Instructor: Kathryn Caldera  
Office: 392F LARTS  
Email: kcaldera@umassd.edu  
Office Hours: 24/7 online or by appointment  
Sociology and Anthropology Department: 508/999-8404  
Course meets: January 21 to May 6, 2020  
Location: Course is 100% online

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

SOA 200 meets the core theory requirement for Sociology and Anthropology majors/minors and is generally taken during the students’ second year of study. To be eligible to take SOA 200 students must have successfully completed (with a C- or better) an introductory course in sociology or anthropology (SOA 101, 111, 113 or equivalent). The assumption guiding the framing of this course is that students have had at least one semester of basic social theory and are ready to advance to the next level.

In SOA 200 we will engage with the original writings of foundational social theorists Karl Marx, Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, W. E. B. DuBois, and Michel Foucault. We will situate these thinkers within their specific historical contexts, linking their thought and writings to events taking place in the political and social environments in which they lived and worked. These classical scholars represent different ways to think about society, culture, and power, all of which remain relevant today. Through their works we will learn different ways to think about the nature of capitalism and industrialization, race, class, status, and social inequality, personhood and subjectivity, and the dynamics of power and change. The writings of these important thinkers constitute the foundations of our western intellectual history and continue to inform our understandings of the contemporary social world today. The most compelling reason to read and study them is to develop our own capacities to think well.

Prerequisites: SOA 101, SOA 111 or equivalent

Course Credits: 3 units

Required texts and technology:
- Daily electronic access to myCourses.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to
- read and critically analyze foundational works in social science and communicate ideas in written form.
- convey a basic but comprehensive understanding of modern social theory.
- identify some of the persistent assumptions in western social theory regarding the individual’s relation to society, human nature, social change, history, modernity, rationality and power.
- consider the ways in which canonical texts continue to inform and inspire current western thought.
- use social theory to critically analyze the everyday events in the world around us as they affect our lives.

Time Considerations: The rule of thumb for college undergraduate courses is that students spend two hours outside of class for every hour in class, or about six hours per week. Some of the readings in this course are very challenging, however, which means you may need to devote more time than normal to some sections of this course. The upside is that since we do not spend three hours per week sitting in a classroom, you can devote that time to your reading and written summaries. In our online environment then, my expectation is that you will spend a minimum of nine hours per week on this course.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

This course is 100% online and so it is crucial that we maintain regular contact electronically. Here are my expectations for electronic communication over the fourteen weeks we will be working together:

- Our primary form of communication will take place in the weekly discussion forums. Each forum appears on the main topic page with a prompt (or prompts) designed to organize and focus our discussions. A link to the discussion forum can also be found under Student Resources. Discussions typically address issues drawn from the course materials but may include references to relevant films, articles and books, or events outside the course. Discussions take the place of in-class lectures and are therefore where a lot of teaching and learning takes place in this course, so please take them seriously. Moreover, they are graded. Be sure you read and understand the detailed instructions for how discussions in this course work. These instructions can be found in the Discussion Folder under Syllabus and Course Info.

- Our second method of communication is on myCourses messaging which can be accessed only by students enrolled in the course and by me. It is our internal communication system and saves a lot of time. If you have discovered a link that is not open when it should be, please use myCourses messaging so that I can fix the problem ASAP. Perhaps you are new to online courses and you’ve forgotten where to find the study guides. "Select All" and send your question to everyone in the course. One of your classmates may see your message and come to your assistance before I do. We revert back to umassd email when the semester ends.
For the duration of the semester, from Jan 21 to May 6, please use umassd email ONLY when you wish to discuss something that is not course related.

Please DO NOT send assignments or exams via email, unless instructed to do so by me. Appropriate submission procedures via myCourses are given with each assignment.

**METHODS OF INSTRUCTION AND EVALUATION**

Because this is a theory course, it is entirely oriented around important and well-known contributions by Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Du Bois and Foucault. We will spend the first few days of the week reading and the rest of the week discussing. (I offer several suggestions for how you might best approach these texts, below.) The discussion forums are where we come together to explain how we interpreted/understood the readings, hash out misunderstandings, ask questions, and teach each other what we’ve learned.

The Discussion Board is probably the most important component of the course as it provides an essential platform where I can do my job, which is to teach. You may make mistakes in your discussion posts but they will not count against you as long as you repost and show me that you have come to a new, better understanding of the material. Discussions are where you should ask questions, try out your ideas, offer thoughts and insights, and help your classmates. Misunderstandings and mistakes are *normal and essential* to the learning process, and will not detract from your course grade as long as you learn from them. But your silence (absence from discussion forums) *will* earn you a low grade.

