



Contemporary Sociological Theories

Syllabus

Details of the discipline

Level of Higher Education	First (bachelor's level)
Field of Knowledge	<i>C - Social Sciences, Journalism, Information and International Relations</i>
Speciality	<i>C5 Sociology</i>
Educational Program	<i>Conflict Resolution and Mediation</i>
Status of Discipline	<i>Elective Course</i>
Form of Learning	<i>Part-time</i>
Year of Education, Semester	<i>4 year, 8 semesters</i>
ECTS	<i>4 credits 120 hours: lectures 8 hours, seminars 4 hours, independent work 108 hours.</i>
Form of Control	<i>Test, modular control work</i>
Schedule	<i>https://schedule.kpi.ua/</i>
Language	<i>English</i>
Information about course leader / teachers	<i>Lecturer: Andrii Bahinskyi, candidate of political sciences, associate professor of the Department of sociology, e-mail: andrei.baginsky@gmail.com Practical Classes: Professor, doctor of sociological sciences Pavlo Fedorchenko-Kutuev, e-mail: andrei.baginsky@gmail.com</i>
Course placement	

Outline of the discipline

1. Description of the discipline, its aims, subject of study and learning outcomes

The purpose of teaching the credit module "Contemporary sociological theories" is to develop students' abilities as future professionals:

- 1. Analyze contemporary sociological theories;*
- 2. Analyze their conceptual and categorical apparatus;*
- 3. Employ concepts of the contemporary sociological in professional activities.*

According to the requirements of the educational program, students after mastering the credit module must demonstrate the following learning outcomes:

Knowledge of:

- 1. The main research programs of the latest sociological theories;*
- 2. Methodological assumption of contemporary sociological theories;*

3. *Classification of concepts of contemporary sociological theories;*
4. *Connection of the latest sociological theories with other levels of theorizing and other social sciences (political science, economic theory);*
5. *Features of application of the newest sociological theories in a society.*

skills:

1. *Use theoretical knowledge to understand the social dynamics caused by radical social changes;*
2. *Evaluate existing research programs in the contemporary sociological theories;*
3. *Identify and analyze the contemporary sociological theories in two main dimensions of modern society and conflicts that arise in the process of formation of capitalism and during the formation of the nation state;*
4. *Select effective methods for predicting the development of specific research programs in the contemporary sociological theories;*
5. *take into account the contemporary sociological theories in their professional activities.*

Experience of :

1. *The analysis of basic concepts and methodology of contemporary sociological theories;*
2. *The analysis of the conceptual and categorical apparatus and the use of the concept of the contemporary sociological theories in professional activities.*

2. Prerequisites of the discipline (place in the structural and logical scheme of education according to the relevant educational program)

This course is based on students' knowledge of the courses "History of Sociology", "Modern Sociological Theories", "Sociology of Modernity and Modernization". The knowledge acquired by students within the course "Contemporary Sociological Theories" can be used not only in the study of specialized disciplines ("Sociological Theories of Conflict and War in the Context of Transformation and Modernization", etc.), but also in practice conducting sociological research and professional activities.

3. The content of the discipline

List of topics

Topic 1. Origins of sociological discourse: a new genealogy.

Topic 2. Sociological theory after the Second World War, philosophy of science and prerequisites for the synthesis of classical thought in contemporary sociological theory.

Topic 3. Richard Munich as an interpreter of T. Parsons and a theorist of modernity.

Topic 4. From neofunctionalism to cultural sociology: the intellectual trajectory of Jeffrey Alexander.

Topic 5. Max Weber's sociology, Weber's renaissance and modern socio-political transformations.

Topic 6. Marxism, critical theory and contemporary interpretations of Marxism.

Topic 7. Historical macrosociology today: theoretical breakthroughs and syntheses.

Topic 8. Sociological theories of nationalism: Benedict Anderson and Ernest Gellner.

Topic 9. Sociological theories of multiple modernities.

