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I consider this course one of the most important you will take during your sociology undergraduate career. Sociological theory serves as the ideational foundation for all sociological investigation past, present, future, and across all areas of substantive interest. As sociologists, theories provide us the necessary interpretive schema's by which to make sense of the empirical world.

Social theory encourages us to look beyond individual psychology and unique events to the predictable, broad patterns and regular occurrences of social life that influence individual destinies. It frames our understanding and conceptualization of human nature, human behavior, and human organization. Social theory enables us to see. It is an unusual form of vision.

What is society? What are its constituent parts and how are they related? How is the individual and society linked? How do societies retain their unity and continuity while undergoing change? What is the cause of social change? Why and how do vast social, political, and economic inequalities endure? In what ways do class, gender, and race intersect? How and where is culture created? To what ends? Such grand questions are the essence of both classical and contemporary sociological theory.

What is so exciting about these types of questions is that they are the very ones we need to grasp and interpret the complex and dynamic features of modern social life. Looking across the social landscape today - economic recession, the process of globalization, computers and mediated communication, spectacle and consumerism, climate disruption, and tremendous economic inequality - it seems most appropriate to pursue our discipline's most fundamental concerns. The many sociological concepts and theories that we will study this semester provide us powerful thinking tools to comprehend these most vital, contemporary concerns.

To the casual observer, theorizing may appear quite divorced from the business of gathering facts about the social world. For the working sociologist, it is theory that tells us what is relevant and problematic about groups of facts. It tells us why certain facts are seen as significant, why certain questions are asked, and why certain solutions are accepted.

The textbooks I have chosen for this course were written and designed to facilitate your understanding of a broad range of classical social thought. I think you will find these texts quite engaging. The authors have worked hard to make a number of complex ideas as understandable as possible. You must do a little work as well. You will be expected to have read and assimilated the required readings each week. The reading assignments should be done before the topic is discussed in class. There are two required texts for this course. They are available at the UMC Bookstore and the Bookstore on The Hill.

***Contemporary Sociological Theory and its Classical Roots: The Basics by G. Ritzer***  
***Enchanting a Disenchanted World: Revolutionizing the Means of Consumption by G. Ritzer***

**Exams and Grading:** There will be six examinations for this course. Each exam will account for 15% of your final grade (90% total). Each of these exams will require a strong grasp of key concepts and theoretical frameworks, and the capacity to display some of the higher levels of thinking: synthesis, analysis, criticism, and creative application.

Your attendance and participation is vital, and will account for 10% of your final grade. I favor frequent and informed contributions. If you are going to miss one of our exams, it is vital that you notify me prior to that class. In determining final grades I do use the "+, -" system

**Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide me notification from Disability Services and discuss specific needs with me, preferably during the first two weeks of class. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities (303-492-8671, Willard Hall, room 322.)

**Classroom Behavior Policy:** Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set re limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities.

**Student Honor Code:** All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and nonacademic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion).

**Policy on Discrimination and Harassment:** The University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships applies to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550.

**Sociology 3001**

**Classical Social Theory**

**Fall 2011**

**Schedule of Readings & Exams**

Aug. 23 Introduction to Sociological Theory & Course Overview

Aug. 25 *The Basics: Chapter 1 - Introduction*

Aug. 30 & Sept. 1 & 6 & 8 *The Basics: Chapter 2 Classical Theorists*

Sept. 13 **Exam 1**

Sept. 15 & 20 *The Basics: Chapter 3 - Classical Theorists II*

Sept. 22 *The Basics: Chapter 4: Contemporary Grand Theories I*

Sept. 27 **Exam 2**

Sept. 29 & Oct 4 *The Basics: Chapter 5 – Contemporary Grand Theories II*

Oct. 6 &, 11 *The Basics: Chapter 6 -Contemporary Theories of Everyday Life*

Oct. 13 **Exam 3**

Oct. 18 & 20 *The Basics: Chapter 7 – Contemporary Integrative Theories*

Oct. 25 & 27 *The Basics: Chapter 8 – Contemporary Feminist Theories*

Nov. 1 **Exam 4**

Nov. 3 & 8 *The Basics: Chapter 10– Globalization Theory*

Nov. 10 *The Basics: Chapter 9 – Postmodern Grand Theories*

Nov. 15 **Exam 5**

Nov. 17 *Enchanting A Disenchanted World. Chapter 1 & 2*

Nov. 29 *Enchanting A Disenchanted World. Chapter 3 & 4*

Dec. 1 *A Disenchanted / Enchanting Film*

Dec. 6 *Enchanting A Disenchanted World. Chapter 5 & 6*

Dec. 8 *Enchanting A Disenchanted World. Chapter 7 & 8*

**Dec 15 7:30am-10:00am (Final) Exam 6**