

**Sociology 2LL3**  
**INTRODUCTION TO CONTEMPORARY SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY**

Fall, 2017

Day and Time of Class:

Mon., 2:30 pm to 3:20 pm

Wed., 2:30 pm to 3:20 pm

Class Location: ABB/102

Instructor: Dr. D. Young

Office (**see note below**): KTH/629, Ext. 23615

Office Hours (**see note below**):

Mon., 12:30 pm to 1:30 pm (Term 1)

Tues., 5:30 pm to 6:30 pm (Term 1)

Email (**see note below**): youngd@mcmaster.ca

**Course Outline**

**Contact Information**

My name is Dr. Young. My office location and hours are indicated above. Feel free to drop by or call during these times. **Please Note:** I would appreciate it if you would make every effort to see me during scheduled office hours. However, if you are unable to speak with me during my office hours, you may ask me to arrange an appointment for you. My office hours will *not* be in effect during scheduled university closures (e.g., holidays), scheduled university breaks (e.g., mid-term recess weeks), or the term-end examination periods.

My office telephone number is indicated above. **Please Note:** Leave your name, a telephone number (spoken slowly), and a very brief message.

My email address is indicated above. **Please Note:** Before sending an email message, please check to see if your question has already been answered in this course outline. Please also ensure that your inquiry deals with something short and simple; complicated matters require discussion in person (i.e., during office hours or by appointment). Since email to professors and TAs is an aspect of business communication, and since it is important for you to acquire business communication skills, please follow these guidelines with regard to sending a message:

- Please ensure that your message is sent from your McMaster email account (*not* from any other email account or from Avenue to Learn mail). This is official policy adopted by the Faculty of Social Sciences, and university personnel are *not* required to reply to email originating from a non-McMaster email address.
- Please ensure that you use “Sociology 2LL3” as a subject line.
- Please ensure that you include an appropriate greeting following by my title and name (“Dear Dr. Young”, “Hello Dr. Young”, or “Hi Dr. Young”). When writing to TAs, please use a similar greeting followed by their name. Please understand that “Hey” is *not* an appropriate greeting in business communication.
- Please write your email message in a professional manner (e.g., being polite and using full sentences).
- Please sign off in a professional manner (e.g., writing “Thank you”, “Thanks”, “Regards”, or “Sincerely” followed by your full name).

Please do *not* expect an immediate response. Professors and TAs are busy people, and it may take us a few days to reply. Furthermore, email will *only* be read and answered during regular working hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm).

## **Course Description**

This course is one of two courses that replace Sociology 2S06 (Introduction to Sociological Theory). Organizationally, the two courses cover different phases of an historical timeframe. Sociology 2KK3 (Introduction to Classical Sociological Theory) addresses early developments in the history of sociological theory, and Sociology 2LL3 (Introduction to Contemporary Sociological Theory) addresses later historical developments. Because Sociology 2KK3 provides the foundation for Sociology 2LL3, it may be difficult to understand aspects of the second course if you have not yet completed the first course. For this reason, you are strongly encouraged to finish 2KK3 *before* taking 2LL3. Unless you have exceptional timetabling difficulties, you should avoid taking the two courses out of sequence or at the same time.

Sociology 2LL3 addresses historical developments in sociological theory from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century up to the present. This is the basic timeframe for contemporary sociological theory. We will begin the course with an overview of contemporary theoretical ideas in sociology and get an understanding of how these ideas relate to the work of the classical theorists. We will then analyse several theoretical perspectives as well as the ideas of some particular theorists who have been associated with these perspectives. The perspectives to be examined include symbolic interactionist theory, structural functionalist theory, conflict theory, and neo-Marxian theory. We will conclude the course by considering how some perspectives and theorists have tried to challenge the failure of many sociological approaches to address issues associated with women, minority groups, and Indigenous peoples. More specifically, we will discuss contemporary feminist theory and sociological theory that has tackled “race” or colonialism.

