Convener: Dr. Anaheed Al-Hardan
Email: aa238@aub.edu.lb
Office: Nicely 201C
Office Hours: Wednesdays 9:00am-12:00pm (by appointment only)

Course Description

This course will introduce students to a cross section of the main theorists and schools of modern Western social theory and social theory emanating from the Global South with relevance to the discipline of sociology. Students will read classical Western sociological theorists, like Marx, Weber and Durkheim, as well as critical post-World War II theory such as that of the Frankfurt School and poststructuralism. This theory will be assessed from the vantage point of the Arab world and the global south more broadly, bringing it into conversation with thinkers and themes relevant to the colonial and postcolonial world. The latter includes the Global South in the Global North, Arab and Asian sociology, and feminist, decolonial, postcolonial critical race and Indigenous theory.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Critically identify the main classical sociological theorists and schools of thought in the Western social theory tradition
- Critically identify a cross section of social theorists and theories emanating from the Global South, including the Global South in the Global North
- Critically assess what constitutes disciplinary origins and theory in sociology viz. colonialism and the politics of knowledge production
Class Structure

The first half of the class is based on a lecture that will cover the major themes and issues of the readings for the week in question. The second half of the class is based on a detailed discussion of the readings. Students must come to the class having at least read the set readings for the week in question and participate in the class discussion in a way that demonstrates a close reading of the set texts. Students’ attendance and participation constitutes 10% of their overall grade.

Course Material

There is no set text for the course. All course materials have been digitized and are available on Moodle. Weekly reading materials are divided into set and recommended readings. It is recommended that students go beyond the set readings in order to gain a more thorough understanding of the themes of the week in question, and in order to be able to draw on a wide variety of sources for their course assignments.

Visiting Scholar (Week 11)

Week 11 will consist of guest lectures by Dr. Dana Olwan of the Doha Institute for Graduate Studies. Dr. Olwan will be visiting AUB as part of an AUB-Doha course exchange program, and she will lecture on decolonial feminist sociology. The readings for her guest lectures will be made available to students in advance.

Course Assignments

There are no exams for this course. Students will be assessed through four course assignments. With the exceptions of the presentation, all course assignments are due in hardcopy at the beginning of class. You also have to turn in the course assignments, including presentation notes or power point, using Turnitin on Moodle before handing in the hard copy for plagiarism screening. A late assignment in hard copy or through Turnit will lose 5% of the mark for every day that it is late. Submission deadlines are non-negotiable, and it is the students’ responsibility to manage their time in a way that ensures the submission of the course assignments in a timely manner. Students will
automatically fail their assignments and receive 0% if their assignments are handed in more than a week late.

Students who fail to turn in their assignments without a valid reason (medical note from an AUB doctor for major illness, family bereavement and other extraordinary circumstances supported with evidence) will fail the course. Incomplete grades for students who fail to turn in their assignments will only be given at the discretion of the course convenor and for what constitutes valid reasons as listed above. Information on incomplete grades and other grading policies are governed by university and departmental rules and regulations, and it is students’ responsibility to be informed about them.

Please visit and schedule an appointment with the AUB Writing Center for assistance with academic writing and citation: http://www.aub.edu.lb/units/writing_center/Pages/index.aspx

Assignment 1: 20min structured class presentation on set reading for class of student’s choosing. Class presentations will be allocated during week 2.

Assignment 2: Book Review of 1,500 words is due on Thursday of week 6. Book to be reviewed is Karl Marx and Friedrich Engel’s The Communist Manifesto (London: Pluto Press, 2008). The word limit for juniors and seniors is 2,000 words.

The book is on course reserve in the library and is available in e-form through the university library. It is also available for purchase in AUB’s bookstore.

When writing your book review, begin by setting out the main thesis of the book, provide a summary of the book, set out its strength and weaknesses, and conclude by stating your position on the book in relation to its main arguments, content, strengths and weaknesses. It is recommended that you read academic book reviews in online journals to familiarize yourself with a book review format before writing the book review. It is the students’ responsibility to familiarize themselves with writing a book review. Should students still have concerns about writing book reviews after reading
book reviews online or visiting the AUB Writing Center, set an appointment with your professor during office hours for consultation.

Assignment 3: 1,500 word essay is due on Thursday of week 9. A list of essay questions will be handed out in week 3. Essays will be marked on structure (clear introduction, body and conclusion), strength of arguments (demonstrating wide reading and in-depth understanding of material), definitions (definition of terms, concepts and theories), sources (wikipedia is not a legitimate academic source), MLA citation system, clear language and adhering to the word count (grades will be reduced for essays that do not stick to the word limit). It is the students’ responsibility to familiarize themselves with writing a research essay and with using the MLA citation system. Should students still have concerns about research essays after reading research essays online or visiting the AUB Writing Center, set an appointment with your professor during office hours for consultation. The word limit for juniors and seniors is 2,000 words.

