

# Sociology 2LL3: Introduction to Contemporary Sociological Theory

Winter, 2020.

Day and Time of Class: Mon and Wed. 4:30 pm to 5:20 pm.

Instructor: Dr. D. Young.

Office: KTH/629, Ext. 23615.

Office Hours: Mon., 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm and Wed., 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm (or by appointment).

Email: 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. 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 leave your name, a telephone number (spoken slowly), and a very brief message.

My email address is indicated above. 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 the instructions below when 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 account.
- Please ensure that you use "Sociology 2LL3" as a subject line.
- Please ensure that you include an appropriate greeting following by my title and last name (e.g., "Dear Dr. Young", "Hello Dr. Young", or "Hi Dr. Young"). When writing to TAs (if any TAs have been assigned to the course), 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 with correct spelling).
- Please sign off in a professional manner (e.g., writing "Thank you", "Thanks", "Regards", or "Sincerely" followed by your full name and student number).

Email that fails to follow the instructions noted above may **not** be answered (or you may be told to re-write and re-send the message if you want me to answer your question). Even if you have followed the instructions, please do **not** expect an immediate response. Professors and TAs are busy people, and it may take us up to two business days to reply. Furthermore, please keep in mind that email will **only** be read and answered during regular business hours (Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm). If you have not received a reply after two full business days, please check to see if you followed all of the instructions provided above. If you did and still did not receive a response, it may be that the message was not received or somehow got missed. At that point, please send a follow-up message.

## 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.

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:

[Link to Undergraduate Degree Level Expectations](#)

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 lectures have been scheduled for Tuesdays and Thursdays 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 are **only** permitted to go to the tutorial you are officially 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. It will be used to communicate major announcements and to distribute various documents (such as course handouts or lecture slides). Avenue will also be used to distribute grades for computer-scanned results of in-class tests (but not grades for written work, grades for any aspect of a final examination, or final course grades).

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 or lecture slides) 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.

## 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 Mar. 2.

Term Paper (30%), due on Mar. 16.

Tutorial Participation (10%), grade determined after the end of classes.

Final Examination (35%), scheduled by the Registrar (Apr. 13 to Apr. 28).

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

This course is divided into three sections and six topics (as set out in the "Course Schedule" below). The mid-term test will cover the first three topics (Part I and the first two topics of Part II), and the final examination will cover the last three topics (the final topic of Part II and the two topics in Part III). 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. 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). 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 book was published), but I might ask questions about general timeframes (e.g., which of several theories was developed first or which perspective was dominant in a particular decade).

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 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.

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 "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 the Undergraduate Calendar for the university's policies regarding deferred examinations.

If you miss an in-class test, and if I give you permission to write a make-up test (see the section below regarding "Accommodation for Missed Academic Term Work"), 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 two to three weeks beyond the due date to finish the grading.

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 "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.

Please note that you must submit a printed hard copy of your paper. Your paper will **not** be considered submitted until I receive a printed hard copy. I will **not** accept an electronic version of your paper (by fax, email, email attachment, or any other means). Furthermore, please note that electronic submission to Turnitin.com does **not** constitute submission of the paper for grading (since Turnitin.com is **only** used to check for academic dishonesty). Failure to submit a printed 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. This is standard procedure in many courses.

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 "Responsibilities Regarding 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 in an inappropriate or disrespectful manner.

If you miss a tutorial and wish to receive credit for that tutorial, you **must** do all of the following: submit a McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF) which indicates that you missed a tutorial in the course; arrange to have the automated MSAF email sent to Dr. Young (**not** to your TA);

promptly send a follow-up email to Dr. Young (requesting accommodation and indicating who your TA is); and complete some make-up work that will be assigned and graded by your TA (based on the required readings discussed in the missed tutorial).

## 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:

[Link to Missed Work Procedures in Social Sciences](#)

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 McMaster Student Absence Form (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; as noted below, 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/Program 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. In deciding whether or not to grant accommodation, adequacy of the supporting documentation, including the timing in relation to the date of the missed work and the degree of incapacitation, may be taken into account. Following verification of the documentation and approval by an Academic Advisor (if appropriate), the Faculty Office will send an automated MSAF notification to the course instructor (or, in special cases, an email). Students will also receive a copy of the notification or email. 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.

