COURSE DESCRIPTION: In this course, you will learn about contemporary sociological theories that have contributed to the development of sociology as a discipline. Sociological theories are simply mechanisms to understand culture, history, and day-to-day interactions. Some theories are intuitive and easy to understand while others are convoluted and well… annoying. The goal of this class is to help you better understand the world, and not better understand theory. Focus on what makes sense to you but attempt to understand what you do not know. You will be graded on how much you grow in this class more than you will be graded on how much you know.

Course expectations:

Workload: As a general rule, in any 3-credit course, students are expected to spend 4 hours per week in the classroom and 6-10 additional hours per week doing coursework outside the classroom.

The time commitment may vary from week to week, depending on the amount of reading and other assigned work. Some weeks may require significantly fewer hours, some may require more. Course materials include many reminders regarding the work you must complete.

Active Participation: You must log on to the D2L course at least every three days to check for announcements and email.

- All coursework must be submitted in the D2L course.
- If you encounter problems with D2L, click on D2L Help at the top of the page. It’s a very good idea to print a copy of the contact info found there in case you are unable to access D2L at some point during the term.
- Problems with your computer are NOT an acceptable reason for deadline extensions. If you encounter computer problems that cannot be resolved in time, you should use another computer to complete the work prior to the deadlines. It’s a good idea to have an alternative computer identified BEFORE you run into problems.
Course policies:

_D2L:_ The instructor will post the syllabus on D2L. Students will submit journal entries via D2L. The instructor will also post comments on response papers and grades for all assignments on D2L.

_Email:_ The instructor regularly communicates with the class via PSU email so be sure that you are receiving my emails. It is your responsibility to check your email daily during the school week and respond in a timely manner. In emails to the instructor, please put the title of the course in the subject line and sign your emails using your first and last name. Use the email addresses on the first page of the syllabus. The instructor will generally respond to email within 24 hours. Emails sent after 5:00pm on Friday will generally be answered by 5:00pm on Monday.

_Academic honesty:_ You are expected to demonstrate complete academic honesty. Please refer to the Student Conduct Code for more detailed information on PSU policies. Cheating or plagiarism will result in failing the assignment and will be reported.

_Plagiarism:_ If you use a direct quote (i.e. someone else's words), you must include it in quotation marks and cite the source, including author(s) name(s), the date of publication, and the page number. If you summarize or paraphrase an idea from another person, you must cite the source, including author(s) name(s) and the date of publication. Failure to cite your sources, whether intentional or not, is plagiarism. Instances of plagiarism will result in failing the assignment and will be reported.

_Access and inclusion for students with disabilities:_ If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the DRC to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. The DRC is located in 116 Smith Memorial Student Union, 503-725-4150, drc@pdx.edu, http://www.pdx.edu/drc. If you already have accommodations, please contact me to make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter and to discuss your accommodations.

_Title IX reporting:_ As a member of the university community, I have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment, sexual violence or discrimination to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can find a list of those individuals at http://www.pdx.edu/sexual-assault/get-help or you may call a confidential IPV Advocate at 503-725-5672.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- All readings for this class can be found on D2L

**Graded Assignments:**
Critical reflections (50%): Throughout this course, you will be asked to keep a journal. Your journal entries will be due each Friday by 11:59 PM on D2L. In these journals, you are expected to record your critical reflections on course content. This will mostly consist of you reflecting on arguments made in readings, as well as responding to my feedback from previous entries (I get that you cannot respond to my feedback in the first entry). A strong journal entry will open with a brief review of all the readings from the week and reflect on at least two aspects of the readings. “Critical reflection” can mean a number of things: 1) Students may pose a series of questions that they thought of while readings. 2) Students may also connect specific aspects of the readings to their own life. 3) Finally, students may connect themes from different readings together. A strong critical reflection will use all three of these approaches or extensively employ one of these approaches in addition to responding to my feedback. I am not looking to check off boxes in order to give credit for this assignment, I am looking to have a conversation with you. There is no required page length for these reflections. You should write as much as you think is necessary. The grades for these journals are compounded, meaning each journal entry is worth more than the last. This is setup to so that your ideas build on each other. Please do not be afraid to get creative early on. One way to think about these journals is as a dialogue with me. Not every student has the same academic skillset. Thus, you will be graded on your own standards. Late journal entries will be docked points. The point deduction will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Example of Critical Reflection: While reading Max Weber you come across the concept of the “Iron cage” and are confused by it. A good critical reflection will write out the quote where this concept was discussed, state what it means, and ask any number of questions about the concept. You may ask, “How does the Iron Cage relate to the Protestant work ethic?” or “What is the significance of using a cage in the analogy”. You are not required to answer the questions you pose (I most likely will answer them for you) but it is important that you ask clear open-ended questions (a yes or no question is usually not deep enough for theory). Note, that if you take this approach you should also be including additional questions on different concepts or connecting additional concepts to aspects of your life or other readings. A great reflection would incorporate a quote that uses the Iron Cage, explore the concept online (through google or Wikipedia), share what they found online about the concept, and connect that concept to a different reading. For example, instead of asking how the Iron Cage is connected to the Protestant work ethic, a great reflection may explore how these concepts are connected based on their own experiences and ask an additional question that highlights how you think these concepts are linked. Perhaps you have a job that demonstrates the iron cage but not the Protestant work ethic and you ask if there are jobs that demonstrate both concepts. What separates these two approaches are the nuances to active learning. In the first example, you are asking questions about the readings, which allows you to be an active participant in learning. In the second approach, you are creating new
knowledge through your example and asking questions. Thus, you are actively building the basis for the knowledge you are learning.

