

Sociology (Honours) Syllabus 2014-2017

(18 modules: 1800 marks)

SEMESTER I

Module 1: Introducing Sociology

Module 2: Introducing India - I

SEMESTER II

Module 3: Sociological Thinkers I

Module 4: Introducing India -II

SEMESTER III

Module 5: Sociological Thinkers II

Module 6: Research Methods I

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SEMESTER V

Module 11: Everyday Life and Relationships

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Module 13: Social Institutions II

Module 14: Social Stratification

SEMESTER VI

Module 15: Sociology of Development

Module 16: Social Movements and Social Problems

Module 17: Social Institutions - III

Module 18: Dissertation

Semester 1 : Paper 1 Introducing Sociology

Course Objectives

The course is structured to introduce to students the most basic tool kits for thinking sociologically. Students will learn to inculcate a 'sociological consciousness' through the play of biography and history that involves the study of contemporary societies. Students will also appreciate the status of sociology as a scientific discipline and its intimate relationship with common sense. The course aims to provide a brief history of the context of the emergence of sociology and some of its methodological and theoretical concerns. The course will also introduce students to basic sociological concepts such a socialization, institutionalization, structure and agency and so forth.

1. What is Sociology

- **The Experience of Society**
- **Sociological Imagination**
- **Sociological Consciousness**

2. Contextualizing Sociology

- **The emergence of Modernity**
- **The subject matter of Sociology: Postivism, Social facts and Verstehen.**

3. Substantive and Methodological dimensions of Sociology

- **Sociology as a Science**
- **Sociology and Common Sense**

4. Explanatory toolkits:

- **Institutionalization**
- **Socialization**
- **Social Control**
- **Agency, Structure and Function.**

Semester I : Paper 2 Introducing India I

Course Objective:

This course attempts to understand the experience of modernization in India using the lens of tradition-modernity and goes on to show how they overlap. It looks at the colonial constructions of India as well as how structural aspects like caste, class, family, kinship and gender have played a role in contemporary times, in shaping aspects of Indian social reality. The course also introduces students to a critical understanding of the village studies tradition in Indian sociology.

1. Contextualising the tradition-modernity debate

- **The modernity of tradition**
- **The modernization thesis**
- **Mapping a distinctive modernity.**

2. Social Institutions : Continuity and Change through

A) Caste

- **The traditional understanding of caste**
- **Caste as Varna**
- **Caste as Jati**
- **Approaches to the understanding of caste in India**
- **Difference between caste and tribe**
- **The contemporary importance of caste in India.**

B) Class

- **Definition**
- **Differences between caste and class**
- **The overlap between caste and class**
- **Class in agricultural and tribal societies**
- **The rising significance of the Indian middle classes in India.**

C) Gender

- **Difference between sex and gender**
- **Embedded-ness of gender in social institutions**

D) Family

- **Definitions**
- **The debate between nuclear and joint family in India**
- **Changes in the modern Indian family.**

E) Kinship

- **Definition and Social significance**
- **Types of kinship**
- **The kinship map of India.**

3. Post 1950s Village Studies in India and its critique

Semester II, Paper 3: SOCIOLOGICAL THINKERS I

Course Objective :

The Enlightenment, French Revolution and Industrial Revolution during the 18th century had far reaching consequences in transforming the feudal mode of production, leading to the emergence of industrial capitalism in Europe. This course module outlines the impact of these major socio-historical events upon the rise and development of Sociology as a distinctively ‘modern’ and scientific discipline that attempts to study systematically the new modes of organization of society as well as the relationship of man within it. Works of classical Sociological thinkers such as August Comte and Herbert Spencer, who laid the foundations of the discipline of Sociology have been analysed in an effort to understand the varied features of the emerging modern industrial society in the West. This module also attempts to examine the works of Karl Marx with a view to developing a critical understanding of Marx’s materialist interpretation of socio-historical development and the centrality of class and class struggle in history.

1. Emergence of Sociology:

- **Enlightenment**
- **Industrial Revolution**
- **French Revolution**

2. August Comte

- **Positivism**
- **Law of three stages**
- **Hierarchy of sciences**
- **Statics and dynamics.**

3. Herbert Spencer

- **Organic analogy**
- **Typology of societies.**

4. Karl Marx

- **Dialectical materialism**

- **Materialist interpretation of history**
- **Alienation**
- **Class & class struggle**
- **Capitalism**
- **Base & superstructure.**

Semester II , Paper 4 : Introducing India – II

Course Objective :

This paper aims to provide a perspective to students about the cultural aspects of the construction of modern India. It examines identities built around the questions of language, religion, ethnicity in India and tries to depict how these forms of affiliations play out in the context of nation building in independent India. Another aim of the course is also to give a synoptic overview of the growth, development and professionalization of sociology in India and familiarize them with at least three India social thinkers whose ideas have gone into the making of the discipline.

