

# SO9C1-20 State of Art of Sociology

**24/25**

**Department**

Sociology

**Level**

Taught Postgraduate Level

**Module leader**

David Turner

**Credit value**

20

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

100% coursework

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

This module seeks to introduce students to some of the major debates about how theorising and empirical research should be done, through examples of how it is being done. It seeks to situate this against the background of the sociological tradition and to give students a sense of where there is continuity, discontinuity, progress and/or decline.

### Module aims

To introduce students to the latest developments in Sociology and related disciplines. To embed an awareness of current and ongoing debates in Sociology and a critical understanding of the possibilities of the discipline in terms of empirical research, theoretical developments, and methodological innovations.

### Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

This module will introduce students to current developments and debates in the field of sociology, linking this to the older traditions and currents of the discipline. Students will appreciate both the possibilities and the limits of Sociology as a discipline, through engagement with a wide range of

approaches (in terms of methodology, empirical focus and theoretical approach), to develop their own interests in specific areas of work (in preparation for the dissertation) and to relate these specific interests to other sociological approaches. The two hour session will be broken down into a one hour lecture and one hour seminar devoted to key readings.

Summative assessment will be by a 4,000 word essay in which students must demonstrate their engagement with some of the debates that have been presented to them. They may choose a specific field of interest from those that have been presented (or beyond) but their coursework will focus on the development of independent critical analysis of debates both within this specific area, and its links to broader fields of social science.

The precise curriculum will vary from year to year, depending on the availability of academic staff. An indicative term may look something like the following:

The Craft of Sociology: State of the Art or State of Science?

Theorising, or skill and clumsiness in the use of concepts

Spies and Cannibals: the perils of ethnography

What makes your case so special?

What's new in comparative sociology?

Interdisciplinarity

Rationality, relativism and postcolonial studies

Writing well and writing badly

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- (1) Demonstrate knowledge of recent debates in Sociology and their relationship to longer-standing traditions in the discipline.
- (2) Demonstrate critical analysis of the current state of Sociology as a discipline in a specific area of specialism.
- (3) Relate aspects of methodological, empirical and theoretical traditions and innovations in Sociology to one another, and to a specific area of interest.
- (4) Apply analytical skill to relate a specific area of sociological interest (research, theory, and/or method) to broader developments in Sociology and beyond.

## **Indicative reading list**

Allert, T. 2010. *The Hitler Salute*. London: Picador

Axelrod, R. 'The live and let live system in trench warfare', in Michael Hechter and Christine Horne (eds) *Theories of Social Order*

Back, L and Puwar, N (2012) *Live Methods*, Wiley-Blackwell.

Becker, H. 2014. 'Black Boxes', in *What about Mozart, What About Murder?: Reasoning from Cases*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cohen, R.L., Hughes, C. and Lampard, R. (2011) 'The methodological impact of feminism: A troubling issue for Sociology?' *Sociology* 45 (4), 570 — 586

Gane, N and Back, I (2012) 'C. Wright Mills 50 Years On: The Promise and Craft of Sociology Revisited' . *Theory, Culture and Society*, 23, 7/8, 2012, pp.399-421

Hacking, I. 1999. 'Why ask What?' in *The Social Construction of What?*. Harvard University Press.

Hinterberger, A (2012) *Publics and Populations: The Politics of Ancestry and Exchange in Genome Science*. *Science as Culture*, 21(4): S28- 549 (2012)

Mah, A. (2012) *Industrial Ruination, Community and Place: Landscapes and Legacies of Urban Decline*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Pettinger, L (2013) 'Market moralities in the field of commercial sex', *Journal of Cultural Economy*, 6(2): 184-99.

Sahlins, M. 1998. *How Natives Think*.

Skocpol, T. 'Explaining Revolutions' in *Social Revolutions in the Modern World*

Todd, E. 2015. *Who is Charlie?*

Verdery, K. 2018. *My Life as a Spy*

Wieder, D.L. 1974. 'Telling the Code' in R. Turner (ed) *Ethnomethodology*

### **Subject specific skills**

Capacity to understand contemporary social issues and sociological responses to those issues, and to situate issues and their response in relation to the history of the discipline.

Capacity to understand and apply theoretical ideas to empirical problems.

Enhanced analytic abilities in the application of sociological ideas to real-world situations.

### **Transferable skills**

Oral and written communication skills; critical thinking and analytic reasoning.

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## **Study**

### **Study time**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Required</b>
Seminars	9 sessions of 2 hours (9%)
Private study	182 hours (91%)
Total	200 hours

### **Private study description**

reading and researching for weekly seminars. Preparation for assessment.

### **Costs**

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### Assessment group A1

	Weighting	Study time
4000 word Essay	100%	

### Feedback on assessment

Marking is via the Tabula system and students receive written, electronic feedback through the system.

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## Availability

### Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of TIMA-L981 Postgraduate Social Science Research
- TSOA-L3PD Postgraduate Taught Sociology
  - Year 1 of L3PD Sociology
  - Year 1 of L3PD Sociology

This module is Option list A for:

- TSOA-L3PW Postgraduate Taught Social Inequalities and Research Methods
  - Year 1 of L3PW Social Inequalities and Research Methods
  - Year 2 of L3PW Social Inequalities and Research Methods
- Year 1 of TSOA-L3PE Postgraduate Taught Social Research
- TSOA-L3P8 Postgraduate Taught Social and Political Thought
  - Year 1 of L3P8 Social and Political Thought
  - Year 1 of L3P8 Social and Political Thought
  - Year 1 of L3P8 Social and Political Thought
  - Year 1 of L3P8 Social and Political Thought

This module is Option list C for:

- TPOS-M9PE Double MA in Politics and International Studies (with NTU Singapore)
  - Year 1 of M91B International Political Economy (Double Degree - NTU)
  - Year 1 of M91C International Politics and East Asia (Double Degree - NTU)
  - Year 1 of M91D International Politics and Europe (Double Degree - NTU)

- Year 2 of M91B International Political Economy (Double Degree - NTU)
- Year 2 of M91C International Politics and East Asia (Double Degree - NTU)
- TPOS-M9PP Double MA in Politics and International Studies (with Universität Konstanz, Germany)
  - Year 1 of M92B International Political Economy (Double Degree - Konstanz)
  - Year 1 of M92C International Politics and East Asia (Double Degree - Konstanz)
  - Year 1 of M92D International Politics and Europe (Double Degree - Konstanz)
  - Year 1 of M92E International Relations (Double Degree - Konstanz)
  - Year 1 of M92G International Security (Double Degree - Konstanz)
  - Year 1 of M92H Public Policy (Double Degree - Konstanz)
  - Year 2 of M92D International Politics and Europe (Double Degree - Konstanz)
  - Year 2 of M92K Political and Legal Theory (Double Degree - Konstanz)
- Year 2 of TPOS-M9PT MA in International Development
- Year 1 of TWSA-M9P7 Postgraduate Taught Gender and International Development
- Year 2 of TPOS-M1P8 Postgraduate Taught International Politics and East Asia
- Year 2 of TPOS-M9PS Postgraduate Taught Political and Legal Theory
- Year 2 of TPOS-M9PQ Postgraduate Taught United States Foreign Policy