

SOC2. Social theory

(Course Organiser: Prof Patrick Baert)

The paper on contemporary social theory builds on students' knowledge of classical theory from Part I and explores the development of social theory through to the present day. The paper aims to provide students with a firm grasp of key theoretical approaches and enables them to read the work of some of the great thinkers of the 20th Century in some depth. The time period runs from roughly 1920 to the present day, but the emphasis is placed on recent (i.e. post-1960) literature and developments. Topics covered include: symbolic interactionism and ethnomethodology; hermeneutics and theories of interpretation; 20th Century Marxism; the Frankfurt School; structuralism and post-structuralism; functionalism; rational choice theory; feminist theory; theories of modernity and post-modernity; Habermas; Foucault; Bourdieu; Giddens; Beck; and Bauman.

SOC3. Modern societies II: Global Social Problems and Dynamics of Resistance

(Course Organisers: Dr Monica Moreno Figueroa)

This paper aims to:

- introduce and explore a selection of global social problems and dynamics of resistance from a sociological perspective.
- introduce the sociological notion and methodological tool of intersectionality, bringing gender, race and class to the fore, for the understanding of social problems and dynamics of resistance.
- develop a critical understanding of key sociological concepts, approaches and analyses to social problems such as inequality, neoliberalism, development, nationalism, globalisation, social movements, protest, transnationalism, discourse, representation, democracy, political economy and power.

SOC4. Concepts and arguments in sociology

(Course Organiser: Dr Manali Desai)

This paper gives students the opportunity to pursue your interests in Sociology in some depth and to think carefully about the nature of sociological explanation and analysis. With the help and guidance of a supervisor, students will have a chance to engage in independent reading and research. The paper is assessed by means of two 5000 word essays on questions drawn from a list that is published each year. The list is divided into two Sections; students must write one essay on a topic from each Section. Questions in Section I are concerned with key concepts in Sociology and in the Social Sciences more generally. They focus on the history, complexity, and potential uses of these concepts in empirical research. Questions in

Section II are concerned with sociological analysis and explanation. They focus on a particular problem, phenomenon or development and invite students to think about how it can be analysed and/or explained sociologically.

SOC5. Statistics and methods

(Course Organiser: Dr Mark Ramsden)

In this course students will learn about a range of quantitative and qualitative methods and how they may be applied to explore issues in social science. Students will have the opportunity to apply new skills and knowledge in lab sessions, exploring real-life data. A wide range of statistical methods for data analysis will be covered, from simple descriptive statistics through to multivariate regression, logistic models and factor analysis. The course will also cover survey design, sampling methods, techniques in interviewing, and the principles of ethnography. At the end of the course students will:

1. Be aware of the different approaches to carrying out empirical research and the epistemological backgrounds that inform the approaches
2. Be able to read and understand empirical research published in books and journal articles
3. Know how to perform basic statistical analysis using SPSS software, and to interpret findings correctly
4. Have a solid foundation in basic methods and statistics, which will enable progression to more advanced courses, if desired

The focus of this course will be on research methods as practical tools to address real-life questions relevant to sociologists and social science. No prior expertise in mathematics or statistics is necessary. The skills and knowledge gained from studying on this course will be of benefit to students embarking on a substantial research project such as a dissertation, and will be useful for those interested in a career involving use, and interpretation, of data.