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).

## Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the “Policy on Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous and Spiritual Observances” (the RISO policy). Students requiring an RISO accommodation should submit their request to their Faculty Office (normally within 10 working days of the beginning of the term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation) or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructor as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

## Disability Accommodation Letters

Students who require academic accommodation for a disability must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. 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 (as well as your other instructors). Please go to the following link and carefully read all of the information provided about how to set up your accommodations for particular courses you are taking:

[Link to SAS Instructions for Activating Accommodations](#)

At the link noted above, SAS states: “Upon your instructor’s reviews and acknowledgment of your accommodations, an auto generated email will be sent to you requesting you to communicate with your instructor.” Furthermore, SAS indicates the following: “You are expected to communicate at the beginning of the term with each of your instructors to discuss details related to the implementation of your accommodations for each of the courses you have selected.” Finally SAS indicates the following: “SAS strongly recommends you meet with your instructors in person to discuss your accommodation plan and implementation. Failure to communicate with any of your instructors may result in the University’s inability to ensure accommodations.”

In line with the SAS statements quoted above, please communicate with me at the beginning of the term so that we can discuss your accommodations. As specified by SAS, it is best to meet with instructors in person. However, in order to protect your confidentiality and ensure that we have enough time to address your accommodations, please do **not** try to discuss your accommodations with me in the classroom right before or after a class. Instead, please drop in during my scheduled office hours or contact me via McMaster email to set up an appointment for a time outside of my office hours so that we can talk about your needs more discreetly. If possible, please bring two copies of your accommodation letter to the meeting in my office. A meeting will only take about five to ten minutes. We will review your accommodations and discuss your needs. I will then write notes on both copies of your accommodation letter (indicating what we have agreed to). I will keep one copy and give you the other. While some accommodations are straight-forward, others require a conversation and agreement in advance in order to avoid potential confusion or misunderstanding. Although a meeting is preferable for this reason, it may be possible to discuss your accommodations and make arrangements via email if a meeting is difficult for you.

## 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.

## Grade Changes on the Term Paper

Sometimes, students disagree with a grade on a term paper or other written work and want to know what is involved with trying to get a higher grade. The following is the procedure that will be adopted with regard to requests for grade changes on the term paper in this course:

1. Please wait at least two full days from the time you got your term paper back. During this period, please do not contact the person who graded your paper (which would be either me or a TA). Instead, please use the time to digest the comments on your paper and reflect critically on your own work. In other words, please try to understand what is wrong with your paper and why you got the assigned grade.
2. If at least two full days have gone by and you still believe that you deserve a higher grade on the term paper, please send a letter (through your McMaster email account) to the person who graded your work (either me or a TA). A letter sent through anything other than McMaster email will **not** be accepted. Please write (or copy and paste) your letter into the text of an email message (i.e., please do **not** send an attachment). In your letter, you must address the four marking criteria (knowledge, organization, writing, and referencing). Your letter must present a logical, persuasive, and well-written argument for a grade change based on the four marking criteria (as I have identified, defined, and described them in the assignment instructions). You will have to convince the grader that your work is of higher quality (in relation to these criteria) than he or she initially thought. Please note that your letter only gives the grader something to consider, and it is **not** a guarantee that you will receive a higher grade. Any letter that is insulting or expresses anger will be automatically dismissed by the grader (and you could find yourself in serious trouble for making such statements). Furthermore, the grader will also **not** consider any letter that refers to how much “time” or “effort” you put in or to how much you “need” a higher grade. That is because your grade can only be based on the quality of what appears on the pages of your work (in relation to knowledge, organization, writing, and referencing).
3. After you have sent a letter through your McMaster email account, you will receive a reply through McMaster email with instructions for re-submitting the graded hard copy of your term paper so that it can undergo re-examination by the person who graded the work (either me or a TA).
4. After a re-examination of your term paper, the person who graded your work (either me or a TA) will do one of three things. The grader may decide to increase your grade, leave your grade as it is, or even decrease your grade. We may find that there is no merit to your argument for a higher grade. With more time to examine the paper, we may even notice problems with your work that we did not spot the first time around and find it necessary to reduce your grade. Therefore, if you elect to write a letter and submit the graded hard copy of your term paper for re-examination, you do so with the understanding and full acceptance that you are taking a risk with your grade.
5. Through a message sent to your McMaster email account (probably within a week of re-submitting the graded hard copy of your term paper), the person who graded your work (either me or a TA) will inform you that a decision has been made regarding your grade. You will then be expected to pick up the hard copy of your paper to find out if the grade has been increased, decreased, or left as it is. The grade will **not** be reported through