## **Course Learning Objectives**

This course has several objectives. By the end of the course, you will:

- understand major concepts and ideas presented by key contemporary theorists in the period from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century up to the early 21<sup>st</sup> century
- grasp how social, political, economic, intellectual, and biographical factors can influence theoretical ideas
- comprehend how contemporary theoretical ideas in sociology build on classical theoretical ideas and can help us to understand events or circumstances in the 21<sup>st</sup> century

All of the objectives noted above are associated with the *topic* and *content* of the course. Additional objectives are connected to several of McMaster’s Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations (which can be found at: <http://ccl.mcmaster.ca/COU/degree/undergraduate.html>). In particular, you will have the opportunity to enhance the depth and breadth of your knowledge as you learn about various theoretical ideas in sociology. Through a term paper, you will have the opportunity to apply knowledge acquired in the course. Along with verbal participation in tutorials, the written work in the course will help to enhance your communication skills. Finally, you will be encouraged to deepen your autonomy and professional capacity by developing qualities and transferable skills necessary for further study and employment (e.g., business communication skills, reliability, maturity, time management skills, and behaviour consistent with academic integrity and social responsibility).

## **Course Format**

There will be two 50-minute lectures each week. The two 50-minute lecture periods have been scheduled for Mondays and Wednesdays at the times noted above. There will also be one 50-minute tutorial each week. Tutorials have been scheduled for various days and times. You *must* go to the tutorial you are enrolled in. See the section below on “Tutorial Participation” for more information.

**Please Note (Hearing Problem):** Please keep in mind that I am partially deaf. This makes it difficult for me to hear comments or questions during lectures, especially if there are many students in a course or if a classroom has poor acoustics. Therefore, I would very much appreciate your co-operation in two ways:

1. If you are inclined to ask questions, please sit near the front of the classroom. If you would prefer to sit at the back, then perhaps you could save your questions for after class or during my office hours. I would be happy to address your questions then. Depending on the size and acoustics of the classroom, I may not be able to hear questions from the back of the room.
2. When students are asking questions, or when any class discussions are taking place, please listen and refrain from making any noise. Competition from other sounds (talking, sorting notes, adjusting chairs, etc.) makes it extremely difficult for me to hear what someone is saying to me.

## **Avenue to Learn**

In this course, we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for McMaster email accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure, please discuss this with the course instructor.

Avenue to Learn will be used in a limited way during this course. Avenue will be used to post major announcements (and it is your responsibility to check for new announcements regularly). Avenue will also be used to distribute grades for scanned results of in-class tests (but *not* grades for written work or grades for any aspect of a final examination).

Please do *not* contact me through Avenue to Learn. There are two reasons for this. First, I rarely go on Avenue, and I prefer to use my McMaster email account for correspondence. Second, it is impossible to reply to a message sent from Avenue to a McMaster email account. Consequently, if you expect your message to be read and answered, please send the message from your McMaster email account to my McMaster email account.

Please be aware that material posted on Avenue to Learn is protected by copyright. You are permitted to print or download one copy of material that I have written (e.g., course handouts, lecture slides, or tip sheets) so that you can privately read or study this material. However, any further copying or any distribution of these materials (e.g., to websites or to students not enrolled

in the course) is strictly prohibited. If some academic writing has been posted on Avenue (e.g., an excerpt from a book), please note that this has been done under provisions in Canada's Copyright Act. Please pay close attention to the copyright statement provided by the McMaster University Library in the cover sheet for each document.

### **Course Requirements**

The course requirements, and the weights attached to them in the calculation of your final grade, are as follows:

Mid-Term Test	25%	Scheduled for Oct. 23
Term Paper	30%	Due on Nov. 13
Tutorial Participation	10%	Grade determined in December after the end of classes
Final Examination	35%	Scheduled by the Registrar (Dec. 8 to Dec. 21)

You *must* complete *all* of these course requirements. More information about the course requirements can be found in the sections below.