*Participation on Discussion Boards*

Substantive and active participation includes:

- sharing one’s understanding of the assigned readings and offering insights that might go beyond the readings but were inspired by them.
- commenting on other participants’ interpretations of those readings.
- trying out an idea you have related to a theory under discussion and asking for feedback.
- asking the instructor and classmates questions about the assigned readings if you are completely mystified or merely confused.
- challenging a point that another participant made in a respectful manner; offering a different perspective on a concept or theoretical idea being discussed.
- relating how you have applied what you have read and learned from the course to your personal or professional life.
- sharing other resources such as Web links, books, etc. you have used and found helpful.

Please avoid:

- Simply repeating or agreeing with others’ comments.
- Yes or no responses.
- Uninformed opinions. The discussion board is not a forum for talking about how you “feel” about this or that. Simply expressing your opinions does not earn you a grade. Sociology and anthropology are scientific disciplines based on the works of the theorists we are reading. *Your posts must be informed by evidence drawn from those readings.*
Discussions are intended to help you think critically and carefully about the concepts and ideas raised in the texts, and should serve as a forum for you to try out your ideas, but your ideas must be informed by the readings or by critical reflection on the readings.

**Readings:** Some of these texts will challenge you and will require effort and persistence on your part. Set aside blocks of time and a place where you will be undisturbed and power through them – roughly two to three hours at a time spread across several days. Reading closely and taking notes is key to understanding these texts. A thorough understanding of Marx, for example, will take you far toward understanding the arguments made later by Weber, Du Bois, and Foucault. The course gets easier as the semester progresses.

I strongly suggest that you take notes as you read. The following general questions can help guide your note taking:

- What is the subject the author is discussing in this piece? Identify the passages that contain the central argument/s. What general argument is the author making?
- Identify key terms or concepts (see study guide). Be prepared to define them as best you can. Use the study guides and the lectures to help you!!!
- List concepts or identify passages you do not understand, no matter how many times you read them.
- How does this author relate to other theorists we have read so far?
- How can we relate the insights from this scholar to our society today?

Keep your notes handy so that in discussions you can amend and correct any mistakes you made. Your goal is to compile a useful collection of notes to draw upon throughout the course, as each set of readings builds on previous ones.

**Post-discussion summaries.** You will write ten short papers over the semester, choosing from a total of twelve sets of readings. (This means you skip two.) Summary response papers are short (2-4 pages double spaced) concise summaries of the main points of that week’s assigned readings. Your papers can use study guide questions to help you outline the author’s main points. Summary papers are to be submitted each week on myCourses. I will read them, add comments, grade them (on the basis of your effort), and return them to you. Weekly summary papers help you clarify your thoughts and prepare for the exam.

Like discussions, your mistakes or misunderstandings on the summary papers are not penalized providing what you write provides evidence that you actually did the reading and did your best to understand it. It takes time to build an understanding of social theory but the effort is worth it. The summary response papers are building blocks toward that understanding. Mistakes do count on the exam, however. For this reason, I encourage you to work systematically toward building an understanding of the theorists under consideration, week by week. The people we are reading devoted entire lifetimes to developing their explanations of our world. You will not absorb them in their totality after reading a particular passage once.

**Warning:** Because these authors are well-known, much can be found on the internet analyzing their works. I invite you to read these sources, but do not copy from them. Not only is that plagiarism (see Academic Integrity below), but you will never grasp these texts unless you work
through them yourself. Also, some internet sources are total BS. *Ask for help!!!* Theory may not be your strength (yet) and this will seem like a hard course, especially in the beginning. I will help you work through the tough spots.

**Study Guides.** There is a study guide with concepts and questions for each set of readings. The study guides are a heuristic device – you don’t turn them in for credit; rather they are designed to help you pull from each text important points, themes, and arguments. If you answer all the questions on the study guide, you can use those answers to frame your summary response paper of each text.

**Exam:** There is only one exam at the end of the semester. It will be made up of essay questions addressing each theorist and his work. There will be no surprises. All of the questions will be familiar to you if you’ve been engaged in the course throughout the semester. Everything in the course is building toward this exam: the discussions, your weekly summaries, your reading notes and the completed study guides all together will constitute a body of knowledge you can use to answer the short essay questions and ace the exam.

**Your semester grade** will be calculated from the scores you earn class discussions, on the ten weekly post-discussion summary papers, and the exam. The breakdown is as follows

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Grading scale

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**Policy on late or missing assignments:** Assignments submitted after the due date will be penalized by 10%. Missing assignments will receive a grade of 0.

