Foundations of Sociology

Soc. 301 Winter 2017

Monday 5:30-9:10 CH 382

Instructor: Julius McGee (cjulius@pdx.edu)

Office Hours Cramer 217O (hours Tuesday 1:00-3:00)

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Office hours by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this course you will learn about core theoretical perspectives in sociology. These include theories developed by Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, W.E.B. Dubois, and Charlotte Perkins Gilman. The goal of this course is to provide students with a general background of the core ideas that helped develop sociology as an academic discipline, and of the prevailing themes that exist in sociology today.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

- Kenneth Allan. *The Social Lens: An Invitation to Social and Sociological Theory*

**Graded Assignments:**

**In class writing response (30%):** At the beginning of each class you will be asked to write a short response essay pertaining about the week’s readings. The prompts are not meant to be challenging, but you will need to have done the reading before class to adequately address the question. Questions will usually require you to define one or two concepts from the readings and apply/analyze them. There is no right or wrong way to apply or analyze the concepts, so don’t be afraid to get creative. These responses are intended to help spark a fruitful discussion about a particular theory or theorist, and serve as notes for your essay assignments. Your two lowest writing response grades will be dropped at the end of the quarter. Thus if you are absent for one or two classes your writing response grades for those classes will be dropped and your grade will not suffer. As a result of this policy, there is no way to make up missed writing responses (Note: there will be no exceptions to this rule).

**Essays (70%):** You are required to complete two essays (minimum 1500 words) (each worth 35% of your grade) during the term, an “Analysis” essay, and an “Application” essay. The details of each assignment are spelled out on separate sheets posted to Canvas. It doesn’t matter which essay prompt you respond to first. The essays must deal with entirely different readings and topics. The first of the two essays is due Monday at the beginning of class in week 5. The second of the two essays will be due Monday at the beginning of class in week 10. You are welcome to turn the essays in as early as you like. Essays must be submitted both on Canvas and in hard copy in class. If you receive a grade below an 85% on your essay you will be given the opportunity to revise your essay and resubmit it 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. Note: resubmitting your essay will not automatically result in a higher grade. The maximum grade a resubmitted essay can receive is an 85%.

Calendar of Topics and Readings:

WEEK 1: January 9th
Discussion Topic: What is Social Theory
Required Readings: Allan Chapter 1

WEEK 2: January 16th
Discussion Topic: Marx
Required Readings: Allan chapter 3; Foster “How to Read Karl Marx” (D2L)

WEEK 3: January 23rd
Discussion Topic: Marx Continued
Required Readings: Excerpts from Capital (D2L); Piketty “Introduction to Capital in the Twenty-First Century” (D2L)

WEEK 4: January 30th
Discussion Topic: Max Weber
Required Readings: Allan Pages 83-103; Excerpts from The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism; Luzer, “The Protestant Work Ethic is Real” (D2L)

WEEK 5: FEBURARY 6th
Discussion Topic: Max Weber Cont.
Required Readings: Allan Pages 103-118; Ritzer “Introduction to McDonaldization” (D2L)

WEEK 6: February 13th
Discussion Topic: Emile Durkheim
Required Readings: Allan Pages 121-143
FIRST PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS.

WEEK 7: February 20
Discussion Topic: Emile Durkheim
Required Readings: Allan Pages 144-152; Hassan “What Motivates the Suicide Bombers?” (D2L)

WEEK 8: February 27
Discussion Topic: W E B Dubois
Required Readings: Allan Pages 198-108 Dubois The Souls of Black Folk (excerpt D2L)

WEEK 9: MARCH 6th
Discussion Topic: W E B Dubois cont.
Required Readings: Dubois “The Souls of White Folk” (D2L) *The Scholar Denied* (excerpts D2L)

**WEEK 10: MARCH 13th**  
Discussion Topic: Charlotte Perkins Gilman  
Required Readings: Allan Pages 187-198 “The Simple Truth” (D2L)  
SECOND PAPER DUE DURING FINAL EXAM TIME

*** Disclaimer***  
Syllabus is subject to change.