### **Mid-Term Test and Final Examination**

The course is divided into six topics (which are set out in the "Course Schedule" below). Ideally, the mid-term test will cover the first three topics, and the final examination will cover the last three topics. However, if there is not enough time to finish the third topic before the mid-term test, part or all of that topic will be transferred to the final examination. The final examination is *not* cumulative, so you will *not* be re-tested on material. Only topics *not* covered on the mid-term test will appear on the final examination.

The mid-term test will be 50 minutes long. It will include multiple choice questions as well as true/false questions (but *not* short-answer questions or essay questions). Most of the questions will be multiple choice, but some will be true/false. While the majority of the questions will be based on the lectures, a minority of the questions will be based on the required readings from the *current* edition of the assigned textbook. Questions based on the required readings will cover important points that you should have picked up from doing the readings (e.g., definitions of concepts or explanations of key issues or ideas), and these points could come from any part of an assigned chapter. Questions based on the lectures will go into greater detail (e.g., definitions of concepts, examples of concepts, details of particular theories or studies, biographies of theorists, and contributions of theorists). I will *not* ask questions about specific dates (e.g., the year in which a theorist published a book), but I might ask questions about general timeframes (e.g., which theory came before another one or which theory was dominant in a particular decade). Consequently, you should be familiar with the sequence and timing of key historical events associated with the development of sociological theory.

The final examination will be two hours long. It will include multiple choice questions, true/false questions, and *possibly* essay questions. For information about the nature of the multiple choice and true/false questions, please read the paragraph above. In addition to answering multiple choice and true/false questions, you *may* be expected to answer one essay

question from a choice between two questions. In each of these essay questions, I will identify a specific section of the lecture on a topic and ask you to demonstrate your comprehension of the material covered in that particular section. You will need to show detailed knowledge of the definitions, examples, descriptions, and analyses presented in that part of the lecture.

Please be aware that all essay questions and all *lecture-based* multiple choice or true/false questions will be derived from the *current* lecture material. This means that you will need the definitions, examples, descriptions, and analyses of theoretical issues presented in the version of the course that you are taking. If you use out-dated lecture notes from an earlier version of the course, you may not have the material you need to be successful.

Before each test or examination, I will post an announcement on Avenue to Learn which presents more specific information (e.g., noting testing locations, indicating the exact number of multiple choice and true/false questions, specifying the weights attached to particular types of questions, and providing other information). The announcement will appear on Avenue *at least* one week before the test or examination is to be held, and it is your responsibility to carefully read that announcement.

**Important Note:** In-class tests will *not* be re-scheduled to accommodate vacations or other travel arrangements. If travel arrangements mean that you are not going to be available on the scheduled test date(s) noted above, you are advised to drop the course. Only certain conditions are acceptable grounds for missing in-class tests. For details, see the section below regarding “McMaster Policy on Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work.” You should also be aware that McMaster’s Undergraduate Calendar states: “Examinations are not rescheduled for purposes of travel.” If you miss the final examination, I do *not* have the authority to let you write it. You will have to deal with other university personnel. Please see sections of the Undergraduate Calendar that address the university’s policies regarding deferred examinations.

**Important Note:** If you miss an in-class test, and if I give you permission to write a make-up test (see the “McMaster Policy on Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work” below), please be aware that you will be given only *one* chance to make up the missed test. Missing the scheduled make-up test (for *any* reason) will result in a grade of zero for that test. You will *not* get a third chance to write it.

### **Term Paper**

Comprehensive instructions for completing the term paper will be supplied early in the course so that you have plenty of time to do the work. Please note that it will take a *minimum* of two weeks beyond the due date to grade the term paper.

The term paper is to be done individually. You are *not* permitted to form study groups with others, and there will be *no* collaboration of *any form* between students when working on the term paper. The term paper will be checked for inappropriate (i.e., unauthorized) collaboration as well as plagiarism and other violations of McMaster University’s Academic Integrity Policy. If I suspect any violations of this policy, you may be required to answer questions about your term paper in an oral examination.

