1. **Title of the module**

SOCI8830 (SO883) - Contemporary Social Theory

1. **School or partner institution which will be responsible for management of the module**

School of Social Policy, Sociology and Social Research

1. **The level of the module (Level 4, Level 5, Level 6 or Level 7)**

Level 7

1. **The number of credits and the ECTS value which the module represents**

20 credits (10 ECTS)

1. **Which term(s) the module is to be taught in (or other teaching pattern)**

Spring term (term 2)

1. **Prerequisite and co-requisite modules**

None

1. **The programmes of study to which the module contributes**

Sociology MA

International Social Policy MA

Criminology MA

Criminology with a term Abroad MA

Methods of Social Research MA

Two year masters versions of the appropriate programmes listed above

1. **The intended subject specific learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

8.1 Critically analyse links between important debates about social and political life and their theoretical underpinning

8.2 Display a critical understanding of the implications of different theoretical approaches for the way society is known.

8.3 Employ advanced analytical tools in various traditions of social theory to examine a range of analytical aspects of social life and a range of empirical cases.

8.4 Critically evaluate competing theoretical perspectives using logic and drawing on relevant empirical evidence.

8.5 Provide original insights when critically discussing issues in social theory within a global framework.

1. **The intended generic learning outcomes.  
   On successfully completing the module students will be able to:**

9.1 Respond to written sources and present information orally and in writing in a clear and organized way commensurate with postgraduate study.

9.2 Develop argumentation based upon sound reasoning and understanding of the material and express these arguments in a written format.

9.3 Undertake desk-based research. Students will be able to gather library and web-based resources appropriate for postgraduate study; make critical judgements about their merits and use the available evidence to construct a developed argument to be presented orally or in writing

1. **A synopsis of the curriculum**

Social theory is a nebulous field of inquiry with fuzzy boundaries. Some of the most significant contributions to it in terms of ideas and concepts have historically originated in the work of thinkers diversely identified with a wide range of disciplines - such as psychoanalysis, philosophy, anthropology, literary and aesthetic theory, historical and cultural studies, as well as with sociology. This module approaches contemporary social theory by exploring a set of themes through close readings and analyses of several texts by 20th and 21st century theorists whose work has been to varying degrees appropriated across the social sciences and the humanities, but yet whose contribution to ‘social theory’ per se is still open to question, in any case far from canonical.

In working through these selected primary texts within a seminar group, the aim is to critically investigate and evaluate what they offer to social theory, and to critically assess their usefulness for understanding various social and political phenomena characteristic of contemporary life and society in a globalised world. During the course of such detailed discussions, we will also, no doubt, reflect on the distinction between modern and postmodern social theory; the ‘linguistic turn’, the ‘cultural turn’, the ‘ethical turn’, the shift from narrative to image based culture, and other general parameters of social theorizing in recent times.

1. **Reading list (Indicative list, current at time of publication. Reading lists will be published annually)**

Barthes, R. and A. Lavers (1972) *Mythologies*. New York: Hill & Wang.

Boltanski, L.and L. Thévenot. (2006) *On Justification: Economies of worth*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1990) *The Logic of Practice*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Foucault, M. (1978) *The History of Sexuality*. New York: Pantheon Books.

Habermas, J. (1989) *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere.* Cambridge: MIT Press.

Latour, B. (2005) *Reassembling the social: An introduction to actor-network-theory*. Oxford University Press, USA.

Luhmann, N. (1977) “Differentiation of society.” *The Canadian Journal of Sociology/Cahiers Canadiens de Sociologie* 2:29–53.

West, C., and D. H Zimmerman (1987) “Doing gender.” *Gender and society* 1:125–151.

1. **Learning and teaching methods**

Total contact hours: 22

Private study hours: 178

Total study hours: 200

1. **Assessment methods**
   1. Main assessment methods

Coursework – essay 4,000 – 5,000 words) – 85%

Coursework –seminar participation – 15%

13.2 Reassessment methods

100% coursework.

1. **Map of module learning outcomes (sections 8 & 9) to learning and teaching methods (section 12) and methods of assessment (section 13)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Module learning outcome** | *8.1* | *8.2* | *8.3* | *8.4* | *8.5* | *9.1* | *9.2* | *9.3* |
| **Learning/ teaching method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Private Study | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Seminars | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| **Assessment method** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Coursework 1 essay – 4,000 to 5,000 words | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |
| Coursework 2 – seminar participation | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** | **X** |

1. **Inclusive module design**

The School recognises and has embedded the expectations of current equality legislation, by ensuring that the module is as accessible as possible by design. Additional alternative arrangements for students with Inclusive Learning Plans (ILPs)/declared disabilities will be made on an individual basis, in consultation with the relevant policies and support services.

The inclusive practices in the guidance (see Annex B Appendix A) have been considered in order to support all students in the following areas:

a) Accessible resources and curriculum

b) Learning, teaching and assessment methods

1. **Campus(es) or centre(s) where module will be delivered**

Canterbury

1. **Internationalisation**

The discussion and application of contemporary social theory is performed in an international context. Specifically learning outcome 8.5 highlights the global perspective students develop within this module.

**FACULTIES SUPPORT OFFICE USE ONLY**

**Revision record – all revisions must be recorded in the grid and full details of the change retained in the appropriate committee records.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date approved | Major/minor revision | Start date of the delivery of revised version | Section revised | Impacts PLOs (Q6&7 cover sheet) |
| 30/03/2017 | Minor | January 2017 | 13 | 30/03/2017 |
|  |  |  |  |  |

Revised FSO March 2018