- 1. Composite Culture and the Debate over Indian Identity**
- 2. Religion in India**
 - **Sociological Approach to the study of Religion**
 - **Religious diversity**
 - **Religious pluralism**
 - **Changes in religion in modern times.**
- 3. Language**
 - **The language question in post-independent India**
 - **Linguistic Nationalism**
 - **Language based movements and their resolution.**
- 4. Ethnicity**
 - **Conceptual meaning**
 - **Ethnicity and Race**
 - **Ethnicity and Class**
 - **Ethnic conflicts**
 - **Challenges to nation building in multi-ethnic societies.**
- 5. Power**
 - **Institutional forms of power**
 - **Everyday forms of power**
- 6. Development of Sociology and Social Anthropology in India**
 - **Emergence**
 - **Shifting concerns**
 - **The role of the professional associations.**

7. Theoretical thinking in Indian Sociology

- **Founders and Beyond**

Semester III, Paper V: SOCIOLOGICAL THINKERS II

Course Objective:

As an extension of the sociological tradition established by August Comte and Herbert Spencer, this course module examines the theoretical ideas of Emile Durkheim through some of his major works. This module also discusses the works of Max Weber, Georg Simmel and Vilfredo Pareto in an effort to expose the students to the great sociological diversity in their writings, which is a hallmark of Classical Sociological thought. The objective of this module is to give the students adequate understanding of the theoretical ideas of these four thinkers so that they are able to critically engage in interpreting the social reality around them.

1. Emile Durkheim

- **Social facts**
- **Suicide**
- **Division of Labour**
- **Religion**

2. Max Weber

- **Social action**
- **Verstehen**
- **Typology of authority**
- **Bureaucracy**
- **Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.**

3. Georg Simmel

- **Formal sociology**
- **Objective culture.**

4. Vilfredo Pareto

- **Logical and non-logical action**
- **Circulation of elites.**

Semester III, Paper VI Research Method-I

Course Objective

This module provides the foundation to understand the research methods which implies the use of research. It also seeks to realize the scope of research and its relevance in social science. It aims to teach the student about the different paradigms of social research, the basics of hypothesis formulation, the processes of theory construction-inductive and deductive, notions of validity and reliability as well as familiarize students with knowledge to draw conclusions about the universe i.e. sampling. In short the thrust of this paper is to imbibe a sense of methodology and prepare the student in a way such that he/she would be able to examine evidence objectively.

1. What is Social Research?

- **Stages of Social Research**
- **Types of Research**
- **Rationale of Social Research.**

2. Research Process

- **Concepts**
- **Variables**
- **Propositions**
- **Hypothesis: Hypothesis construction and verification**
- **Conceptualization**
- **Operationalization**

3. Research Design

- **Definition**
- **Purpose of research**
- **Units of analysis**
- **Ecological fallacy and fallacy of reductionism**
- **Factors affecting research design.**

4. Validity and Reliability

- **Definition**
- **Types.**

5. Theory construction

- **Inductive and Deductive theory construction**
- **Link between theory and research.**

6. Sampling

- **Definition**
- **Probability sampling**
- **Non-probability sampling.**

7. Social Statistics

- **What is social statistics**
- **History and Application**

8. Basic Concepts of Statistics

- **Measurement**
- **Scales of measurement (Nominal, Ordinal, Interval, Ratio)**

- **Class interval**
- **Grouping of data**
- **Bar graph**
- **Histogram**
- **Ogive.**

9. Measures of Central Tendency

- **Mean, median, mode**
- **Measures of dispersion-mean deviation, standard deviation**
- **Application of measures of central tendency in social research**
- **Bi-variate and multi-variate tables**

Semester IV: Paper VII Research Methods II

Course Objective

In the last two decades, emerging theories in qualitative research have drawn attention to the complexities inherent in social science research. In light of these theories, research can no longer be regarded objective, or value free, where data is neutrally collected, interpreted and textualized by detached researchers. Rather, research methodology has become a problematized and contested terrain depicting a double crisis of representation and legitimation. The course offers an overview of the different approaches, considerations and challenges involved in social research. In addition to reviewing core human research methods such as field research, surveys, ethnographies and the study of life documents, the course will also explore methods used in critical analysis of texts, such as discourse, content and conversational analysis. This course will also focus on mixed method approaches, case studies, as well as methods of analysing secondary data.