4. Training materials and resources

Basic:

1. Adams M., Sydie R., Dawson D. Contemporary Sociological Theory. London : SAGE Publications, 2023. 456 p.

2. Ahmed S. *The Feminist Killjoy Handbook*. New York : Seal Press, 2023. 400 p.
3. Bauman Z., Donskis L. *Moral Blindness in the Liquid Modern World*. New ed. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2022. 240 p.
4. Bhabra G. K. *Colonial Global Economy*. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2022. 260 p.
5. Bhaskar R. et al. *Critical Theory and Social Transformation*. London : Routledge, 2022. 280 p.
- 6.

Additional:

1. Couldry N., Mejias U. *The Costs of Connection: How Data Is Colonizing Human Life and Appropriating It for Capitalism*. Updated ed. Stanford : Stanford University Press, 2023. 280 p.
2. Dean M. *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society*. 3rd ed. London : SAGE Publications, 2023. 336 p.
3. Delanty G. *Contemporary Social Theory*. 3rd ed. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2023. 320 p.
4. Elliott A. *Contemporary Social Theory*. 2nd ed. London : Routledge, 2023. 360 p.
5. Fraser N., Jaeggi R. *Capitalism: A Conversation in Critical Theory*. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2022. 240 p.
6. Honneth A. *Reification and Recognition*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2022. 240 p.
7. Lemke T. *The Government of Things: Foucault and the New Materialisms*. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2023. 220 p.
8. Lupton D. *Digital Sociology*. 2nd ed. London : Routledge, 2024. 240 p.
9. Mignolo W., Walsh C. *On Decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*. New ed. Durham : Duke University Press, 2023. 360 p.
10. Ritzer G., Stepnisky J. *Sociological Theory*. 11th ed. New York : McGraw-Hill Education, 2022. 736 p.
11. Rosa H. *The Uncontrollability of the World*. Cambridge : Polity Press, 2022. 200 p.
12. Zuboff S. *The Age of Surveillance Capitalism*. New ed. New York : PublicAffairs, 2022. 704 p.

Educational content

5. Methods of mastering the discipline (educational component)

Lectures

Topic 1: Origins of sociological discourse: a new genealogy.

Main questions: Intellectual origins of sociology: Sieyès and Quetelet. The ideological context of the dynamics of sociological theories: the Cold War and the clash of powers. Sociological theories and political and economic practice.

Independent work of student: A New Historiography of the Origin of Sociological Discourse from the Enlightenment to the Present. Contemporary sociological theories and ideologies. The latest sociological theories: the state and public policy.

Topic 2: Sociological theory after the Second World War, philosophy of science and prerequisites for the synthesis of classics in modern sociological theory

Main issues: Methodological principles of logical positivism and sociology. The role of philosophy of science in the discourse of contemporary sociological theories. Principles of methodology of research programs and their application in historical and sociological analysis. Problems of micro- and macro- in theoretical sociology. Centrality of classics and discourse of modern sociology. The concept of interpenetration in classical sociology and modern sociological theories.

Independent work of student: Transformations and continuity of the positivist approach in sociological theorizing. From logical positivism to postpositivism. Classical sociology and modern sociological theories.

Topic 3: Richard Munch as an interpreter of T. Parsons and a theorist of modernity.

Main questions: Theoretical synthesis or eclecticism: "R. Munch's theories of action". I. Kant's philosophy and theoretical sociology: from M. Weber to T. Parsons. Sociological theory of T. Parsons and its Kantian roots. Parsons' idea of continuity: theoretical breakthrough or lack of development? Conceptualization of modernity by R. Munch.

Independent work of student: T. Parsons' Kantian core of sociology and contemporary sociological theories. R. Munch: reconstruction of classical sociology as a theory building. Weberization of Parsonian sociology by R. Munch.

Topic 4: From neofunctionalism to cultural sociology: the intellectual trajectory of J. Alexander.

Main questions: Two versions of neofunctionalism: J. Alexander and R. Munch. The concept of differentiation as the basis of J. Alexander's reconstruction of Parsonian sociology and neo-functional research program. Neofunctionalism in the context of the dichotomy "modern versus postmodern". From T. Parsons to E. Durkheim: cultural sociology of J. Alexander.