If you wish accommodation for missing the due date for the paper, you are required to meet certain conditions. For details, see the section below regarding “McMaster Policy on Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work.” Other explanations for missed work (e.g., full or part-time work obligations, travel arrangements, and computer breakdowns) are *not* acceptable grounds for accommodation; I suggest that you organize your time and regularly create external backups of your work. I also suggest that you begin to work on your paper early in the course because *I will NOT grant extensions* for any reason other than what is covered in the official McMaster policy noted above.

I will *not* accept *any* paper, for *any* reason, after the date of Nov. 20. Any paper *not* submitted by that date (which is one week after the due date) will receive a grade of zero. Students who elect to hand in their paper late may do so until Nov. 20 (with a lateness penalty attached for each day that their paper is late). Students who have followed McMaster University’s rules for requesting accommodation will have until Nov. 20 to submit their paper; if the latter students successfully follow the university’s rules and make arrangements with me, their accommodation will be to submit their paper no later than Nov. 20. This will give accommodated students one extra week, which should be sufficient time to put the finishing touches on their work (since the assignment was given out months earlier along with the advice to start working on it early in the course).

Please note that you *must* submit a hard copy of your paper. Your paper will *not* be considered submitted until I receive a hard copy. I will *not* accept a paper by fax, email, or email attachment. Failure to submit a hard copy will result in a grade of zero for the paper.

### **Tutorial Participation**

You are required to attend and participate in a weekly tutorial. You will only receive credit for attending and participating in the tutorial you are officially enrolled in.

Please do *not* go to your assigned tutorial until I announce that the tutorials are ready to begin. Since I need time to meet my TAs and get them prepared, the tutorials will probably not begin until the second or third week of the term.

Please understand that I am *not* able to move you to a different tutorial *unless* you have a conflict with another course that can be verified. Please see me during my office hours (*not* before or after a lecture), and bring a hard copy of an *up-to-date* version of your *official* McMaster timetable which clearly indicates that you are enrolled in another course being held at the same time as your tutorial in this course. I will keep the hard copy of your official timetable for my records and work with you to find a different tutorial. Since many of the tutorials may be full, you will have to be flexible and accept whatever alternative tutorial I can find for you. Given the large number of students in the course and limited space in the tutorials, I’m afraid that I cannot move you to a different tutorial for any reason other than a documented conflict with another course. For example, finding the tutorial time to be inconvenient in some way, or having work obligations at the time of the tutorial, will *not* be the basis for being moved to a different tutorial.

Your tutorial participation grade will be based on a combination of *attendance at the tutorial* and *knowledgeable contribution to the tutorial*. You are expected to regularly attend your tutorial, to arrive on time for your tutorial, to stay for the duration of your tutorial, and to conduct yourself in an appropriate manner during your tutorial; see the section below on “Appropriate Behaviour” for a description of actions that will be considered inappropriate, disruptive, or unacceptable. You are expected to come prepared by completing the required reading that your TA has indicated will be addressed in a particular tutorial, and you are expected to demonstrate knowledge of that reading through contribution to the tutorial (e.g., through participation in discussions or other active learning activities). All of these factors will be considered by your TA when deciding on your tutorial participation grade. Your TA is authorized to reduce your grade for tutorial participation if you arrive late, leave early, or behave inappropriately.

### **McMaster Policy on Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work**

McMaster University has a policy on “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work.” This policy is explained in the Undergraduate Calendar. Building on that general policy, the Faculty of Social Sciences has established a policy titled “Student Absence Information: Academic Missed Work Procedures.” This policy can be found on the Faculty’s website.

The following is a combined summary of these policy statements (along with my requirement that students must enter into a written agreement with me for completing missed work). More detailed information can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar and on the website for the Faculty of Social Sciences. You are strongly advised to consult these sources and have a full understanding of the policy statements.

