# Sociology 610
## Fall Semester 2011

**Section 1: 2002 JFSB on T Th at 01:30 pm - 02:45 pm**

**Instructor:** Howard Bahr  
**Office:** 2021 JFSB  
**Office Hours:** T Th 12:00 - 1:00  
or by appointment  
**Office Phone:** 801-422-6275  
**Email:** hmbahr@byu.edu  

## Texts & Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required</th>
<th>Vendor</th>
<th>Price (new)</th>
<th>Price (used)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Weber: A Short Introduction  
By Gianfranco Poggi  
ISBN: 9780745634906 | BYU | $19.95 | $15.00 |
| The Essential Writings of Machiavelli (Modern Library Classics)  
By Niccolo Machiavelli  
ISBN: 9780812974232 | BYU | $17.95 | $13.50 |
| Durkheim (Founders of Modern Political and Social Thought)  
By Gianfranco Poggi  
ISBN: 9780198780878 | BYU | $54.00 | $40.50 |
| Nietzsche: A Re-examination  
By Irving M. Zeitlin  
ISBN: 9780745612911 | BYU | $36.95 | $27.75 |
| Karl Marx: His Life and Environment, Fourth Edition  
By Sir Isaiah Berlin  
ISBN: 9780195103267 | BYU | $19.95 | $15.00 |
| Georg Simmel on Individuality and Social Forms (Heritage of Sociology Series)  
By Georg Simmel  
ISBN: 9780226757766 | BYU | $23.00 | $17.25 |
| Alexis de Tocqueville, the First Social Scientist  
By Jon Elster  
ISBN: 9780521740074 | BYU | $23.99 | $18.00 |

## Optional
Description

Our objective is to know what good social science theory is and to be able to apply it in the interpretation of social events and in designing and conducting research. Those theorists who are our particular guides are often considered “classical,” both in the chronological sense that their work represents early or “pioneering” social science, and in the sense that their formulations continue to affect contemporary research and theorizing, and their worldviews continue to influence, and often dominate, the way we see things and define problems. They are classical in the sense that they are both pioneers and have continuing relevancy.

Apart from the assigned texts, all reading materials for this class are to be located by the students. For materials available in local libraries or on the Internet, we will not provide copies but rather rely on students to become adept at locating copies of whatever is necessary to their work in an efficient manner. Learning how to do research and find sources is one of the objectives of this course.

The work of the class consists of:
1) Learning about and assessing the utility of the work of eight theorists: Machiavelli, Comte, Marx, Tocqueville, Nietzsche, Durkheim, Weber, and Simmel. We may consider other theorists of the 19th and early 20th centuries briefly, and attempt to achieve some familiarity with the “world” of theory at that time, but these eight will be studied in depth.
2) During the first weeks of class, we will spend approximately two class periods on each theorist, with students taking turns leading the discussion on the various theorists.
3) In the second half of the course, students will choose to “specialize” in particular theorists, devoting several weeks to developing as comprehensive an assessment as possible of that theorist’s history, biography, and theoretical ideas, and the benefits and liabilities, breakthroughs and dead-ends, that have been based on his ideas. They will share their ongoing research by topic in the seminars, speaking as they have learned, or believe, that “their” theorist would speak about the topics at hand. That is, each specialist will work to represent the theoretical positions of his or her theorist as he is represented in the literature, on the various topics to be considered.
4) Periodically, at least every two weeks, students will be asked to summarize their recent intellectual explorations and progress. These oral reports will advise other seminar members of useful items discovered, materials possibly relevant to others’ work, and detail where students have they gone, what they have done, what they have discovered, etc.
5) On the basis of their intimate acquaintance with their selected theorists, their literature review, and their discussions with the group, students will write an original paper, typically ranging from 12-15 double-spaced pages, making a case for the utility of their theorist in a topic area he is not generally identified with, or clarifying some general misunderstanding about his theories or neglect of his relevance that has become clear in our discussions and the student’s reading. For a model of what this paper might eventually become, see the essays in Camic (1997). It may be after mid-semester before the student knows the theorist’s work, and the general literature and the work of other theorists as discussed in class, well enough to make a topic selection. The final selection of the paper topic is made in consultation with the teacher and, to a degree, the other seminar members. Ideally, it is an imaginative attempt to apply the theorist’s work to contemporary issues or to clarify the theorist’s relevance to topics beyond familiar applications.