**Media analyses (30%)**: You are required to write four media analyses throughout the course that corresponds to theories we examine in the class. Analyses should be no less than 500 words.

**Media analyses are due at the end of week 2, the end of week 4, the end of week 8, and the end of week 10 on Sundays at 11:59 PM**. In each week that a media analysis is due, you will be provided with a link to content that you can use for the assignment. Weeks 2, 4, and 6 include examples of media analyses conducted by me, which are intended to serve as a guide to media analyses using social theory. Week 8 also includes content from external sources that is meant to serve as a guide as well as content you can examine using social theory. You must use theories that correspond with the modules in which the assignment is due. For example, in week 4 you are required to use theories corresponding with Max Weber for your media analysis. You are **not required** to use the media content I provide in each week for your analysis (they are simply there to help you). If, for example, you do not want to examine the *Matrix* in week 2 and have a different movie, book, or artistic expression (I am quite flexible on what I consider media) that you want to examine using Marxists theories, you are welcome to use it. In order to access the films listed in the course schedule you will need a Youtube account. Note, when accessing the films via Youtube you will need to pay at least $3.99 to rent the film (this much cheaper than a book). My examples are available in the content section of D2L under media analysis examples. Your media analysis should consist of a brief review of the content (no more than 200 words), followed by an analysis of how this form of media corresponds to the theory we are examining.

**Essay (20%)**: You are required to complete one essay (minimum 1500 words) during the term. The details this assignment are spelled out on separate document (under contents) available through D2L. You are welcome to turn in the essay at any point during the term. Essays must be submitted on D2L. If you receive a grade below an 85% on your essay, you will be given the opportunity to revise your essay and resubmit your essay for a higher grade. If you decide to do this, you will be required to include additional one page paper outlining how you addressed each comment and concern raised in regards to your essay. Resubmitted essays should be emailed to the TA and me with the subject line *resubmitted essay SOC 301*. Note: resubmitting your essay will not automatically result in a higher grade. The maximum grade a resubmitted essay can receive is an 85%. The deadline to email resubmitted essays is Friday of finals week. In order to receive the revise and resubmit option, you must turn in your essay before the start of week 10.

**Course schedule**:

**Week 1: Karl Marx**

Karl Marx: Stanford Encyclopedia (D2L)

**Week 2: Karl Marx continued**
“The Robbery of Nature” (D2L)

“The Nature of the Left: On the Question of Human Nature” (D2L)

**Film analysis of the Matrix Due Sunday 11:59 PM** (Film can be accessed through this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEXv-rVWAu8&has_verified=1)

**Week 3: Max Weber**
Max Weber: Stanford Encyclopedia (D2L)

**Week 4: Weber**
Max Weber’s Theory of Rationalization (D2)
Max Weber’s Contribution to Sociology (D2L)

**Film analysis of the Contrapoints Incels Due Sunday 11:59 PM** (Film can be accessed through this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fD2briZ6fB0&t=1s)

**Week 5: Émile Durkheim**
Émile Durkheim Internet Encyclopedia of philosophy (D2L)

**Week 6: Émile Durkheim continued**
“The canonical limits of Durkheim's first classic” (D2L)

Marx, Weber, and Durkheim on Market Society (D2L)

**Week 7: W.E.B Dubois**
W.E.B. Dubois Stanford Encyclopedia (D2L)

**Week 8: W.E.B Dubois continued**
Dubois “The Souls of White Folk” (D2L)

Double Consciousness Stanford Encyclopedia (D2L)

**Film analysis of the Get Out Due Sunday 11:59 PM** (Film can be accessed through this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YfLSryEaAfw&has_verified=1)
Week 9: Feminists theories
Feminist Political Philosophy Stanford Encyclopedia (D2L)

Week 10: Gender inequality continued
Required Readings: “Hartman the Unhappy Marriage of Marxism and Feminism” (D2L)

Film Analysis of Romance Tropes Due Sunday 11:59 PM

Rom Cons: Problematic Movie Romance Lessons The Take
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohmWqno24cE

Abduction as Romance Pop Culture Detective
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t8x17w1POZ0

*** Disclaimer***

Syllabus is subject to change.