Assignment 4: 1,500 word visiting scholar report on Dr. Dana Olwan’s guest lectures is due on the last day of class.

Please familiarize yourself with writing a report and reviews of academic events through online academic blogs before writing the report (e.g. Critical Legal Thinking, Jadaliyya, etc). When writing the report, begin by presenting Dr. Olwan’s main ideas, as discussed in class. In the body, provide a summary of the main ideas, themes and topics presented in her guest lectures. Conclude by assessing the strengths/weaknesses of what you have learnt from her lectures. It is the students’ responsibility to familiarize themselves with writing an academic event report. Should students still have concerns about writing an academic event report after reading academic events online or visiting the AUB Writing Center, set an appointment with your professor during office hours for consultation.

**Attendance and Participation**

Attendance and participation in class discussions count toward 10% of the students’ final grades and an attendance record will be taken. An absence results in the
reduction of 1.5% from the student’s attendance and participation grade and students who miss more than a fifth of their classes (a total of six meetings) will be withdrawn from the course without notice. It is the students’ responsibility to make up for what they miss, including what they miss on official Lebanese holidays.

Students are also expected to read the set texts and participate in the class discussion. A failure to read the set texts or to participate in class discussions in a way that demonstrates a close reading of the set text will result in the reduction of students’ attendance and participation grade.

**Plagiarism**

Whenever students draw on another’s work, they must specify what they borrowed, whether facts, opinions, statements or quotations, and where they borrowed it from. Using another person’s documented ideas or expressions in one’s writing without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offence in AUB. Students who are caught plagiarizing will receive a 0% for the assignment in question and face serious disciplinary action. You can learn more about what constitutes plagiarism through AUB's Plagiarism Tutorial and Test page: https://www.aub.edu.lb/it/acps/services/plagiarism/plagiarism_test/Pages/home.aspx

**Students with Learning Disabilities**

AUB strives to make learning experiences as accessible as possible. If students anticipate or experience academic barriers due to a disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please inform the course convener immediately so that options can be privately discussed. In order to help establish reasonable accommodations and facilitate a smooth accommodation process, students are encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Office: accessibility@aub.edu.lb; +961-1-350000, x3246; West Hall, 314.

**Grading System**

90-100 (Outstanding)
85-89 (Excellent)
80-84 (Very Good)
75-79 (Good)
70-74 (Fair)
60-69 (Weak)
Below 60 (Fail)

Assessment Breakdown

Attendance and Participation: 10%
Presentation: 15%
Book Review: 25%
Seminar Report: 25%
Essay: 25%

Weekly Readings

Week 1: What is sociology, what is theory?

Tuesday

General introduction

Thursday


Week 2: What is sociology (cont’d) & Ibn Khaldun

Tuesday

Thursday


Week 3: Karl Marx

Tuesday


Thursday

Karl Marx (1845), “Theses on Feuerbach”: https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/theses/

Week 4: Max Weber

Tuesday


Thursday

Week 5: W.E.B. DuBois & The Atlanta School

Tuesday


Thursday


Week 6: Emile Durkheim

Tuesday


Thursdays

Week 6: The Frankfurt School – Book Review due

Tuesday


Thursday


Week 7: Poststructuralism

Tuesday

Screening of film on Michel Foucault.

Thursday

Michel Foucault. “Of Other Spaces,” in Diacritics 16 (Spring 1986), 22-27

Week 8: Postcolonial Theory

Tuesday


Thursday

Encarnacion Gutierrez Rodrigues. “Decolonizing Postcolonial Rhetoric,” in
Decolonizing European Sociology: Transdisciplinary Approaches by Encarnacion Gutierrez Rodrigues, Manuela Boatca and Sergio Costa (eds) (Surrey: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 49-67

**Week 9: Decolonial Theory – Essay due**

**Tuesday**


**Thursday**


**Week 10: Indigenous Theory**

**Tuesday**


**Thursday**

Week 11: Decolonial Feminisms (Visiting Scholar)

Tuesday @ 11am in Niceley 204


Thursday @ 11am in Niceley 204


Week 12: Critical Race Theory


Tuesday


Thursday

Week 13: Arab & Iranian Sociology

Tuesday


Thursday


Week 14: Asian Sociology + Report on Visiting Scholar due

Tuesday


Thursday