Prerequisites

Normally students will have completed at least one undergraduate social theory course. In unusual circumstances this prerequisite may be met by recommended readings completed prior to the beginning of the course.

Classroom Procedures

In the sessions of the seminar, members take turns leading the discussion, reporting on their reading, pondering, and conclusions, especially with reference to their assigned theorist(s), but also on relevant matters of general scholarly/theoretical interest. Typically our discussions will be organized around four general issues that will concern us throughout the semester:
1) What are the theorist’s intellectual contributions? (What did he say and do?); 
2) In historical context, how important were these ideas? Why? (Analysis of impact); 
3) Today, how useful are these ideas? (Analysis of contemporary relevance and utility, based on actual usage); 
4) How might they be more useful, or how might we use them in creative ways? (Analysis of potential usage).

The identification of topics for discussion in the last few weeks of class is tentative, driven by the research underway and the scope of prior discussions. That is, in the final weeks of class, we may decide to continue an unfinished, fruitful topic, or substitute a new one, rather than slavishly follow the outline.

Students present their term papers, in near-final form, to the class in the final weeks. Criticisms and suggestions from the presentations should be taken into account in the final revision of the paper.

**Participation Policy**

Attendance and participation in class is critical to successful completion of the course. Students are to come having read the day’s assignments, plus having extended their knowledge of the topic area and their theorist as widely as possible. Successful attendance and participation means that the student was present, animated, and involved. Thoughtful and creative participation demonstrates mastery of the material and enriches everyone as they are exposed to each other’s research and thinking each week.

The class sessions will usually be organized in a discussion mode, beginning with issues raised in the assigned readings, or with theorists’ positions on the assigned topics. Questions or other issues for discussion may come from any of us. This means that we all are to come to class having read the materials assigned for that day, and especially prepared for the topics of the day with respect to our assigned theorists. It is expected that anyone present may, if requested, provide a summary of the assigned reading.

Much of the benefit of taking this class, rather than simply reading and watching life around you, is the interaction, the give-and-take that having prepared makes possible. Each student’s preparation enriches the group; the group is impoverished without all its members. The constructed-in-process learning environment of the seminar cannot be “made up.” Good scholarship involves going beyond expectations, reading beyond what is required, seeking and mastering relevant material for the joy of immersion in the topic.

**Grading Policies**

Course grade is based on the following:

1) Attendance and participation in seminar discussions; apparent preparation on assigned topics, and creative effort and imagination in applying the assigned readings and other relevant materials to the topics of the day (33%).
2) Term paper, typically 12-15 double-spaced pages (33%)
3) Final examination (33%)

Citations, references, and format of the term papers are to be according to the style accepted by the American Sociological Association. Papers will be graded with respect to content, quality and quantity of research, originality and creativity of presentation, apparent contribution, writing style, etc., as if they were articles submitted to professional journals for review.

**Learning Outcomes**

- **Sociological Theory**
  Sociology 610 is a core graduate course in the BYU Department of Sociology masters degree program. Its content supports the BYU mission statement and is designed to impact all four expected outcomes of the BYU experience, namely to be (1) spiritually strengthening, (2) intellectually enlarging, (3) character building, and (4) oriented to lifelong learning and service.
- The content of Sociology 610 supports the Sociology M.S. program purpose statement: “The program objective for the Sociology Master of Science degree is to produce graduates who have the following characteristics: . . .
  They have an in-depth understanding of the principal theories of sociology and how these theories may be used to elucidate key social issues facing the world today.”
- Expected learning outcomes from this course appear in the “Program Purpose” statement under the “Theoretical and Analytical Outcomes” section, and include the following: “Graduates will be able to evaluate orally and in writing selected, major theories in sociology, including their historical development, philosophical underpinnings,
key assumptions, strengths and weaknesses, and practical implications. “• Graduates will acquire an in-depth understanding of a single theory or theoretical framework, and be able to apply a single theory or theoretical framework to a research problem, accurately laying out the implications of that theory or framework for the topic of investigation and the design of the research, and, at the end of the research, discuss the implications of the research findings for the theory.”

