

**Carleton University**  
**Department of Sociology & Anthropology**  
**SOCI 2005A**  
**Histories of Sociological Thought**  
**Fall 2025/Winter 2026**

Dr. Ariel Fuenzalida  
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Method of Delivery: In-person  
Class Schedule: Fridays 3:35 – 6:25 p.m.

Teaching Assistant: TBA

**COURSE DESCRIPTION & OBJECTIVES:**

This course introduces students to the foundational theoretical perspectives within sociology. The course will focus on key primary texts from a range of classical and contemporary social thinkers, and hence will be challenging. With lectures and tutorials to complement the texts, the first semester will overview the origins of modern social thought in the European Enlightenment. We will begin with an exploration of the 19th century, concentrating on the rise of industrial capitalism by focusing on Karl Marx & Frederick Engels' critique of social and economic relations, ideas concerning history, alienation, revolution, and the theory of commodity fetishism. We will then move on to Émile Durkheim, particularly his rules for sociological method, ideas concerning the division of labour, the forms of religious life and collective effervescence, and his theory of anomie. From there we will move on to Max Weber and his analysis of capitalism and religion, bureaucracy, rationalization, and disenchantment in modern social life. We will also touch upon the critical theories of the Frankfurt School (Adorno & Horkheimer), theories of imitation and diffusion (Tarde), theories of ideology critique (Althusser), and the discovery of the unconscious (Freud). In the second semester we will explore some of the most influential ideas and debates in political, cultural, and social theory of the 20th century, with a particular focus on the emergence of feminist social thought (Gilman, de Beauvoir, & Butler), theories of race (Du Bois), theories of language (de Saussure), semiotics (Barthes), the society of the spectacle (Debord) and we will end by exploring theories of power (Foucault, Deleuze). Throughout the course we will explore the relationship of social theory to the questions and problems of modern social existence, such as the persistence of social, racial and gender inequality, the role of religion in modernity, the bureaucratic administration of daily life, ideology and relations of power, and the nature and possibilities of social change, among others.

**PREREQUISITES:**

SOCI 1001 and SOCI 1002, or SOCI 1003 [1.0], or ANTH 1001, or ANTH 1002.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

1. Enhance academic reading and writing skills, as well as skills in expressing ideas in other mediums, such as oral presentations.
2. Develop the ability to critically engage with a range of theoretical concepts, such as ideology, hegemony, double consciousness, culture industry, discourse, among many others.
3. Learn to connect and analyze seemingly disparate social phenomena using the theoretical tools introduced in class.

## **METHOD OF DELIVERY**

In this course, you are expected to learn from your texts, your teacher and from one another. This requires striving towards understanding each other but it does not imply striving towards finding agreement. Our class will be racially, religiously, politically, culturally, generationally, and economically diverse. We will be of different gender identifications and sexual orientations and our lived experiences and reactions to the course material will reflect this diversity. Sharing our perspectives and interpretations on the course material will enhance everyone's learning experience and you are encouraged to openly express any disagreements with the authors you will read, with your fellow classmates, or with the Professor in the different participation fora that are available for this course. However, you are expected to conduct yourself in such a way that shows the utmost respect to others who may – or may not – share your views. Derogatory comments and hateful behavior towards others (and their views) will not be tolerated.

## **COURSE POLICIES & EXPECTATIONS**

You are expected to come to class regularly and prepared. **This means having read the required readings** for the week **before** class begins. This point cannot be stressed enough: **you must read the required material!** If you do not read the required texts, you will not do well in the course. You are also expected to regularly attend classes, work in groups, and **actively participate and contribute to discussions**. You are also expected to complete all assignments on time.

In this course the use of artificial intelligence (AI) programs, such as ChatGPT, for the purposes of handing in course work that is to be graded is strictly forbidden. This means that you should not be using AI programs to generate answers, essays, presentations, or any element of the course that will be graded by the professor or the teaching assistants. Any work that is found to be generated by AI will receive a zero.

