

Syllabus template

Semester: II				
Programme : Sociology				
Course : Sociological Thinkers				
Paper code: C1SO230211T				Credits: 4
Hours/week : 4 Hours/week				
Category: Core/MDC/SEC/VAC : Core				
Theory / Practical / Composite : Theory				
No of Modules : 2				
<p>Course Overview: This course introduces students to the foundational ideas and theoretical contributions of major classical sociological thinkers—Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel—who laid the intellectual foundations of sociology as a discipline. Through a systematic study of their key concepts, perspectives, and methodologies, the course examines how classical theories explain the emergence of modern society, social order and change, capitalism, religion, authority, rationality, and modernity. By integrating insights from positivism, social evolutionism, functionalism, conflict theory, interpretive sociology, and formal sociology, the course enables students to develop analytical and critical skills to interpret social institutions and contemporary social issues, while appreciating both the relevance and limitations of classical sociological thought in the present context.</p>				
Course Outcome:				
1. Recall the key concepts, terminologies, and foundational ideas of classical sociological thinkers such as Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel.				
2. Explain the central theoretical contributions of classical sociologists, including positivism, social evolutionism, social facts, materialist conception of history, social action, authority, and formal sociology.				
3. Apply classical sociological theories and concepts to interpret social institutions, processes, and issues such as religion, capitalism, division of labour, alienation, modernity, and social change.				
4. Analyze and differentiate major sociological perspectives by examining their assumptions, methodologies, and interpretations of society, social order, and social conflict.				
5. Critically evaluate the relevance and limitations of classical sociological theories in understanding contemporary social realities and debates.				
6. Formulate coherent sociological arguments or interpretations by synthesizing ideas from multiple classical thinkers to develop an informed perspective on modern social phenomena				
Prerequisites: -				
SYLLABUS				
UNIT/Module	CONTENT	HOURS or NUMBER OF CLASSES	CO Mapping	COGNITIVE LEVEL
I.	Module I 1. Auguste Comte:	2 hours/week	CO1 CO2	K1 K2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Positivism; ● Law of Three Stages; ● Hierarchy of Sciences; ● Statics and dynamics. <p>2. Herbert Spencer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social Evolutionism; ● Typology of Societies <p>3. Emile Durkheim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Social Facts; ● Division of Labour; ● Suicide; ● Religion 		<p>CO3</p> <p>CO4</p> <p>CO5</p> <p>CO6</p>	<p>K3</p> <p>K4</p> <p>K5</p> <p>K6</p>
II.	<p>Module II</p> <p>1. Karl Marx:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dialectical Materialism; ● Materialist Conception of History; ● Alienation; ● Class and Class Struggle; ● Capitalism; ● Base and Superstructure; ● Ideology <p>2. Max Weber:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Typology of Social Actions; ● Religion; ● Authority; ● Rationality; ● Ideal Types <p>3. Georg Simmel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal Sociology; ● Ideas on modernity 	2 hours/week	<p>CO1</p> <p>CO2</p> <p>CO3</p> <p>CO4</p> <p>CO5</p> <p>CO6</p>	<p>K1</p> <p>K2</p> <p>K3</p> <p>K4</p> <p>K5</p> <p>K6</p>
III.				
IV.				
Text Books				
1. Coser, L. A. 2012. Masters of Sociological Thought. Rawat Publications.				
2. Giddens, A. 1996. Capitalism and Modern Social Theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.				
3. Allan, K. 2014. The Social Lens: An Invitation to Social and Sociological Theory. (3rd Edition). New Delhi: Sage.				
Suggested readings				
1. Appelrouth, S & Edles L.D. 2012. Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory: Text and Readings. (2nd Edition) Sage: New Delhi				

2. Simmel, G. (1971). "The Stranger." In D. N. Levine (Ed.), <i>Georg Simmel: On Individuality and Social Forms</i> (pp. 143–149). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
3. Harvey, D. (2010). <i>A companion to Marx's Capital</i> . Verso.
4. Scharff, R. C., 1995, <i>Comte after Positivism</i> , Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Schmaus, W, 1982, "A reappraisal of Comte's Three-states Law", <i>History and Theory</i> , 21(2): 248–66.
6. Weber, M. (2001). <i>The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism</i> . Translated by Talcott Parsons. Routledge. (Original work published 1904-1905)
7. Swedberg, Richard (ed.), 2005. <i>The Max Weber Dictionary</i> , Stanford: Stanford University Press.
Web Resources
1. Bourdeau, Michel, "Auguste Comte", <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Spring 2026 Edition). URL https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/comte/
2. Kim, Sung Ho, "Max Weber", <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Winter 2024 Edition). URL https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/weber/
3. Weinstein, David, "Herbert Spencer", <i>The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy</i> (Summer 2024 Edition). URL https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/spencer/
4. Prowse, Michael, "Emile Durkheim", <i>Prospect Magazine</i> , (February, 2005). URL https://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/essays/56708/emile-durkheim
Evaluation
Theory
CIA: 30 Semester Exam: 70
Paper Structure for Theory Semester Exam Module :
Total Marks – 70 Modules -2 (35 marks each)
Module A
1 long question out of 2: 1X15=15 2 short questions out of 4: 2X10=20
Module B
1 long question out of 2: 1X15=15 2 short questions out of 4: 2X10=20

Course outcomes (COs) and Cognitive Level Mapping

COs	CO Description	Cognitive levels
CO1	Recall the key concepts, terminologies, and foundational ideas of classical sociological thinkers such as Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Georg Simmel.	K1
CO2	Explain the central theoretical contributions of classical sociologists, including positivism, social evolutionism, social facts, materialist conception of history, social action, authority, and formal sociology.	K2
CO3	Apply classical sociological theories and concepts to interpret social institutions, processes, and issues such as	K3

	religion, capitalism, division of labour, alienation, modernity, and social change.	
CO4	Analyze and differentiate major sociological perspectives by examining their assumptions, methodologies, and interpretations of society, social order, and social conflict.	K4
CO5	Critically evaluate the relevance and limitations of classical sociological theories in understanding contemporary social realities and debates.	K5
CO6	Formulate coherent sociological arguments or interpretations by synthesizing ideas from multiple classical thinkers to develop an informed perspective on modern social phenomena.	K6