

Course Title	Introduction to Sociology	Instructor	Dr Cherry Amor YAP
		E-mail	
Class Style	Lecture	Office Hours	To be determined Or by appointment (please send an email to request an appointment)
Track		Mode of Instruction	Solo
Credits	2	Allocated Year	Spring 1st Year
Active Learning	Category 1: 3, 5, 6 Category 2: 3, 6 Category 3: 1, 2, 3, 5 Category 4: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11 Category 5: 1, 2	Compulsory or Elective	
Course Overview	<p>This course introduces students to the major theories, concepts, and debates in classical and contemporary sociology. What is society? How did the early social scientists understand the transformations brought by modernisation? As society advances, how did they think about the ongoing changes brought by such transformations? More relevantly, what do their ideas tell us about the world today?</p> <p>The course is structured in two modules: Module 1 (Classes 1-8): Classical Theory - Class 1 is syllabus overview and introduction to the 'sociological imagination'; Class 2 is a historical summary of the discipline and its founding figures; Classes 3-4 cover Marx; Class 5 covers Durkheim; Class 6 covers Weber, and Class 7 combines Weber with a comparative revision woven in. Class 8 is the midterm exam. Module 2 (Classes 9-15): Social Issues and Debates — stratification, social mobility, gender, sexuality, family, race, and ethnicity, with sustained reference to contemporary Japanese society.</p> <p>Teaching emphasises critical thinking, active engagement with ideas, and the application of sociological reasoning to real social questions.</p>		
Course Objectives	<p>By the end of this course, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the major classical sociological theories and situate them within the wider founding tradition of the discipline; • Apply sociological concepts to interpret contemporary social issues, with a focus on Japanese society; • Participate in structured academic discussions and collaborative tasks; • Write clear analytical paragraphs that use evidence to support a sociological argument; • Develop the 'sociological imagination' — the ability to connect personal experience to broader social forces. 		
Prerequisite	This introductory course is open to all students and does not have any prerequisites.		
Course Schedule	No	Contents	Homework
	1	Syllabus Overview and Introductions This introductory meeting explains the course structure, the work expected from each student, and the grading system. The class concludes with an initial discussion on "what is sociology" and initiating the students' 'sociological imagination'.	Readings for the next class.
	2	The History of Sociology — Founding Figures and the Discipline's Origins	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
	3	Karl Marx (Part 1) — Capitalism and Class Conflict	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
	4	Karl Marx (Part 2) — Alienation and Ideology	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to

		explore further in class.
5	Émile Durkheim — Functionalism and Social Solidarity	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
6	Max Weber — Rationalisation, Authority, and the Iron Cage	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
7	Weber — The Protestant Ethic, and Comparative Revision	Studying for the Midterm Exam.
8	MIDTERM EXAM — Module 1	
9	Class and Social Stratification (Part 1) — Inequality in Society	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
10	Class and Social Stratification (Part 2) — Social Mobility	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
11	Gender, Sex, and Sexuality — Sociological Perspectives	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
12	LGBTQ+ Rights — Stigma, Identity, and Social Change	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
13	The Family — Changing Structures and Social Forces	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
14	Race, Ethnicity, and Nationalism — Multiculturalism in Japan	Complete the assigned readings and identify one question or idea you want to explore further in class.
15	Conclusion — Thinking Sociologically	Studying for the Final Exam.
	FINAL EXAM — Module 2	
Grading	<p>Class Participation 30% Assessed on the quality of intellectual contribution to discussions, group tasks, and in-class writing. Students are evaluated on engagement with ideas and use of course concepts — not on the fluency of English expression. Students who prefer not to speak publicly may arrange an alternative format with the instructor.</p> <p>Weekly Activities (In Class/Homework) 20% Short tasks either done in class or as additional assignments.</p> <p>Midterm Exam 25% Covers Module 1 where the first part is designed as multiple choice and true/false questions. The second part is a short essay writing for analytical and critical reasoning assessment.</p> <p>Final Exam 25% Covers Module 2 where the first part is designed as multiple choice and true/false questions. The second part includes longer and multiple essay writing exercises for analytical and critical reasoning assessment.</p>	
Textbooks	Information on primary textbooks will be provided by the instructor on Moodle.	
References	<p>A detailed list of references will be provided on Moodle.</p> <p>Online References Video — Crash Course Sociology (YouTube, 44 episodes) Simple English Wikipedia — Key Theorists and Concepts: Karl Marx; Marxism; Alienation;</p>	

	<p>Émile Durkheim; Max Weber; Protestant Ethic; Zainichi Koreans; Ainu people</p> <p>Japan-Focused Reading — Nippon.com (free English articles on Japanese society) NHK World-Japan — Free English Documentaries on Japanese Society</p> <p>Data Tools Gapminder — World income inequality data explorer WEF Global Gender Gap Report 2024 — Japan country data OECD — Society at a Glance (Japan social indicators) OECD — Education at a Glance (Japan education data)</p>
NOTES	<p>The use of AI tools like ChatGPT, Google Gemini, or Claude is not entirely prohibited. Students, however, must remember that these are primarily “tools”, as with any kind of tools, they are to be used carefully and in a relevant manner. For instance, it can help you understand new terminologies or concepts, sort out your notes, or check if you interpreted an idea correctly. But, AI can also give out the wrong information. Reading and studying verified references can help solve this. If you must use AI, please discuss it with the course instructor.</p> <p>Students with special needs (including stress and anxiety problems) should talk with the course instructor to discuss arrangements to let them attend the course properly. Confidentiality will be granted to all students.</p>