## **Acknowledgement of Territory**

We pay respect to the Algonquin people, who are the traditional guardians of this land. We acknowledge their long-standing relationship with this territory, which remains unceded. We pay respect to all Indigenous peoples in this region, from all nations across Canada, who call Ottawa home. We acknowledge the traditional knowledge keepers, both young and old. And we honour their courageous leaders: past, present, and future.

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols.

## **REQUIRED READINGS:**

There is no required textbook for this class. All required readings will be made available through links found in this course outline.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS & METHODS OF EVALUATION:**

Student assessment will have five components:

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|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Tutorial Participation (20%) | <b>Weekly</b>                                 |
| 2. Two Quizzes (20%)            | <b>November 21 &amp; March 20</b>             |
| 3. Short Essay (20%)            | <b>October 31</b>                             |
| 4. Group Presentation (15%)     | <b>February 27</b>                            |
| 5. Art Project/Essay (25%)      | <b>March 27 (Art project)/April 8 (Essay)</b> |

***Tutorial Participation:*** As part of the participation grade, students will be required to **actively engage** in small groups during tutorials. This means that you must attend, participate, and speak during the group discussion component of the course. The participation mark is worth a total of 20% of the final grade (10% per semester) and will be evaluated on the basis of **actively contributing to group discussions/activities in the tutorial**.

***Quizzes:*** There will be 2 short quizzes totaling 20% of the overall grade (**each quiz is worth 10%**). The quizzes will consist of multiple-choice questions and will be based on the main material covered in class and readings. Detailed explanations of the quiz format will be given in class. **Quizzes will be made available through Brightspace**, and you can complete them on the following days: **Quiz 1 is scheduled for November 21 and Quiz 2 is scheduled for March 20**.

***Short Essay:*** There will be **one short essay** (7 to 8 double-spaced pages, excluding title page and bibliography) worth 20% of the final grade. The short essay will be based on the theories and concepts we have covered in the first semester. Specific details for the assignment will be given in class and posted on Brightspace. **To provide some flexibility for students, there will be a window to hand in your short paper. The window to submit papers begins November 7 and closes on November 28.** To be fair to those students who submit assignments on time, **late papers will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day**. It is expected that your assignments will be readable at a second-year level and hence **you will be penalized 1% for each spelling and grammar mistake** (up to a maximum of 10%).

***Group Presentation:*** In the second semester there is one group presentation worth 15% of the overall grade. **Your attendance is required on February 13, 2025.** We will dedicate this class to outlining the specific details for the group project (guidelines will also be posted on Brightspace). During our meeting you will have the time to form groups, begin the assignment, and allocate different sections of the project to each member of the group who will in turn be

responsible for presenting that specific section of the project. If you cannot be present for this class, then you will need to make your own arrangements to be part of a group or you will have to present the project on your own. **Group presentations will take place in class on February 27, 2025.**

***Final essay/Art project:*** You have the option of either writing an essay **or** creating a conceptual art project. The paper/project is worth 25% of the final grade. The **final paper** is a research essay (10-12 double-spaced pages, excluding title page and bibliography) on a topic of your choosing related to the course material. The **conceptual art project** will consist of an “artistic” creation, in any medium of your choosing, and must be accompanied by a short (3-4 double-spaced pages) explanatory paper that describes your conceptual artwork and links it to some theoretical or conceptual dimension relating to the course. On the last day of class, we will turn the classroom into a gallery where you will exhibit your art project and give a short five-minute talk to the class explaining your piece. Your mark will be derived from a combination of your art project, short paper, and presentation. **All conceptual art projects must be approved by the professor no later than March 20.** Art projects will be presented in class on **March 27**. Final essays and conceptual art project papers are due on **April 8**. Detailed guidelines for the paper/art project will be posted on Brightspace and discussed in class. It is expected that your essay will be readable at a second-year level and hence **you will be penalized 1% for each spelling and grammar mistake** (up to a maximum of 10%). Late papers will be penalized at a rate of 3% per day. Submission of papers will be done through the drop box set up on Brightspace. If you encounter extenuating circumstances that temporarily hinder your capacity to submit the final assignment by this date you may request academic consideration. See the following: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-consideration-coursework/>