The appropriate approach for requesting relief due to missed academic term work depends on the value of the missed work as well as your specific situation:

1. For medical or personal situations lasting *up to three calendar days* and affecting academic work *worth less than 25%* of the final grade, students must use the MSAF online self-reporting tool. No further documentation is required. Students may submit requests for relief using the MSAF once per term. An automated email will be sent to the course instructor, who will determine the appropriate relief. *Students must contact the instructor immediately (i.e., within 2 working days) to discuss possible consideration. Any consideration that may be provided for missed work is the decision of the instructor. Failure to follow these instructions may result in no consideration given for missed work. If I grant accommodation, students will be required to enter into a written agreement that sets out conditions for completing the missed academic work. Failure to enter into a written agreement within a specified time frame will result in no consideration given for missed work.* The MSAF cannot be used to meet a religious obligation or to celebrate an important religious holiday; such accommodation is addressed through a separate university policy (the “Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances”). The MSAF cannot be used for academic work that has already been completed or attempted. *An MSAF applies only to work that is due within the period for which the MSAF applies, i.e., the 3-day period that is specified in the MSAF. However, all work due in that period can be covered by one MSAF.* The MSAF cannot be used to apply for relief for any final examination or its equivalent.

2. For medical or personal situations lasting *more than three calendar days*, and/or for missed academic work *worth 25% or more* of the final grade, and/or for any requests for relief in a term where the MSAF has been used previously in that term, students must report to their Faculty Office (i.e., their Associate Dean's office) to discuss their situation and will be required to provide appropriate supporting documentation. If the reason for a request for relief is medical, the approved McMaster University Medical Form covering the relevant dates must be submitted. The student must be seen by a doctor at the earliest possible date, normally *on or before the date of the missed work*, and the doctor must verify the duration of the illness. If the reason is non-medical (e.g., a death in the family), appropriate documentation with verifiable origin covering the relevant dates must be submitted, normally *within three working days* of when the work was missed. Documentation for travel arrangements will *not* be accepted by the Faculty of Social Sciences. Students may be required to meet with an Academic Advisor to discuss the circumstances surrounding their missed work. Following verification of the documentation and approval by an Academic Advisor (if appropriate), the Faculty Office will send an automated MSAF notification to the instructors (or, in special cases, an email). Students will also receive a copy of the notification or email. *Students must contact their instructor immediately (i.e., within 2 working days) to discuss possible consideration. Any consideration that may be provided for missed work is the decision of the instructor. Failure to follow these instructions may result in no consideration given for missed work. If I grant accommodation, students will be required to enter into a written agreement that sets out conditions for completing the missed academic work. Failure to enter into a written agreement within a specified time frame will result in no consideration given for missed work.*

**Important Note:** As far as the Faculty of Social Sciences is concerned, submitting an MSAF or submitting documentation only gives students the opportunity to discuss *possible* consideration with the instructor. In other words, there is no guarantee that an instructor will provide any accommodation. An instructor may deny accommodation to students for various reasons (e.g., if they have submitted an MSAF far too late, if they have submitted inadequate documentation or submitted the documentation too late, or if they have failed to follow-up in a timely manner by requesting accommodation through McMaster email within 2 working days).

### **Disability Accommodation Letters**

Students who require academic accommodation for a disability must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. SAS can be contacted by phone (905-525-9140, Ext. 28652) or email (sas@mcmaster.ca). For further information, consult McMaster University's policy on "Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities."

If you have a disability, you will need an accommodation letter from SAS to arrange your accommodations with me.

SAS has two methods students can use to set up accommodations. One is the "Printed Letter Method", and the other is the "Online Method."

In the “Printed Letter Method”, students print two copies of their accommodation letter and then meet with the course instructor during office hours or by appointment to discuss their accommodations. The instructor signs one copy, returning it to the student for submission to SAS, and keeps the other copy for his or her records. *Since I like to write notes on each copy (indicating what we have agreed to), I would appreciate it if students would use this method.*

In the “Online Method”, students send electronic versions of their accommodation letter to their course instructor. However, SAS has made it very clear that students using this method are still required to speak to their course instructor about their accommodations: “It will be your responsibility to follow up with each and every course instructor to discuss details related to activation of any or all accommodations.” Therefore, if you elect to use this method, you must still see me during office hours or by appointment to discuss your accommodations. In order to expedite matters, please bring at least one copy of your accommodation letter.