Independent work of student: Theoretical logic in the sociology of J. Alexander as a reconstruction of classical theory. The concept of social differentiation: yesterday and today. From Parsonian neofunctionalism to Durkheim's cultural sociology.

Seminars

Seminar 1: Origins of sociological discourse: a new genealogy (Part 1)

Main questions: Key intellectual origins of sociology: Sieyès and Quetelet. How historical and ideological contexts influenced early sociological thought. The relation between sociological ideas and political/economic practice.

Independent work of student: Analyze one classical sociologist's influence on modern theory. Prepare a timeline of major intellectual developments in early sociology.

Seminar 2: Sociological theory after the Second World War (Part 1)

Main questions: Logical positivism and its influence on post-WWII sociology. Role of philosophy of science in forming research programs. Continuity and change from classical to modern theory.

Independent work of student: Prepare a discussion on positivism vs. post-positivism in sociology. Identify one post-WWII sociological study that applies positivist principles.

6. Independent work of student

The independent work includes:

preparation for classroom lessons – 82 hours;

preparation for modular control work – 20 hours;

preparation for the test – 6 hours.

Total – 108 hours.

Policy and control

7. Course policy (educational component)

Class attendance

Attendance of lectures and seminars is mandatory.

Evaluation control measures missed

The missed modular test can be rewritten, but until the time of the intermediate certification, taking into account the time required by the instructor to test the work. Missed express quizzes can't be retaken.

Procedure for appealing the results of tests

Students have the opportunity to raise any issue related to the control procedure and expect it to be addressed according to the university procedures. To appeal against the grade, the student must submit a statement stating the reason for the appeal, the facts of the instructor's bias. The instructor should discuss this statement with the student in person at the consultation. In case if the dispute is not resolved of lack of understanding on the result of the control measure, a commission made up of the department is formed, which evaluates the procedure of the control measure and the student's claim. The Commission may decide to re-examine or reject the appeal. The decision of the commission is final and not subject to appeal.

Academic integrity

The policy and principles of academic integrity are defined in Section 3 of the Code of Honor of the National Technical University of Ukraine "Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute". Details: <https://kpi.ua/code>.

8. Types of control and rating system for evaluation of learning outcomes (RSE)

The student's rating in the discipline consists of points received for:

- *work in seminar classes;*
- *writing modular control work*
- *results of express tests at lectures;*

*Work in seminar class is evaluated in total at 40 points (2*20 points = 40 points) according to the following criteria:*

- *“excellent” – creative approach to revealing the problem in the report, reflection of one's own position, supplementing other students' answers, participation in discussions – 20-18 points;*
- *“good” – deep disclosure of the problem in the report, participation in discussions – 16-17 points;*
- *“satisfactory” — supplementing other students' answers, participation in discussions – 12-15 points;*
- *“unsatisfactory” – complete passivity in the seminar class – 0 points.*

A student may appeal the teacher's assessment by submitting a corresponding complaint to the teacher no later than the next day after the student is familiarized with the teacher's assessment. The complaint will be considered according to the procedures established by the university.

Mastering the discipline of ensuring the modular control work (MCW)

Modular control work is an important form of independent study by students of the discipline. This year's MCW in the entire essay writing (10-15 pages A4, Times New Roman, font size - 14, line spacing - 1.5). MCW should demonstrate the level of mastery of the student's material on a certain topic; the ability to independently comprehend and systematize educational information; clearly, concisely and logically present the material, justify one's own opinion, draw conclusions. The coverage of theoretical issues does not require a plan, introduction, but must be completed with conclusions. Students are invited to draw one of the modern socio-political conflicts and analyze its map, using the conflict, present this analysis of the letter and send it to the teacher electronically before the start of the credit session.

Weight score for MCW- 40 points.