Beginning Suggestions for Supplemental Reading


Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Th - Sep 1</td>
<td>Beginnings: Machiavelli and Loyola as modernist social scientists</td>
<td>Machiavelli, The Prince, Introduction, etc. &amp; Chapters 1-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>M - Sep 5</td>
<td>Labor Day</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Sep 6</td>
<td>Machiavelli, The Prince, and samplings from The Discourses</td>
<td>Machiavelli, The Prince, Chapters 14-26; The Discourses (Essential Writings 103-164, 215-224, 229-239)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th - Sep 8</td>
<td>Comte</td>
<td>Collins &amp; Makowsky Ch. 1; Coser Ch. 1 (pp. 3-41); Camic Ch. 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T - Sep 13</td>
<td>Tocqueville</td>
<td>Elster, Alexis De Tocqueville, Chapters 1-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th - Sep 15</td>
<td>Tocqueville</td>
<td>Elster, <em>Alexis De Tocqueville</em>, Chapters 5-7, 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Sep 20</td>
<td>Marx</td>
<td>Berlin, <em>Karl Marx</em>, Foreword, Chapters 1, 6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th - Sep 22</td>
<td>Marx</td>
<td>Berlin, <em>Karl Marx</em>, Chapters 6, 10, 11</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Sep 27</td>
<td>Nietzsche</td>
<td>Zeitlin, <em>Nietzsche: A Re-Examination</em>, Chapters 1-5 (pp. 1-85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th - Sep 29</td>
<td>Nietzsche</td>
<td>Zeitlin, <em>Nietzsche: A Re-Examination</em>, Chapters 6-12, Epilogue (pp. 86-173)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T - Oct 4</td>
<td>Durkheim</td>
<td>Poggi, <em>Durkheim</em>, Chapters 1-4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th - Oct 6</td>
<td>Durkheim</td>
<td>Poggi, <em>Durkheim</em>, Chapters 5-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Oct 18</td>
<td>Simmel</td>
<td>Simmel: <em>On Individuality and Social Forms</em>, Introduction (ix-lvi), and Chapters 1-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th - Oct 20</td>
<td>Simmel</td>
<td>Simmel: <em>On Individuality and Social Forms</em>, Chapters 5-6, 9-10, 23</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Oct 25</td>
<td>Consultations with our theorists: The nature of society: social structure and process</td>
<td>Survey and analysis of the appropriate literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th - Oct 27</td>
<td>Society: Issues of solidarity, morality, and legitimacy (what makes &quot;right&quot;?)</td>
<td>Survey and analysis of the appropriate literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Nov 1</td>
<td>Social stratification (functions, costs); hierarchy, power, inequality</td>
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<td>Th - Nov 3</td>
<td>Social change: Causes, patterns, directions; modernization, &quot;development&quot;</td>
<td>Survey and analysis of the appropriate literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Nov 8</td>
<td>Social change: Causes, patterns, directions; modernization, &quot;development&quot; (continued)</td>
<td>Survey and analysis of the appropriate literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th - Nov 10</td>
<td>Religion: origins, meanings, functions</td>
<td>Survey and analysis of the . . . . (etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Nov 15</td>
<td>Sociology of religion (concluded)</td>
<td>Survey and analysis of the . . . . (etc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th - Nov 17</td>
<td>Sociology of knowledge (nature, language, reality, knowing, meaning)</td>
<td>Survey and analysis of the appropriate literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>W - Nov 23</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>Th - Nov 24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F - Nov 25</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Break</td>
<td>No class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T - Nov 29</td>
<td>Student reports: Tocqueville, Marx</td>
<td>Term papers well underway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th - Dec 1</td>
<td>Student reports: Nietzsche, Durkheim</td>
<td>Term papers nearing completion</td>
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<tr>
<td>T - Dec 6</td>
<td>Student reports: Weber Simmel</td>
<td>Term papers in final production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Th - Dec 8</td>
<td>Student Reports: Machiavelli; Course summary, review</td>
<td><strong>Term Papers Due</strong></td>
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BYU Honor Code

In keeping with the principles of the BYU Honor Code, students are expected to be honest in all of their academic work. Academic honesty means, most fundamentally, that any work you present as your own must in fact be your own work and not that of another. Violations of this principle may result in a failing grade in the course and additional disciplinary action by the university. Students are also expected to adhere to the Dress and Grooming Standards. Adherence demonstrates respect for yourself and others and ensures an effective learning and working environment. It is the university's expectation, and my own expectation in class, that each student will abide by all Honor Code standards. Please call the Honor Code Office at 422-2847 if you have questions about those standards.

Preventing Sexual Discrimination and Harassment

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU's policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university, but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Students with Disabilities

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere that reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified, documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD Office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures by contacting the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-285 ASB.