Soc\*3310
Contemporary Theory

Ray

Fall 2022

Instructor: Dean Ray

Office: TBD

Office Hours: TBD

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**Description from Academic Calendar:** This course outlines and evaluates the major theories in use today. A central aspect of the course is instruction in the application of these theories.

**Course Goals:**This course will focus on contemporary theory. It will consider topics like interaction, colonialism, race, gender, settler-colonization and globalization from a range of theoretical perspectives and connect these to theoretical currents today and to their origins in classical sociological theory. Some of the central questions of classical theory dealt with modernity and modernization, classical theorists asked: What makes society possible? What holds society together and what reshapes it and breaks it apart? And How was modernity changing social, cultural and economic institutions? Contemporary theory is more concerned with the conditions of social life and social and cultural change in an already modern society. Racism, classism, discrimination on the basis of gender and sexuality, colonization of Indigenous lands, genocide and poverty pervade our already modern lives. Contemporary theory considers how we can bring to bear ideas to understand these phenomena—sometimes very old ideas. In this course we will describe and interact with a range of theories in the hopes that we can better understand our ever changing world and our own lives. Throughout the semester we will examine how authors connect theories to empirical findings and draw on collected data to make theoretical claims. Thus the aim of this seminar is explicitly to facilitate use and engagement of knowledge critically.

**Required Text:** All readings provided through CourseLink

**Evaluations:** Community Agreement, Fishbowl Seminar, Short Quizzes, Reading Summary