



## ICIR 212 Social Institutions of the Modern World

### Course Description & Aims

This course examines a selection of basic social institutions in comparative global perspective. Students will develop a differentiated understanding of the process of socialization and its significance for social stability. Adopting a critical approach, the course compares the core components of social structure, e.g. marriage and the family, education and schooling, religion, culture and the media, or governance, politics and the law. By contrasting functionalist and Marxist approaches in the study of social institutions, students will evaluate the merits of diverse perspectives for an understanding of society and social structuration. Through class discussions, they will also be able to relate their own life experiences to the class contents and develop a differentiated awareness of their own position in society.

Basic social institutions in comparative global perspective. Socialization. Marriage and the family. Education and knowledge. Religion and culture. Media and communication. Government and administration. Politics and power. Multi-institutional politics approaches in sociology. Students will describe; explain; analyze significant social and political institutions.

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### Assessment

Active Class Participation	10 %
Group Debates	20 %
Midterm Examination	30 %
Final Essay	40 %

### Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Understand and analyze processes of socialization and the basic components of social structure
2. Explain, interrelate and interpret fundamental sociological theories
3. Relate aspects of social organization to their own life experiences.

Topic No.	Topic
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1	Introduction and Course Organization
	What is Sociology? Concepts, Foundations and Approaches
2	Socialization and Identity
	Social Structure and Social Dilemmas
3	Kinship and Belonging in Comparative Perspective
	Families and Inequality
4	Education and Schooling in Comparative Perspective
	Critical Approaches and Education Reform
5	Concepts of Knowledge
	Social Epistemology and the Sociology of Knowledge
6	Media Worlds: Concepts and Critical Approaches
	Censorship and State Monitoring
7	Midterm Review
	Midterm Examination
8	Religion, Culture and Society: Comparative Perspectives
	Religion and Social Change
9	Crime and Deviance: Concepts and Comparisons
	Values, Norms and the Law
10	Politics, Government and the State
	Democracy and Voting Behaviour
11	Theories and Realities of Power
	Social Movements in Comparative Perspective
12	Final Discussion
	Final Review

### **Assessment Methods, Criteria and Rubrics**

**1. Active Class Participation** [10 %]. – Students are expected to actively and regularly take part in class discussions. It is important to keep up with the reading materials in order to be able do so. Core readings are clearly indicated (in **bold** letters) in the detailed lecture schedule at the end of this syllabus, all others are further reading suggestions. Relevant readings will be made available to students electronically and/or in form of a study pack.

**2. Group Debates** [20 %]. – At two occasions (during Week 3 and 6), students will be divided into two groups and asked to discuss a given topic from different angles. Groups will be given 30 minutes to develop arguments for their respective positions. Afterwards both groups are discussing the merits and limitations of their contrasting positions with each other. During each group debate, students can accumulate up to 10 points. The level of participation and the quality of contributions to these debates – both during the preparation in small groups and during the open-floor debate – will be assessed based on the frequency and quality of individual contributions, as well as students’ ability to engage in team-work.

**3. Midterm Exam** [30 %]. – In Week 7, students will take an in-class exam consisting of 10 short-answer questions [2 points each] and one essay [10 points].

The short-answer questions that ask students to briefly explain some of the concepts, terms and theories discussed in the first half of term. Answers can be brief, but must be precise and attend to all aspects of the question (read the questions carefully!). The second part of the exam consists of three essay topics to choose from. Students are asked to write *one* structured argumentative essay with reference to relevant concepts and associated theoretical frameworks as they have been discussed during the term.

**4. Final Essay [40 %].** – As a final assessment for this course, students are expected to write a final essay paper (of 2500 words, due at the end of Week 13). In their final paper, students have to discuss the contemporary realities of a social institution of their choice in comparative theoretical perspective. A list of specific topic suggestions will be provided in class after the completion of the midterm examination. The final essay paper must include the following aspects: (1) a brief introduction of the chosen topic, including a more descriptive section regarding background and context of the case study, (2) an analysis and discussion of relevant aspects of the case study in relation to theories and debates introduced in class, and (3) a critical assessment of the applicability of sociological theory to the dynamics of contemporary social structure. The essay needs to be clearly structured and argumentative.