email. Any decision that has been made by me will be final (i.e., I will **not** re-consider the grade further). Any decision made by a TA can be appealed through me (and you would have to contact me through McMaster email to inquire about the process). However, you should be aware that I will **not** be bound by whatever a TA did; I will read your paper and assign whatever grade I think it is worth, and that grade could be even lower than the original or re-considered grade assigned by a TA.

## 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. 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 (which is available through the web page for the Office of Academic Integrity):

[Link to Office of Academic Integrity](#)

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.

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 authenticity and ownership of student-submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work directly to Turnitin.com 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 or other software).

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 Department of Sociology's website as well as 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, and tutorial information).

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 (e.g., severe weather or labour disruptions). If modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice will be given to students with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels (e.g., McMaster Daily News, Avenue to Learn, and McMaster email). It is the responsibility of students to check these communication channels regularly 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). *Introduction to Contemporary Sociological Theory* (Custom Edition for Sociology 2LL3). Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications.

This textbook is crucial to your success in the course. It contains all of the required 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 textbook chapters in your term paper.

Please note that we will be using a custom edition 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 eleven 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 edition 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, you could find yourself temporarily without a copy of the textbook that you need to be successful in the course. 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.

I will post PowerPoint slides on Avenue to Learn 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 (setting 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 discuss this accommodation with me, 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. 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 mail 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.

## Responsibilities Regarding 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; wearing or using headphones or ear buds; 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 or tutorial to begin or while enjoying a scheduled break in the class time. 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 “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities” (formerly known as the “Student Code of Conduct”) and be punishable by various sanctions (penalties) that can be imposed on students by the university. According to the university, all McMaster students have an obligation to familiarize themselves with the “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities.” Again, if you are bothered by the behaviour of other students, you are welcome to discuss your concerns with me privately.

When there is inappropriate or disrespectful behaviour, I will take action to deal with it. I will do this in various ways. Sometimes, at the beginning of a class, I will just issue a brief and friendly reminder to everyone about what constitutes rude or distracting behaviour (as described in the second paragraph of this section). At other times, I may find it necessary to address the behaviour of particular students. When doing this, my preferred approach is to have a private conversation with certain students (e.g., during a break in the class or at the end of the class) so that I can explain my concerns and politely ask that the behaviour cease. However, this approach may not always be possible; if I judge the behaviour to be sufficiently problematic, I reserve the right to stop the class and deal with the behaviour of a particular student (or a few students) immediately in front of the entire class. Such an approach would certainly be necessary in the event of disruptive or unacceptable behaviour (as described in the third paragraph of this section) and perhaps even in extreme cases of rude or distracting behaviour (as described in the second paragraph of this section). Furthermore, when these rare and more serious situations occur, I may find it necessary to pursue further action through the “Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities” (which is described in the third paragraph of this section).

## 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).

### Part I: Introduction

Introduction to Contemporary Sociological Theory (approximately Jan. 6 to Jan. 15).  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 1.

### Part II: Some Major Theories

Symbolic Interactionism (approximately Jan. 20 to Jan. 29).  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 2.

Structural Functionalism and Conflict Theory (approximately Feb. 3 to Feb. 12).  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 3.

Mid-Term Recess (No class on Feb.17 and Feb. 19).

Neo-Marxism (approximately Feb. 24 to Mar. 9).  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 4.

### Part III: Other Important Theories

Contemporary Feminist Theory (approximately Mar. 11 to Mar. 23).  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 5.

Theories of "Race" and Colonialism (approximately Mar. 25 to Apr. 6).  
Required Reading: Ritzer and Stepnisky, Ch. 6.