Evaluation criteria:

"excellent", the work fully corresponds to the topic, contains a deep analysis, critical understanding of the material, references to authoritative sources, logical structure and correct design in accordance with the requirements - 36-40 points;

"good", the work corresponds to the topic, has a sufficiently deep analysis, but due to minor inaccuracies or insufficient critical understanding. The design meets the requirements, but there are minor shortcomings - 30-35 points;

"satisfactory" - the work partially reveals the topic, contains general provisions without deep analysis, an insufficient number of sources are used, there are errors in the structure or design - 24-29 points;

"unsatisfactory" - the work does not correspond to the topic or reveals it superficially, there is no analysis, there is a significant violation in the structure and design, there is insufficient or no reference to the source at all - 0-23 points.

3. Credit.

Weighted score – 100.

The test involves the student's answer to two questions. The questions are different in content, correspond to the topics of lectures, seminars, independent work, self-control questions. Each question is evaluated at 50 points.

Assessment criteria:

48-50 points - the student demonstrates a deep knowledge of the content of the educational material, the ability to systematically and interdisciplinary analysis of course problems; freely and correctly uses scientific concepts and terms, formulates logical, reasoned conclusions, reveals his own well-founded position on debatable issues;

43-47 points - the student demonstrates a very good level of assimilation of the educational material, is well-oriented in the main topics of the course, is capable of analysis and generalization; there may be isolated inaccuracies in wording or examples that do not significantly affect the overall level of the answer;

38-42 points - the student demonstrates a fairly complete understanding of the main topics and issues of the course. Uses basic scientific terminology, but the analysis is mainly descriptive; conclusions are formulated, but not always sufficiently substantiated;

33-37 points - the student demonstrates a general understanding of the educational material, but the answers contain noticeable inaccuracies in definitions, examples or logic of the presentation; the use of scientific terminology is limited, the analytical component is weakly expressed;

30-32 points - the student demonstrates fragmentary knowledge of individual course topics, is oriented only in some key concepts; answers are incomplete, superficial, conclusions are not sufficiently substantiated;

0-29 points - the student is not oriented in key concepts and issues of the course; answers are illogical or absent.

Table of correspondence of rating points to grades on the university scale:

Scores	Mark
100-95	Excellent
94-85	Very good
84-75	Fine
74-65	Satisfactorily
64-60	Enough
Less than 60	Not allowed
Admission conditions are not met	Not allowed

9. Additional information on the discipline (educational component)

Classes within the course "Contemporary Sociological Theories" are conducted in the form of lectures and seminars. During lectures, the lecturer formulates the background assumptions of theories, formulates key concepts, comes up with examples. Lectures take the form of a dialogue, when the instructor asks students questions about the teaching material, may ask to give an immediate answer to the current topic being discussed in the class, or the material of previous classes.

The student's independent work is designed to prepare questions for seminars, analysis of sources. The instructor makes suggestions as to what relevant literature to discuss. The main form of activity during seminars is an oral report that aims at developing the communicative abilities of the student combined with the demonstration and consolidation of the knowledge of the topic. The instructor evaluates both the depth, breadth, accuracy of definitions during the student's speech, the ability to respond to questions from the audience. During the seminar, students' activity in formulating questions, participating in discussions, formulating alternative hypotheses, the ability to refer to theoretical positions and critically evaluate existing theories and practices is additionally assessed.

Learning distance courses

At the student's request, in conditions that do not favor regular attendance of classes, it is allowed to study individual meaningful parts of the educational component in an asynchronous mode, in particular, through learning distance courses. In order to take into account the points for mastering such courses in the evaluation system, they must correspond to the content of the syllabus, be agreed with the teacher, and to confirm the completion of the courses, the student must provide an appropriate document indicating the name and amount in hours. Recognition of the results of non-formal education takes place in accordance with the procedure specified in the relevant Regulations of the Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute.

Working program of the discipline (syllabus):

Prepared by Andrii Bahinskyi, candidate of political sciences, associate professor of the Department of sociology

Approved at the department of sociology meeting (protocol № 14 of 23/06/2025)

Approved by the Methodical Commission of the Faculty of Sociology and law (protocol № 4 of 24/06/2025)