The objectives of the course are:

- To provide students with the tools and skills required to understand research terminology and assess published research;
- To identify the types of methods best suited for investigating different types of problems and questions;
- To develop research questions those are based on and build upon a critical appraisal of existing research;
- To design a research proposal; and
- To begin initial preparations for embarking on a new research project.

1. Methodological Paradigms

- Positivist
- Interpretative
- Critical
- Mixed

2. Quantitative Methods of Data Collection

Survey:

- Definition,
- Art and Science of Survey

- General components of a survey
- Types of survey- questionnaire, interview schedule
- Validity and Reliability of Field Research (Survey).

3. Qualitative Methods of Data Collection

Ethnography:

- Definition
- Art and science of field research
- The design of field studies
- Validity and reliability of field studies

4. Further Exploration in Methods of Data Collection

- Case Studies
- Humanist Methods: Narratives, Life History.

5. Combination of Method and Methodologies

- Mixed Methodology
 - Epistemology of Mixed Methodology
 - Ontology of Mixed Methodology
- Debate between Qualitative and Quantitative Methodologies

Core Readings:

6. Data Analysis and Concluding Processes

- Secondary Analysis
- Content Analysis: Qualitative and Quantitative
- Testing Validity and Reliability
- Coding of Data: Post and Pre.

7. Ethics in Research

Semester IV, Paper VIII Sociological Theory-I

Course Objectives

The course aims to provide an understanding of the historical trajectory of Sociological thought of the twentieth century

The course introduces students to the tradition of functionalism in American Sociology, following closely the theoretical and methodological contributions of Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton. It takes a critical stance to functional theory through the elaboration of the problems of teleology and tautology that marred functionalist thinking.

As a critique to functional thought, students will be introduced to the two traditions of conflict theory in sociology: 1. analytical conflict school through the works of Ralph Dahrendorf and Lewis A Coser and 2. critical conflict school through the works of Theodore Adorno, Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse. The course will attempt to engage with these theories as a response to classical sociological thinkers, particularly Karl Marx and Max Weber. Students will also be introduced to Pierre Bourdieu's notion of forms of capital and its reproduction.

1. Functionalism

- Major Proposition
- The intellectual roots: The influence of Durkheim, Malinowski, Radcliff-Brown.
- Talcott Parsons: Context: Action Theory, Social Systems, and Social Change. Criticism.
- R.K. Merton Codification, Critique and Reformulation of functional analysis; Criticisms.

2. Conflict Theory

- Major Proposition
- The intellectual roots: The influence of Marx, Weber
- Ralph Dahrendorf – ICA's and Cyclical Conflict
- Lewis Coser: Functional analysis of Conflict

3. Frankfurt School

- Major Proposition
- Historical Context
- Critical Theory and the Nature of Social Science
- Criticism of Marxian Theory, Positivism, Sociology, Modern Society, Culture, Social

- Change.
- Critical ideas of Subjectivity, Dialectics.
- Ideas of Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse and Habermas
- Criticism of Critical Theory.

4. **New Conflict School**

Pierre Bourdieu:

- Forms of Social Capital
- Social and cultural reproduction.

Semester V: Paper IX Social Institutions I

Course Objectives:

This course combines perspective from anthropology and sociology to understand the institutions of Kinship, marriage, family and religion. The student will be familiarized with the theoretical approaches to the anthropological study of Kinship including descent, alliance, Marxist, Cultural and feminist. The student will encounter typologies of marriage and its social significance, functionalist and feminist approaches to marriage. Students will learn how discourses, both modern and pre-modern shape the 'normal' family and feminist critiques of the same. Students will also be introduced to classical sociological approaches to religion.

The course aims to equip students to think sociologically and critically about the aforementioned social institutions.