### **Introduction**

**Topic description:** What is sociology? After a general introduction into course contents, the weekly schedule and the course requirements, general questions, approaches, foundations and challenges of sociology will be explained. This includes a brief review of the history of sociology as an academic discipline, an introduction to foundational sociological approaches (functionalism, conflict approach and symbolic interactionism) and a brief discussion of C. Wright Mills' concept of "sociological imagination." In this context, the significance of social frameworks for individual choice is discussed, based on Émile Durkheim's classical study on suicide.

#### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will develop a basic understanding of the history of sociology and be able to differentiate between major sociological approaches.
- Students will become aware of some major concerns and challenges of sociological approaches.

#### **Activity:**

- Plenary brain-storming exercise on the challenges of sociological inquiry.

#### **Readings:**

- **Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.**
  - Chapter 1: "What is Sociology?" (pp. 4-31)
  - Chapter 3: "Theories and Perspectives in Sociology" (pp. 68-105)
- C. Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*. With a new Afterword by Todd Gitlin. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000 [1959].
- Émile Durkheim, *Suicide: A Study in Sociology*. Edited with an introduction by George Simpson. London and New York: Routledge Classics, 2002 [1897].

### **Socialization and Social Structure**

**Topic description:** How do we become who we are? How do we formulate identity and develop a sense of belonging? The first session of this week introduces and explains theories of socialization, including Charles Horton Cooley's concept of the "looking-glass self" and George Herbert Mead's theory of role-taking and the development of social behaviour in response to expectations of the "generalized other". However, the process of socialization does not end when we reach adulthood – accordingly, a variety of context for resocialization is discussed, with some reference to Arnold van Gennep's analysis of passage rites. In the second session of the week the interactionist perspective on society is replaced by a bird's-eye view on social structure. Core components of social structure are introduced and related to each other, to find ways of conceptualizing the complex web of norms, values, rules and regulations; roles, statuses and positions; groups, communities, organizations and institutions. Some consideration will be given

to Durkheim's concept of "social facts" and Anthony Giddens' work on "structuration". Finally a discussion of "social dilemmas" – such as the "tragedy of the commons" or the "free-rider problem" – will highlight some of the structural challenges to social stability.

### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will explore and understand the concepts of socialization and resocialization, as well as social structure and social dilemmas.
- Students will develop awareness for the complexity of social structure and explain and discuss different approaches to socialization.

### **Activities:**

- Students assemble in small groups to discuss issues of identity and the influence of "nature" and "nurture" towards personality development. The groups' findings and suggestions are then presented and discussed in a plenary debate.
- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

### **Readings:**

- **David M. Newman, *Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks [et al.]: Pine Forge Press, 2004.**
  - **Chapter 5: "Building Identity: Socialization" (pp. 127-154)**
  - **Chapter 9: "The Structure of Society: Organizations, Social Institutions, and Globalization" (pp. 284-306)**
- Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.
  - Chapter 8: "The Life-Course" (pp. 281-325)
- George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self, and Society from the Standpoint of a Social Behaviorist*. Edited and with an Introduction by Charles W. Morris. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1972 [1934].
- Charles Horton Cooley, *On Self and Social Organization*. Edited by Hans-Joachim Schubert. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Anthony Giddens, *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1984.

## **The Family and Marriage**

**Topic description:** The family, a core component of social life and often regarded as the most fundamental building block of social structure, is the first social institution that will be discussed in detail. But what exactly is called a "family"? Theories of kinship will be introduced in comparative perspective, and cross-cultural variation in marriage customs, patterns of post-marital residence and the types of family will be discussed. Special attention is given to Talcott Parsons' functionalist analysis of family life, which will be contrasted to the problem of domestic violence and broader challenges that families pose for social equality. Students will have the opportunity to explore related issues in a group discussion during the second session of the week.

### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will explore the significance of the family institution for social structure and social stability.
- Students will understand and be able to explain socially relevant features of marriage patterns and family life.
- Students will begin to critically discuss the relevance of social institutions from Marxist and functionalist perspectives and begin to compare the merits and limitations of these approaches.

### **Activities:**

- Based on a fictive post-election scenario, students will be divided into two groups that represent opposing political parties (one of a “functionalist” and one of a “Marxist” background). During a simulated parliamentary debate, the issue of family policy is discussed: Should families be supported by the state? Should they receive tax deductions? How should inheritance be regulated? During the preparation for the debate (in groups), as well as during the plenary discussion, students will engage with a macro-social perspective in order to understand the social significance of families for structural stability, but also the problematic role that families play in the process of “cultural reproduction” (of dominant culture, socioeconomic inequality, gender norms etc.). – *Note that students’ participation and performance in this group debate is part of the assessment for this course (10 %).*
- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

### **Readings:**

- **Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.**
  - **Chapter 9: “Families” (pp. 328-380)**
- **Philip N. Cohen, “Inequality and the Family,” in: *The Blackwell Companion to the Sociology of Families*, edited by Jacqueline Scott, Judith Treas, and Martin Richards. Malden and Oxford: Blackwell, 2004, pp. 181-192.**
- Talcott Parsons and Robert F. Bales, *Family, Socialization and Interaction Process*. Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1955.
- D. H. J. Morgan, *Social Theory and the Family*. London: Routledge, 1975.

## **Education and Schooling**

**Topic description:** Beyond the family, education is one of the most influential “institutional socializers”. During this week, concepts and principles of education will be introduced in historical comparative perspective and critically assessed. What are the different types of education and how do they translate into frameworks of schooling? The Socratic ideal of personalized instruction (maieutics) will be discussed, and challenges and problems of depersonalized instruction in modern education systems will be critically assessed. Classical sociological theories regarding education and inequality will be explained in a way that students can easily relate to, based on their own experiences at school and university. Special attention is given to Ivan Illich’s critical discourse on the “hidden curriculum” and his suggestion to “deschool” society. Illich’s analysis will be aided by Basil Bernstein’s work on linguistic skills and the impact of “language codes” towards educational performance, in comparison to Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of “cultural reproduction” in formal schooling. A case study on recent developments in the Finnish education system will be used as a basis to discuss the possibilities of educational reform.

### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will understand and explain sociological theories of education and schooling.
- Students will compare the significance of the family and education as “institutional socializers”.
- Students will critically discuss the social significance of education in relation to their own experiences at school and university.

### **Activities:**

- Students assemble in small groups and are given 10-15 minutes’ time to reflect about their own educational experiences during high-school and relate them to sociological theories of education; findings and suggestions are then discussed in a plenary session

- A plenary discussion of the Finnish education system in relation to Ivan Illich's idea of "deschooling".

### **Readings:**

- **Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.**
  - **Chapter 19: "Education" (pp. 830-881)**
- Ivan Illich, *Deschooling Society*. London and New York: Marion Boyars, 2012 [1971].
- Pierre Bourdieu and Jean Claude Passeron, *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. London: Sage, 1990.
- Basil Bernstein, *Towards a Theory of Educational Transmissions*. London: Routledge, 2009 [1975].

### **Documentary:**

- *The Finland Phenomenon: Inside the World's Most Surprising School System*. Directed by Sean Faust. Yleisradio (YLE), 2011.

## **Knowledge as a Social Institution**

**Topic description:** If education is the transmission of knowledge – then what exactly is "knowledge"? During the week, a conceptual framework for this contested term and its social relevance will be developed, making use of the foundational work of analytical philosophy – notably Plato's *Theaitetos* – and its reflection in social epistemology. In class discussions we will develop a systematic approach towards the minimal requirements for a concept of knowledge as "accountable, true opinion" and discuss the impact of social structure and "social facts" in this regard. The component of accountability (or "justification") will be discussed in detail to demonstrate how communities, organizations and institutions contribute to – and sometimes restrict – the production and reproduction of "knowledge". In this context, Karl Mannheim's classical contributions to the sociology of knowledge will be discussed, to explore the sociohistorical situatedness of knowledge and to assess the relevance of critical social epistemology for political sociology.

### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will explore the concept of knowledge and its social significance.
- Students will analyze the concept of knowledge from a sociological perspective and become aware of the relational nature of ideas.
- Students will reflect about the impact of social epistemologies upon the meaning and social significance of learning and teaching.

### **Activities:**

- In a plenary session the definition and concept of knowledge is gradually developed by engaging in an in-depth dialogue with individual students, making use of the Socratic technique of maieutics.
- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

### **Readings:**

- **Peter Hamilton, *Knowledge and Social Structure: An Introduction to the Classical Argument in the Sociology of Knowledge*. London and Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974.**
  - **Chapter 8: "Karl Mannheim and the Production of a "Relationist" Sociology of Knowledge" (pp. 120-134)**
- Karl Mannheim, 'Sociology of Knowledge and the Role of Intellectuals' [i.e. parts of *Ideology and Utopia* with an introduction by James Farganis], in: James Farganis (ed.),

## Media and Communications

**Topic description:** Throughout the 20th century, the mass media have become more and more instrumental for our understanding of the world. Based on a review of historical developments of the ‘media’ and their role in communication and information exchange, we will discuss John Thompson’s communication model regarding different types of interaction, as well as Jürgen Habermas’ analysis of the “public sphere”. The social functions of the media – from information to correlation and mobilization – will be considered and critically discussed with a focus on Jean Baudrillard’s concept of “hyperreality”: how reliable are mediated representations of “reality”, and how biased are the mass media? Are mediated worlds merely “simulations” based on “images without an original”? What is the impact of such hyperreal worlds, if our social awareness is increasingly dominated by mediated information? And consequently, how could societies control and monitor the flow of information – or should they? Where does quality assurance end and censorship begin? – Students will have the opportunity to explore related issues in a group discussion during the second session of the week.

### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will understand some foundational sociological theories of the mass media and explore their key features.
- Students will develop a critical and differentiated understanding of the influence of media representations (or creations) towards our awareness of the world.
- Students will critically discuss a number of sociological perspectives regarding the social impact of the mass media and the degree to which societies should control and limit them.

### **Activities:**

- Students will be split into two groups to discuss recent calls to “regulate the internet” – with one group advocating a strong role of the state in monitoring the exchange of information in the virtual world by formulating policy initiatives that aim at quality assurance, strict ethical codes and the avoidance of information monopolies, whereas the other group’s role is to defend the free flow of information and point out the dangers of political control and censorship for democratic societies. – *Note that students’ participation and performance in this group debate is part of the assessment for this course (10 %).*
- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

### **Readings:**

- **Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.**
  - **Chapter 17: “The Media” (pp. 722-777)**
- **Jean Baudrillard, “Simulacra and Simulations,” in: Jean Baudrillard, *Selected Writings*, edited by Mark Poster. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1988, pp. 166-184.**
- Wendy Hui Kyong Chun, Anna Watkins Fisher and Thomas Keenan (eds.), *New Media, Old Media: A History and Theory Reader*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York and London: Routledge, 2016.
- John Thompson, *The Media and Modernity: A Social Theory of the Media*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995.
- Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2011 [1962].

## Midterm Review and Exam

**Topic description:** A review of the materials of the first part of the course in order to prepare students for the midterm examination. – The format and expectations of the midterm exam will be introduced in detail and students are then given the opportunity to ask questions about any of the topics covered during week 1-6. A review sheet will be provided prior to the review session as a basis for preparation.