### **Grading Schemes**

This course may utilize two different marking schemes. Percentage grades will be used for any multiple choice or true/false testing. Letter grades will be used for any written work. Letter grades are preferred for written work since a numerical scheme implies that it is possible to produce a perfect piece of writing. However, for purposes of interpretation and calculation of a final course grade, the numerical mid-point of a letter grade (or the approximate numerical mid-point) will also be provided. In the case of a failing grade (i.e., an F), the numerical equivalent (between 0%-49%) will be the decision of the marker.

### **Academic Integrity**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences. For example, it can result in: the grade of zero on an assignment; loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (the notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”); and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty, please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy (specifically Appendix 3) located at: [www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity)

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty: plagiarism (e.g., the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained); improper collaboration in group work; and copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

**Important Note:** Students are expected to carefully read the course handout “Referencing Style and Avoiding Academic Dishonesty.” Students are also expected to follow *all* of the instructions in that handout when preparing written work for the course.

### **Use of Turnitin.com**

In this course, we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal plagiarism. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically to Turnitin.com and in hard copy so that it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com must still submit a hard copy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., an online search).

If you do not wish to submit your work to Turnitin.com, please be aware that I will need time to perform the laborious task of checking your work manually for signs of academic dishonesty. Consequently, I reserve the right to withhold your work until I have had a chance to check it manually. This means that you will *not* get your paper back on the same day as those students who did submit their work to Turnitin.com. You will have to wait several weeks longer.

If you do submit your paper to Turnitin.com, and if Turnitin.com suggests that there *may* be a problem with your paper, I reserve the right to withhold your paper until I can carry out a further investigation.

### **Use of Laptop Computers in the Classroom**

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor or TA, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

If you want to use a laptop computer to take notes, you *must* use a battery in your computer or sit directly beside a wall and wall outlet. If you are seen stringing a cord to reach an outlet, you will be told to disconnect the cord. This policy is being adopted to ensure safety in the classroom. Please understand that other people could get hurt by tripping over your cord (if it is lying on the floor) or walking into it (if it is left hanging).

### **Departmental, Faculty, and University Policies**

Do *not* fax assignments. When there are assignments in my courses, you are also *not* permitted to submit them by email or email attachment. Only a hard copy of written work will be accepted.

The Sociology staff do *not* date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

Students should check the university’s website as well as the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin Board outside the Sociology Office (KTH 627) for notices pertaining to Sociology

classes or departmental business (e.g., class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

It is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all email communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student's own McMaster University email account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **Required Readings**

You will need one textbook for the course, and it is available for purchase through the Campus Store. The textbook is:

Ritzer, G. & Stepnisky, J. (2017). *Modern Sociological Theory* (8<sup>th</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications (Custom Version for Sociology 2LL3).

This textbook is crucial to your success in the course. It contains all of the required weekly readings. You will be required to answer questions about the textbook chapters on the mid-term test and the final examination. You will be required to show knowledge of the textbook chapters in the tutorial as part of what you need to do to earn a tutorial participation grade. Most significantly, you will be required to utilize three of the six textbook chapters in your term paper (along with some additional assigned readings).

Please note that we will be using a custom version of the textbook that has been prepared by the publisher specifically for Sociology 2LL3. In an order to help you save money, I arranged for the publisher to create a version of the textbook that *only* includes the six required readings that I have assigned. This is much cheaper than buying the full textbook, which includes many other chapters you would not be required to read.

You are very strongly advised to buy the textbook early in the term. Since this is a custom version of the textbook, the Campus Store will only order a certain number of copies and then order more copies if the supply runs out. If the Campus Store runs out of copies, it will take time to get another shipment from the publisher in California. Therefore, if you delay in buying the textbook, you could find yourself without a copy of the textbook that you need to be successful in the course (especially when preparing your term paper). You assume full responsibility for what happens to your grade if you do not purchase the textbook or if you fail to purchase it in a timely manner.