1. KINSHIP

- A brief history of Kinship Studies and its significance
- Systems of Descent and Affinity
- Theories of Kinship : Descent, Alliance, Marxist & Cultural
- Feminist Critique of Kinship
- Kinship Terminological Systems

2. MARRIAGE

- Classification of Marriages
- Proscriptions and Prescriptions of Marriage
- Marriage as forms of Exchange
- Feminist critique of marriage and Intimate relationships
- Marriage in India : Some Reflections

3. FAMILY

- Nature of Family: Essential Functions (Functionalist perspectives)
- Happy family thesis and its critiques
- Families : Types and changes
- Families in India : Current Trends

5. RELIGION

- Sociology of Religion
- Classical Theoretical Perspectives : Durkheim, Weber & Marx
- The Secularization Thesis
- Magic, belief and revivalism

Semester IV, Paper X: Nature, Body, Culture and Society

Course Objective:

The course offers students a perspective to grasp concepts and phenomena which sociology as a positivist science did not engage with for a substantial period in its theoretical development. This course is interdisciplinary in its approach and concentrates on understanding the critical development of four important concepts in social science namely nature, body, culture and emotion. The course will address the absence or marginal consideration within the discipline of sociology, of woman's relationship to nature, her embodiment, the centrality of culture and the significance of emotions due to an over emphasis on the study of social structures and institutions.

The course will offer newly emerging perspectives on how sociology can think, in theoretical and methodological terms, about nature, body, culture and emotions in so far as they constitute and get constituted by the domain of the social.

1. Understanding Nature:

- Nature-Culture Controversy
- The relationship between the social and natural

2. Embodying Sociology:

- Embodying Sociology: The Issues
- Body in Modernity and Late Modernity
- Body and Capitalism
- Body and Sexualities

3. Understanding Culture

- The Cultural Turn
- Consumer Culture
- Popular Culture and Popular Pleasure
- Global Culture
- Cultural Identity

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4. Senses, Affect & Emotions

- Hierarchy of senses
- Place of emotions in Sociology: Substantive and methodological issues
- The conception of Affect: A brief introduction

Semester V, Paper XI Everyday Life and Relationships

Course Objectives

This module focusing on sociological approaches to everyday life attempts to capture and recognize the mundane, the routines in (and of) social relations and practices. In doing so it not only gives importance to the ordinary and take the ordinary seriously as a category of analysis, but also highlights that everyday life social relations, experiences and practices are rarely simply or straightforwardly mundane, ordinary and routine. Rather they are dynamic and surprising, characterized by ambivalences, perils, puzzles, contradictions and possibilities and continually influenced by things, contexts and environments. In short, everyday life can be thought of as the site of translations and adaptations in which the social gets to be made and unmade.

1. For a Sociology of everyday life and relationships

- Conceptualising everyday life and relationships
- Everyday preoccupation and everyday reasoning
- Space, Time, People and Objects

2. Practice of Everyday Life

- Lies, Secrets, Snooping

3. Interpersonal relationships

- Forms of togetherness: mobile, stationary, manifest, being-aside, being-with, being-for
- Living with strangers

4. Intimacies

- Home Friendship
- Online Intimacy

Semester V, Paper: XII Sociological Theory II

Course Objectives:

Following the decline of the hegemony of functionalism in Sociology, emerges a plethora of schools of sociological thought that traverse the macro- micro, structure- agent binaries in creative ways, and in ways which built on the absences of functionalism. This course introduces students to the schools of symbolic Interactionism, Dramaturgy and Ethnomethodology. Countering 'biologism' implicit in earlier sociological theories students will be acquainted with the history and nature of feminist interventions in social thought. The course winds up with a paradigm shift in sociology and its embrace of what is termed as 'Postmodernism'

1. Symbolic Interactionism and Dramaturgy

- Historical and Intellectual roots of symbolic interactionism
- Herbert Blumer- The language of the self
- Erving Goffman- Imaging the self.

2. Ethnomethodology

- Basic principles
- Harold Garfinkel- Achieving social order.

3. Phenomenology

- Alfred Schutz's intellectual influences and core ideas
- Alfred Schutz's theoretical orientation.

4. Feminist sociological theory

- Emergence of gender as a key concept in Sociology
- Waves of feminism
- Varieties of feminist theories- Liberal, Radical, Marxist, Socialist, Postmodern

- Theories of feminist identity- Black and Dalit feminism.

5. **Postmodernism:** General arguments

Semester V, Paper: XIV Social Institutions II

Course Objectives

This course introduces students to the institutions of work, organisation, market and education. It provides a critical historical trajectory of the changing nature and meanings attributed to these institutions in the context of the expansion of industrial capitalism across the globe. Students will also learn various sociological approaches and frameworks to understand these institutions.