### **Activity:**

- After the midterm exam, anonymized copies of exam booklets will be distributed to students alongside with the assessment rubrics used by the instructor. Each student is asked to peer evaluate one exam based on the official rubric as a mechanism to ensure impartiality and to develop an awareness for assessment methods used in the IRGA program. Student and lecturer scores of the midterm exams will later (in Week 8) be compared and discussed.

## Religion and Social Change

**Topic description:** Despite earlier predictions that “religion will disappear,” many societies around the world remain – or are increasingly – attached to beliefs in the supernatural. New forms of religious fundamentalism and extremism have developed, identity politics often are based on religious principles, and the significance of religion as a basis for social cohesion and the functionalist notion of “moral consensus” continues to be a relevant feature of social organization. During the week we will engage with different conceptualizations of (and approaches to) religion in sociological theory. After comparing Émile Durkheim’s classical contribution to *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* with Marxist approaches towards religion as an “opium of the people,” we will focus our discussion on the contribution of religious convictions to social and cultural change, exemplified through a detailed analysis of the principle perspectives of Max Weber’s study of *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will understand some foundational sociological theories of the religion and explore their key features.
- Students will develop a critical and differentiated understanding of the significance of religion for social structure and social change.
- Students will begin to compare the explanatory value of functionalist and Marxist approaches to social institutions with Weber’s ‘cultural sociology’.

### **Activity:**

- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

### **Readings:**

- **Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.**
  - **Chapter 16: “Religion” (pp. 674-719)**
- **Anthony Giddens, ‘Introduction’, in: Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001, pp. VII-XXIV.**
- **Émile Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, translated and with an Introduction by Karen E. Fields. New York: The Free Press, 1995 [1912].**
- **Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2001 [1976].**



## Politics and Governance

**Topic description:** This week introduces the last thematic bloc of the course, namely the sociological study of political organization, including aspects of governance, the law, and power relations. Basic understandings of “politics” will be considered from an Aristotelian perspective and discussed in contemporary comparative frameworks. Having introduced Max Weber’s approach to the sociological study of religion in the previous week, we continue to engage with his contributions to the understanding of rational modernity. Weber’s three “ideal types” of political domination will be introduced, followed by a discussion of the organizational principles of bureaucracy and Robert Merton’s analysis of the “dysfunctions” of bureaucratic realities. The focus of the second session of the week is the most common form of “legal domination,” i.e. democracy: ideas and ideals of democracy will be analysed based on its conceptual foundations and discussed in comparative perspective. What exactly does it mean if a society is “ruled by the people”? Who are “the people”? And how do they “rule”? Different interpretations and systems of “representation” will be introduced and critically discussed, contextualized by sociological approaches towards an understanding of voting behaviour and political mobilization.

### **Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will begin to explore a range of sociological theories of politics, governance and power and identify and explain key features of the sociology of politics.
- Students will develop a systematic and differentiated understanding of categories and types of governance and the organizational principles of bureaucracy.
- Students will explore diverse ideas about democracy and critically discuss them.
- Students will continue to compare the explanatory value of different sociological approaches.

### **Activities:**

- Students assemble in small groups to discuss their preferential meaning of “democracy”, addressing the key questions of exactly *who* “the people” should be, and *how* they should exercise their “power/rule”. Findings and suggestions from the groups are then discussed in a plenary debate and related to specific democratic systems in a comparative perspective.
- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

### **Readings:**

- **John Hughes, “Bureaucracy,” in: R. J. Anderson and W. W. Sharrock (eds.), *Applied Sociological Perspectives*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984, pp. 106-124.**
- **Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.**
  - Chapter 18: “Organizations and Networks” (pp. 779-827)
  - **Chapter 22: “Politics, Government and Social Movements” [Part I, pp. 988-1010]**

## Law and Crime

**Topic description:** As discussed in Week 9, Weber’s idea of “legal domination” provides the basis for modern political organization. Departing from a consideration of principles of normativity and rationality we will focus our discussion on a differentiation between the proclaimed objectives of legal norms and the actual social consequences of the law. Key problems in the sociological study of crime and deviance will be explored and foundational sociological approaches to jurisprudence (from Émile Durkheim’s and Talcott Parson’s functionalist analyses to Max Weber’s “cultural sociology”) will be introduced, preparing the ground for a critical discussion of the relationship between values, norms and regulations in

increasingly multi-cultural societies. Consequently, our focus will then shift to debates on inequality and discrimination in – and through – law.

**Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will relate concepts of crime and deviance to the idea of ‘social dilemmas’ that has been discussed earlier.
- Students will continue to explore a range of sociological theories of politics, governance and power, this week with a focus on ‘the law’ as a social institution.
- Students will identify and explain key questions and approaches in the sociology of law and develop a systematic understanding of associated categories.
- Students will continue to compare the explanatory value of different sociological approaches and critically discuss the merits and limitations of different perspectives.

**Activities:**

- Students are given brief case scenarios describing twisted legal-ethical situations. Each student has 5-10 minutes’ time to brainstorm these case scenarios in relation to sociological legal theory and then present the case critically in a plenary session.
- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

**Readings:**

- **Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009. Chapter 21: “Crime and Deviance” (pp. 935-983)**
- **Mathieu Deflem, *Sociology of Law: Visions of a Scholarly Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.**
  - Chapter 1: “Introduction: Sociology, Society, Law” (pp. 1-14)
  - **Chapter 10: “Law and Culture: The Balance of Values through Norms” (pp. 198-224)**

**Power, Protest and Social Movements**

**Topic description:** To conclude our discussions of the political and legal realm of social organization, we engage with critical perspectives towards the realities of “power”. Contrasting the Marxist approach to social classes with ideas of power elites, we focus on an understanding of the analytical frameworks of Antonio Gramsci, C. Wright Mills and Robert Dahl. Differentiating between models of the “ruling class” and the “hegemonic class”, as well as the “power elite” and “polyarchic governance”, we discuss the merits of diverse approaches towards the sociological study of power relations. Later during the week, we will explore the concept of “contentious politics” and the changing character of social movements as a means to pursue social agendas beyond the formal political arena.

**Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will continue to explore a range of sociological theories of politics, governance and power, this week with a focus on social movements and ideas about power.
- Students will identify and explain the major differences of class models and elitist approaches in the empirical study of power.
- Students will continue to compare the explanatory value of different sociological approaches and critically discuss the merits and limitations of different perspectives.

**Activities:**

- Plenary discussion of assigned readings.

**Readings:**

- Bob Anderson, “The Empirical Study of Power,” in: R. J. Anderson and W. W. Sharrock (eds.), *Applied Sociological Perspectives*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984, pp. 167-89.
- Anthony Giddens, *Sociology*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009.
  - Chapter 22: “Politics, Government and Social Movements” [Part II, pp. 1010-1025]
- James Fulcher and John Scott, *Sociology*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Chapter 19: “Politics, Power, and Protest”
- Elizabeth A. Armstrong and Mary Bernstein, “Culture, Power, and Institutions: A Multi-Institutional Politics Approach to Social Movements”, *Sociological Theory* 26(1) [March 2008]: 74-99.

### **Final Discussion and Review**

**Topic description:** In light of our in-depth analysis of a selection of social institutions – and sociological approaches – throughout the term, we will once more consider the structural components of society from a broader perspective and engage in a final debate on the significance of social structure and social facts and their impact towards our daily lives. In the second session of the week, a comprehensive review of course materials will be conducted in order to prepare students for the final examination. – The format and expectations of the final essay exam will be introduced in detail and students are then given the opportunity to ask questions about any of the topics covered in the duration of the term. A review sheet will be provided prior to the review session as a basis for preparation.

**Expected learning outcomes:**

- Students will demonstrate awareness of connections and relations between different social institutions vis-à-vis the complexity of social structure.
- Students will demonstrate a differentiated, critical, and in-depth understanding of foundational sociological theory.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to discuss and critically assess the merits and limitations of diverse sociological perspectives.