## **Course Lectures**

I will *not* simply summarize the required readings in the lectures. The lectures will utilize material from the required readings, but they will also go beyond the readings in a variety of ways. They will often address theories, concepts, issues, etc. that are not discussed in the readings. The lectures and the readings are intended to complement each other, not copy each other. You should also be aware that the lectures may *not* be the same as the lectures in a previous version of the course.

I will post PowerPoint slides on Avenue *after* a lecture has been given, but it is important for you to understand that these slides will *not* be lecture notes. Rather, the slides will be “structural outlines” of lectures (which set out the headings and sub-headings used to organize the material) along with “supplementary slides” that provide *some* details from the lectures (e.g., selected key words, certain sketchy points, and graphs or tables). You need to realize that much of the lecture material will be presented verbally. Therefore, unless you regularly attend the lectures, you will *not* have the material you need to be successful on a test or examination. You will only internalize the course material effectively if you regularly attend the lectures, listen to the explanations I give, take your own notes on these explanations, and take the opportunity to ask questions if I have said something you do not understand. The PowerPoint slides are best used when writing lecture notes and when later organizing or re-writing these notes.

You are *not* allowed to make audio recordings or video recordings during the lectures, or to take photos during the lectures, without written permission from the instructor. Usually, only certain disability students are allowed to make audio recordings. If students have an accommodation letter from SAS indicating that audio recordings of lectures are a necessary accommodation for a disability, and if these students meet with me to discuss their accommodation letters, then they will be allowed to make audio recordings of lectures.

Please be aware that my lectures are protected by copyright. Like any piece of academic writing, lectures draw upon academic material produced by others. However, in lectures – as in journal articles or books – the selection and organization of material, as well as the arguments and analyses based on the material, are unique to the person who did the academic writing. Your lecture notes will reflect and reproduce the unique work that I have done, and distribution of that work is protected by copyright. You are certainly permitted (and encouraged) to take notes on my lectures so that you can privately read and study these notes for tests. You are also permitted to share lecture notes with other students in the course on an *individual* basis (e.g., giving notes to a friend who missed a lecture). However, any mass electronic distribution of lecture notes (e.g., through Avenue to Learn or a lecture-sharing website) is *not* permitted. Furthermore, any attempt to secure individual gain from the distribution of lecture notes (e.g., by selling lecture notes for profit or receiving any form of compensation from a lecture-sharing website) is strictly prohibited.

## **Appropriate Behaviour**

It is your responsibility to attend all classes in this course, to be on time for the classes, and to stay for the duration of the classes. The instructor bears no responsibility for difficulties

experienced by students who do not attend, who are late, or who leave early. If you miss a lecture, or a portion of a lecture (for *any* reason), you are advised to borrow notes from a student who was present. You are also advised to consult this student about any announcements that may have been made. If you do not know anyone in the course, you are advised to get to know someone early on and exchange contact information so that you can share notes as well as information about announcements. It is *not* the responsibility of the instructor to provide students with lecture notes or to brief students on any announcements they have missed.

It is your responsibility to conduct yourself in an appropriate manner during classes in this course. While we (either me or a TA) are trying to teach you, and while other students are trying to learn, please do *not* engage in any behaviour which is rude or distracting. Such behaviour includes (but is not limited to): having a private conversation with another student; eating food; reading a book or magazine; putting your head down or sleeping; doing work for another course; using a laptop computer for anything other than taking notes; and using a smartphone or other personal electronic device for any reason while the class or tutorial is underway. Please understand that such rude or distracting behaviour can make it difficult for the professor or TA to teach, and this behaviour can also make it difficult for other students to learn. For example, other students may find it hard to learn if they are distracted by the sound of chatting or eating and the sight of someone in front of them surfing the Web or playing a video game on a computer or a smartphone. You are welcome to engage in such activities while waiting for the class to begin or while enjoying a scheduled break in an evening course or seminar. However, while the class or tutorial is underway, please show consideration for me, your TA, and your classmates. If you are bothered by the behaviour of other students, you are welcome to discuss your concerns with me privately.

