Introduction
Do we actively manage the impressions others may have about us? Perhaps. Are elections the most important part of a democracy? Perhaps not. Why are we developing so many technologies ranging from webcams to traffic cameras to put ourselves under surveillance? This course not only provides answers to such questions of social importance; it also seeks to train you how to think. While one of the objectives of this course is to make you conversant with the most important theories in contemporary sociology, it will not be sufficient to simply memorize facts about theories. We will read about them, talk about them, write about them, and use them in analyzing novel events. It is of critical interest not only to students who wish to major in sociology, but also to those, who need tools to think and talk about their society with a view to broader life satisfaction.

Beware, we will be covering almost a semester worth of material in four weeks. While covering this amount of material in four weeks may seem painful but it will be over, you guessed it, in just four weeks.

When you access the course website for the first time, look around and get familiar with the environment. Under "Content," you will find full course information, quizzes, writing assignment guidelines, virtual class participation guidelines, and evaluation criteria. You can find the course materials under their weekly module. Follow the "To do list," and make sure you complete all the requirements every week. I will put up my lecture notes and slides ahead of time. Again, welcome aboard! Let's have a "thoughtful" summer-break together.

Required Texts
The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences edited by Quentin Skinner (Canto 1985)

Exams
Exams are a highly troubling feature of modern times, I agree. But there is nothing you and I can do about them, except take and give them. Response Paper, Quizzes, and Discussion forum participation are three types of exam in this course. For more details, visit the course website.

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<td><strong>Response Papers</strong></td>
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Week 1: Review of Classical Theory
Module 1: Karl Marx

First Assignment: Write a 200-word essay on yourself (self introduction), and upload a small picture of yours. Your introduction and picture will be available for the whole class to view, get to know you (and admire).

Read Lecture: [Marx, Technology, and our Work Life](#)
Read: [Karl Marx's Manifesto](#) (one of the few original writings you will be reading in this course)

Week 1: Review of Classical Theory
Module 2: Max Weber

Read lecture: [Max Weber: The Ethos of an Age and the Mode of our Work](#)
Read: [Notes on Weber's Protestant Ethic and Capitalism](#)
Read: [Bureaucracy and Rationalization](#)
Read: [Scientific Management](#)

Week 1
Module 3: Functionalism

Lecture Slides: [Functionalism](#)
Read: Functionalism (Chapter 2 Contemporary Sociological Theory, ie, CST)

Week 2
Module 1: Conflict Theory
### Lecture Slides: **Conflict Theory**

**Read:** Conflict Theory (Chapter 3, *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, ie, CST)

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### Lecture Slides: **Symbolic Interactionism**

**Read:** Symbolic Interactionism (Chapter 5, *Contemporary Sociological Theory*, ie, CST)

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### Lecture Slides: **Sociology and the Body**

**Read:** Rediscovering the body (Chapter 8, *Contemporary Sociological Theory*)

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### Lecture Slides: **Habermas and Modernity**

**Read:** Jurgen Habermas, Chapter 7, *The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences*

**Read:** Evolution and Modernity (Chapter 4, Pages 174-195, *Contemporary Sociological Theory*)

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<td>Module 2: Thomas Kuhn</td>
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### Lecture Slides: **Science**
Read: Thomas Kuhn (Chapter 5, The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences)

Read: John Law: Notes on Actor-Network Theory

Week 3
Module 3: Structuralism

Lecture Slides: Structuralism

Read: Claude Levi-Strauss (Chapter 9, The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences)


Week 4
Module 1: Althusser

Lecture Slides: Marxist Structuralism

Read: Louis Althusser (Chapter 8, The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences)

Read: Althusser, Ideology

Week 4
Module 2: Post-structuralism

Lecture Slides: Post Structuralism

Read: Michel Foucault (Chapter 4, The Return of Grand Theory in the Human Sciences)

Week 4
Module 3: Postmodernism
Lecture Slides: Postmodernism

Read: Baudrillard, The Gulf War Did Not Take Place