**Incomplete Policy:** According to the university catalogue, an incomplete may be given only in exceptional circumstances at the instructor's discretion. The student must be passing at the time of the request or be sufficiently close to passing. If the work is not completed within one year of the recording of the incomplete grade, the grade will become an F(I). The incomplete policy for this course is that at least 70% of the course must be already completed and an exceptional circumstance (i.e. medical issue) must exist. If you feel you require an incomplete for an
exceptional reason, you need to email me, or the Dean of Student Affairs and state your reasons for the incomplete in writing. We will then decide on a course of action.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic Honesty: All UMass Dartmouth students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity and scholarly practice. The University does not tolerate academic dishonesty of any variety, whether as a result of a failure to understand required academic and scholarly procedure or as an act of intentional dishonesty. A student found responsible of academic dishonesty is subject to severe disciplinary action and may include dismissal from the University. The procedure for responding to incidents of academic dishonesty may be found in Section III of the Student Handbook.

Academic freedom is a fundamental right in any institution of higher learning. Honesty and integrity are necessary preconditions of this freedom. Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged and deemed appropriate by the instructor of the course. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the University community, and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses.

Maintenance of the standards of academic integrity and the successful administration of this policy depend on the mutual cooperation of faculty and students. Faculty cooperation is essential for successful application of the procedures defined by this Academic Integrity Policy. Faculty members promote academic integrity by making clear on their syllabi their expectations concerning homework assignments, collaborative student efforts, research papers, examinations, computer-based infractions, and the like. Efforts should be made to detect and to prevent cheating and plagiarism in all academic assignments. If faculty members have evidence of academic dishonesty, they are expected to report such evidence promptly.

Students must assume responsibility for maintaining honesty in all work submitted for credit and in any other work designated by the instructor of the course. Students are also expected to report incidents of academic dishonesty to the instructor or dean of the instructional unit. The intent of this policy is to make clear the standards of academic integrity at UMass Dartmouth. For additional information on violations, infractions, and consequences visit the UMass Dartmouth Student Academic Integrity Policy at the link below.

http://www.umassd.edu/studentaffairs/studenthandbookintroduction/studentconductpolicies/academicintegritypolicy/

SafeAssign, is a plagiarism detection service that evaluates the originality of students’ work by comparing their electronic documents to online sources and the SafeAssign databases. Students should be aware that suspect assignments (e.g., those without drafts, without works cited pages, or with large departures in style) will be submitted to SafeAssign by the instructor for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism. Submitted assignments will be included in the UMass Dartmouth dedicated databases of assignments. These databases of assignments will be used solely for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism during the grading process during this term and in the future. Students must provide an electronic copy of their assignment to the
instructor for submission to the service when plagiarism is suspected, in order to receive a grade on the assignment and to avoid possible sanctions.

**STUDENT RESOURCES**

**Center for Access and Success:** In accordance with university policy, if you have a documented disability or chronic health condition and require accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, please call the Center for Access & Success at 508.999.8711 to make an appointment. The Center is located on the first floor in Pine Dale Hall, 7136. Here you will meet with their staff to discuss your needs.

**Tutoring:** If you are having difficulty with this (or any) class please consult with your professor, or contact the Multiliteracy and Communications Center (MCC) in LARTS 219-221.

- At the MCC, students can receive feedback from experienced peer tutors on many types of assignments, including essays, presentations, public speaking, design-based projects, and any other work involving writing or communication.
- Online tutoring services will become available in mid-October.
- Appointments can be made online [https://umassd.mywconline.net](https://umassd.mywconline.net) or by visiting the MCC in LARTS 219.

**The Sociology and Anthropology Department** employs **SOA Writing Mentors** each semester who exist specially to assist our SOA students. They are located in the Reading and Writing Center, LARTS 010. Please feel free to drop in, or

- phone 508.910.6410 for an appointment or
- contact ARC Director, Amy Perelman [aparelman@umassd.edu](mailto:aparelman@umassd.edu).

**Technical Help:** If you are in need of technical assistance contact:

- The IT Service Desk, Claire T. Carney Library, lower level, 508.999.8884 (x8884) or via email. Hours:
  - Sunday, noon – 2pm
  - Monday through Thursday, 7:30am – 2:00am
  - Friday 7:30am – 11pm
  - Saturday, 9:30am – 1pm.

- Students living in the Residence Halls may also contact the Residential Technology (ResTech) Support Center: Visit ResTech in Elmwood Hall, lower level Call the ResTech Help Line at 508.999.8040 (x8040)

- UMass Dartmouth has several ways for you to get technical support for myCourses.
  - [ithelp.umassd.edu](http://ithelp.umassd.edu) or 508-999-8501 during normal business hours, (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm).
  - 24/7 technical assistance is available at [http://umd.echelp.org/](http://umd.echelp.org/)