It is your responsibility to interact with the professor, TAs, and other students in a respectful manner. Disruptive or unacceptable behaviour is strictly prohibited. This behaviour includes (but is not limited to): speaking from your seat – or speaking up during class discussions – without raising your hand and waiting to be acknowledged by the professor or TA; yelling at the professor, TA, or other students; and engaging in any threatening, intimidating, degrading, harassing, or discriminatory behaviour (physically, verbally, or in writing) that is directed at the professor, TA, or other students. Disruptive or unacceptable behaviour that occurs in or out of class may constitute a violation of McMaster University’s “Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities” (formerly known as the “Student Code of Conduct”) and be punishable by various sanctions (penalties) that can be imposed by the university. According to the university, all McMaster students have an obligation to familiarize themselves with the “Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities.” Again, if you are bothered by the behaviour of other students, you are welcome to discuss your concerns with me privately.

### **Reference Letters**

Many students will eventually need reference letters from professors to get into graduate schools, law schools, or teaching colleges. Some students may also need reference letters from professors to get jobs.

It is important to understand that reference letters are *not* reports of your grades. If professional schools or employers want to see evidence that you have a degree or certain grades, they will ask you to arrange for McMaster to send them an official copy of your transcript. They do *not* need professors to report grades. Excellent grades are usually necessary to get reference letters from professors, but the letters themselves focus on other things.

Through reference letters, professional schools and employers want professors to provide assessments of your skills and your behaviour. In relation to skills, they usually want us to comment on your writing skills, analytical skills, and speaking skills (e.g., the quality of your written work and the quality of your presentations or other verbal contributions to classes). With regard to behaviour, they frequently want to know if you have a strong work ethic and are reliable (e.g., always attending classes, always being on time for classes, and always getting assignments done on time). In terms of behaviour, they also often want to know if you show maturity and exercise good judgment (e.g., behaving appropriately and respectfully during classes and when interacting with professors or other students; making wise decisions; and taking responsibility for your actions or your mistakes). Professional schools and employers also ask about a host of other characteristics associated with skills or behaviour; they sometimes ask if you show initiative (e.g., starting assignments early and getting help early), if you exhibit integrity (e.g., being honest with professors and other people; being honest and ethical when doing academic work), and if you have the ability to work with others as well as the ability to work independently. It should be easy to understand why professional schools and employers are looking for students who have such qualities. In order to make it clear that we are in a position to adequately comment on your skills and behaviour, professors are usually asked to declare how long we have known you (e.g., in terms of months or years).

I am happy to write reference letters for students if they have excellent grades, if I know them by face and name, if I have had sufficient opportunity to observe their skills and behaviour, and if I am able to give a strongly positive assessment of their skills and behaviour in relation to further study or employment.

In light of all of this, I would strongly recommend that you do more than focus on getting high grades throughout the three or four years of your undergraduate degree. I would advise you to establish contacts with professors (e.g., by taking smaller classes where they can get to know you or by visiting them during office hours if the classes are larger). I would also advise you to make an extremely positive impression on professors (with regard to your skills and behaviour).

### **Course Schedule**

The course schedule below identifies the course topics, the *approximate* dates when the topics will be addressed, and the required readings for the topics. We may progress a little faster or a little slower than the dates below indicate. You will be given reasonable notice if more significant changes have to be made to the course schedule (e.g., dropping a topic because we have run out of time).

Please note that the chapter numbers below are from the table of contents for the custom version of the textbook (not the original textbook).

***Introduction to Contemporary Sociological Theory*** (approximately Sept. 6 to Sept. 13)  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 1

***Symbolic Interactionism*** (approximately Sept. 18 to Sept. 27)  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 2

***Structural Functionalism and Conflict Theory*** (approximately Oct. 2 to Oct. 18)  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 3  
*Thanksgiving and Mid-Term Recess (No classes on Oct. 9 and Oct. 11)*

***Neo-Marxism*** (approximately Oct. 25 to Nov. 8)  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 4

***Contemporary Feminist Theory*** (approximately Nov. 13 to Nov. 22)  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 5

***Theories of “Race” and Colonialism*** (approximately Nov. 27 to Dec. 6)  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 6