

STOCKHOLM UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology



Syllabus

Classical Sociological Theory

7.5 Credits

Code: SO1FU34

Finalized by: Institutionsstyrelsen, 2024-02-20

Valid from: Autumn semester 2024 (2024-09-02)

Level within study regulation: Third cycle

Course modules Classical sociological theory, 7.5 Credits

1. Entry requirements

No Translation Available

2. Learning outcomes

After accomplishing this course, participants are expected to:

In terms of knowledge and understanding:

- Have knowledge about the origin of sociology, including the social and intellectual context in which it emerged.
- Understand the meaning of central concepts and theories in classical sociological theory.
- Be able to identify important similarities and differences between classical sociological theories.
- Know how classical sociology has influenced modern sociology.

In terms of accomplishment and competence:

- Be able to account for, and to analyze, the content of central texts by classical sociologists in a clear, well put and well-argued manner.
- Be able to use relevant parts of classical sociological theory to analyse social phenomena.

In terms of values and evaluation:

- To be able to critically assess classical sociological theories in terms of their merits and limitations.

3. Content

The aim of this course is to give an overview of classical sociological theory and a deeper understanding of some theories and perspectives.

The main focus of the course is on the founding theorists of sociological theory, Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, but other classical sociologists, such as Georg Simmel and George Herbert Mead will also be discussed. In addition, a number of female pioneers in sociology, such as Harriet Martineau and Marianne Weber, will be presented. Courses in classical sociology usually treat the period that ends around 1920. In this course, however some attention is paid to theories

of a later date, such as the structural functionalism of Talcott Parsons and Robert K. Merton and critical theory of the Frankfurt School.

4. Mandatory exams

The seminars are compulsory. Students are expected to be active during the seminars. The last week of the course's teaching period is devoted to the students' work with course papers/home exams.

5. Forms of examination

Examination is in the form of two assignments. The course member is expected to write two papers of 6-8 pages each. Both papers must contain references to the texts. The first paper is about the prescribed literature (see below): it should include (1) a comparison between the most influential classical sociologist (Marx, Durkheim and Weber, in particular), (2) a discussion of their influence upon later classical sociologists (critical theory and structural functionalism, in particular) and a discussion of their relevance for contemporary sociology. The second paper consists of an extended book review of Durkheim's book *Suicide*. It must consist of both a summary of the content of the book and a critical reflection. To pass the course, the student must also attend and participate actively during the seminars. All course assignments must be submitted in connection with the end of the teaching period.

Grading is done according to a binary grading scale (pass/fail) based on the following criteria:

Passed = In order to receive this grade, the course participant must be able to clearly explain the content of the course literature, critically analyze and compare the content of concepts and theories, argue for their interpretations and conclusions, and critically evaluate how relevant parts of classical sociology can be used in empirical analyzes of social phenomena.

Plagiarism, cheating, and unauthorized collaboration or use of AI

Part of your responsibility as a student is to know the rules for examination. Detailed information can be found on Stockholm University's website here. Teachers are obliged to report suspected cheating and plagiarism to the Vice-Chancellor and the Disciplinary Board. Plagiarism and cheating is always a disciplinary matter and can lead to suspension. An example of plagiarism is copying a text verbatim or almost verbatim (including single sentences or lines of programming) and not indicating where it comes from. Always make sure that an acknowledgement and quotation marks are used when you submit text you did not write yourself. This even applies to texts you have written before (self-plagiarism). Cheating also includes, for example, the use of unauthorized aids, such as a mobile phone or generative AI, on a test. Having study groups together is stimulating and time-saving, but when it comes to examination assignments, you must be careful to work on your own (unless clearly stated otherwise), so as not to risk being counted as unauthorized collaboration. Generative AI, including ChatGPT, can be useful, for example in editing your own writing. However, the use of ChatGPT or similar tools in examination assignments without the examiner's explicit permission and without acknowledgement is considered cheating.

Interim

Students can request to be examined according to this syllabus up to three semesters after it has ceased to be valid. The request shall be made to the Director of Studies. This refers to all parts required to pass the course.

Limitations

Those who have passed the course SO7010 Classical Sociological Theory 7.5 credits or SO7011 Classical Sociological Theory 7.5 credits, or equivalent, cannot be accepted to SO1FU34.

6. Form of instruction

Teaching is given in the form of teacher-led seminars on the texts in the compulsory course literature.

Required reading

Current bibliography is available no later than two months before the start of the course.