hours** after the end of the period covered by the SMC to clarify how they will fulfil the academic expectations they may have missed during the absence;
5. Appropriate academic accommodation will be determined by the Dean's Office/Academic Advisor in consultation with the course instructor(s). Academic accommodation may include extension of deadlines, waiver of attendance requirements, arranging Special Exams (make-ups), re-weighting course requirements, or granting late withdrawal without academic penalty.

The [full policy on requesting accommodation due to illness](#) can be viewed at:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_12

2. ACADEMIC CONCERNS

If you feel that you have a medical or personal challenge that is interfering with your work, contact your instructor and Academic Advisor as soon as possible. Problems may then be documented and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time of occurrence rather than on a retroactive basis. Retroactive requests for academic accommodation on medical or compassionate grounds are not normally considered.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your work load is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you consider reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines; please refer to the [Registrar's website](#), <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/> or the list

of official sessional dates in the Academic Calendar (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm?SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=>).

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. *Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP eligibility and/or Entrance Scholarship eligibility.*

3. ABSENCES

Short Absences: If you miss a class due to a minor illness or other problems, check your course outline for information regarding attendance requirements and make sure you are not missing a test or assignment. Cover any readings and arrange to borrow notes from a classmate. Contact the course instructor if you have any questions.

Please note that for asynchronous online courses, attendance or participation requirements maybe different than for synchronous or in-person courses.

Extended Absences: If you have an extended absence, you should contact the course instructor and an Academic Advisor. Your course instructor and Academic Advisor can discuss ways for you to catch up on missed work, and arrange academic accommodations if appropriate and warranted.

It is important to note that the Academic Dean may refuse permission to write the final examination in a course if the student has failed to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year or for too frequent absence from the class or laboratory

(http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=5&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#SubHeading_68).

4. 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:

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_20.

Students are responsible for understanding the nature of and avoiding the occurrence of plagiarism and other academic offences. Note that such offences include plagiarism, cheating on an examination, submitting false or fraudulent assignments or credentials, impersonating a candidate, or submitting for credit in any course without the knowledge and approval of the instructor to whom it is submitted, any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought in another course in the University or elsewhere. Students are advised to consult the section on Scholastic Discipline for Undergraduate Students in the Academic Calendar.

If you are in doubt about whether what you are doing is inappropriate or not, consult your instructor, the Academic Dean's Office, or the Registrar. A claim that "you didn't know it was wrong" is not accepted as an excuse.

The penalties for a student guilty of a scholastic offence (including plagiarism) include refusal of a passing grade in the assignment, refusal of a passing grade in the course, suspension from the University, and expulsion from the University.

Plagiarism:

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.

All required papers may 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 The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

Computer-marked Tests/exams:

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. Software currently in use to score computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams performs a similarity review as part of standard exam analysis.

5. PROCEDURES FOR APPEALING ACADEMIC EVALUATIONS

All appeals of a grade must be directed first to the course instructor. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the course instructor, a written appeal is to be sent to the School Chair. If the response of the Chair is considered unsatisfactory to the student, they may then submit a written appeal to the Office of the Dean. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Dean, they may appeal to the Senate Review Board Academic (SRBA), if there are sufficient grounds for the appeal and if the matter falls within the jurisdiction of the SRBA. For information on academic appeals consult your Academic Advisor or see the Student Academic Appeals – Undergraduate in the Academic Calendar

http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/PolicyPages.cfm?Command=showCategory&PolicyCategoryID=1&SelectedCalendar=Live&ArchiveID=#Page_14.

Note that final course marks are not official until the Academic Dean has reviewed and signed the final grade report for the course. If course marks deviate from acceptable and appropriate standards, the Academic Dean may require grades to be adjusted to align them with accepted grading practices.

6. PREREQUISITES

Unless you have either the prerequisites for a course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in it, you will be removed from the 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 prerequisite(s).

7. SUPPORT

Support Services

The Brescia University College Registrar's website, with a link to Academic Advisors, is at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/academics/registrar-services/>. Students can access supports through Brescia's Student Life Centre (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/student-life/>) and Learning Skills Services at Western (<https://www.uwo.ca/sdc/learning/>)

Mental Health and Wellness

Students may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to your learning, such as increased anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling down or lost, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. Services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can obtain information about how to obtain help for yourself or others through **Mental Health & Wellness at Brescia** (<http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/mental-health-wellness/>) and **Health and Wellness at Western**, http://uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/index.html.

Sexual Violence

All members of the Brescia University College community have a right to work and study in an environment that is free from any form of sexual violence. Brescia University College recognizes that the prevention of, and response to, Sexual Violence is of particular importance in the university environment. Sexual Violence is strictly prohibited and unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Brescia is committed to preventing Sexual Violence and creating a safe space for anyone in the Brescia community who has experienced Sexual Violence.

If you or someone you know has experienced any form of Sexual Violence, you may access resources at <http://brescia.uwo.ca/life/sexual-violence/>.

Portions of this document were taken from the Academic Calendar, the Handbook of Academic and Scholarship Policy and the Academic Handbook of Senate Regulations. This document is a summary of relevant regulations and does not supersede the academic policies and regulations of the Senate of the University of Western Ontario.