1. WORK

- Conceptual Definition – Understanding the concept of ‘work’
- The Nature of Pre modern, Industrial and Post industrial Work
- Women and Work
- Work and leisure
- Case Studies

2 Organizations

- Emergence of Organization
- Theories of Organization: Weber’s Model of Bureaucracy and its critiques.
Goffman’s Total Institutions. The Debate over De-bureaucratization
- Organization and forms of surveillance
- Influence of Technology on Work and Organization

3. Markets

- Market as a social Institution and Principles of Exchange
- Market as place and Principle
- Impact of the Market

4. Education

- Theories of Education
- Education and Inequality
- Gender and Education
- Case Studies

Semester V, Paper XIV : Social Stratification

Course Objectives:

Sociologists have always laid an enormous amount of emphasis on the structural aspects which have a bearing on different societies. This course examines multiple axes of social stratification like caste, social class, gender, sexuality and race and how they overlap and intersect to make our experiences of social reality a complex one. It draws examples from the new middle class in contemporary India, race relations in America and Britain, the experience of gender in everyday life, and the forms of inequality experienced by sexual minorities in India to depict different forms of stratification as they exist in different societies. The course also tries to dwell upon the concept and the experience of social mobility through a few examples.

1. Stratification

- Overview
- Approaches – Functionalist, Marxist, Weberian, Feminist,
- Stratification and Crime

2. Social Class

- Types
- Social Closure
- Social Reproduction
- Significance of class in contemporary society
- Social Class and Mobility

3. Caste

- Intertwining of caste and class in India
- Caste inequality and social reproduction in contemporary India
- Caste as an Ethnic formation
- Caste and Mobility

4. Gender & Sexuality

- Sex and Gender
- Gender division of Labour
- Theories of gender inequality – functionalist and feminist
- Problematizing masculinity: Connell's Gender Hierarchy
- Sexuality, Inequality and Violence.

5. Race

- Concepts
- Racism today: From 'Old Racism' to 'New Racism'
- Intersections of race, class, gender and sexuality.

Semester VI, Paper XV: Sociology of Development

Course Objectives:

This module traces the entire historical trajectory of development theory commencing with modernisation, and continuing into dependency and world system theories. It seeks to compare and evaluate the breadth, accuracy, precision, and utility of theories. Finally it meanders into exploring globalization with an intent to see how our personal biographies are linked to increasingly dense networks of global interrelations, as the integration of societies, economies, and cultures fundamentally transforms human life. The module also aims to provide students an understanding of the dynamics of globalization including aspects affecting the global economy, political globalization, globalization and culture; local-global linkages and the new global inequalities.

1. Change and Development

- Meaning, Forms and Theories of Change
- Understanding and Critiquing Development: Modernisation, Underdevelopment, World Systems, Post Development

2. Globalization

- Characteristics of Globalization
- Dimensions of Globalization
- Impact of Globalization\

Semester VI, Paper XVI: Social Movements and Social Problems

Course Objectives:

This course focuses on a few contemporary problems that assail India, namely the problem of a growing population, violence against women, children, dalits as well as the emerging problem of terrorism. With regard to population the focus is on debates regarding the sex ratio, family planning and the National Population Policy. It also looks at a variety of old and new social movements and how they emerge in the context of different crises and raise important questions in relation to the civil society and the state in modern India.

1. Population

- Fertility-Mortality
- Migration
- Population Policy
- HIV/AIDS

2. Violence

- Women
- Children
- Dalit
- Terrorism

3. Social Movements

- Old Social Movements: Peasant and Working Class Movements.
- New Social Movement : Gender mobilisation, Lesbian/Gay Rights movement, Sex-Worker movement, Dalit Movement, Environmental Movement

Semester VI: Paper XVII: Social Institutions III

Course Objectives :

This paper interrogates the modern social institutions of State, Civil Society, law and Media. The focus of the course will be the intersections and the power nexus that characterises these institutions thereby producing the everyday fabric of modern social living. Students will develop critical understandings of the operations of these institutions and the exclusions that these engender.

1. STATE

- State as an Institution
- Dimensions of Power
- Legitimacy and the State
- Challenges to the State

2. NGOs and CIVIL SOCIETY GROUPS

- Perspectives of Civil Society
- Contextualizing NGO's

3. LAW

- Sociological perspectives on Law
- Law and other social institutions

4. MEDIA

- Meaning and role of Mass media

- Media and Culture
- Theories of Media

Semester VI : Paper - XVIII : Dissertation

This paper will involve students in the task of writing a 10,000 to 15,000 word long dissertation.

