

Module Details	
Module Title	Social Inequalities: Advanced Themes in Sociology
Module Code	SAC5023-B
Academic Year	2024/5
Credits	20
School	School of Social Sciences
FHEQ Level	FHEQ Level 5

Contact Hours	
Type	Hours
Seminars	12
Directed Study	176
Lectures	12

Availability	
Occurrence	Location / Period
BDA	University of Bradford / Semester 1

Module Aims
<p>All of us reflect on the world we live in. In line with how Sociology is being taught at the University of Bradford, we will take a reflexive approach to understanding and conceptualising the social through advanced lenses. This module aims:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To provide students with an appreciation of how contemporary social theory builds on key assumptions of classical social theory; 2. To enable students to become familiar with the ways social theorists are conceptualising the contemporary era; 3. To provide students with an appreciation of the ways these conceptualisations of the contemporary world are articulated in terms of debates about modernity and postmodernity; 4. To help students to understand the connection between contemporary social theory and lived experience. 5. To enable the application of critical theories and concepts to the analysis of social issues and themes. 6. To examine contemporary risk and vulnerability and analyse power dynamics and inequalities in local and global contexts.

Outline Syllabus

Marx, Durkheim and Weber built on and transformed 18th century Enlightenment ideas about progress, science, inherent and acquired human capacities so that they could understand the problems and possibilities of the industrial era in which they lived. Today social theorists are trying to understand a world that has changed considerably since the mid to late 19th century. Contemporary sociology theorises globalisation and transnational processes in economy, politics and culture, and negotiates risks and more recently vulnerabilities. Power relations are being deconstructed by social theorists that identify and conceptualise inequalities in the meanings and messages that inform our judiciary and political systems, construct our experiences and present social justice issues. Social movements mobilised by these dynamics cut across the globe as digital and social media aid communications. Industrialism is being replaced by the new information technology and, more generally, economy, culture, politics, philosophy and ecology are undergoing radical transformations. Specifically, the module will cover:

- Contemporary social theory
- Chicago School (interactionism)
- Frankfurt School (Critical theory)
- Postmodernism (Foucault, Baudrillard, Loutard, Bourdaux and Habermas)
- Feminist theory
- Critical Race theory
- Postcolonial theory
- Queer theory
- Globalization theory
- Social stratification and inequalities.

Learning Outcomes

Outcome Number	Description
01	Explain the continuities and discontinuities between classical and contemporary social theories.
02	Illustrate how contemporary social theory aims to take account of the present era.
03	Articulate an awareness of key issues in debates about 'modernity' and 'post-modernity'.
04	Use and apply contemporary social theory to interpret particular problems and issues of our times.
05	Critically reflect, correlate and transfer theoretical insights and knowledge to the understanding of alternative or marginal experiences in the social world.
06	Analyse power relations communicated in the structures of language and interactions that make up our social systems and relationships.
07	Consider the role of social stratification in conceptualising the social.
08	Formulate theoretical explanations of contextual social phenomena and calculate their links to global trends and social inequalities.

Learning, Teaching and Assessment Strategy

Lectures and seminars will provide adequate explanation and analysis of contemporary social theories. From each theory one or two main proponents will be considered. In seminar discussions, students will assess critically the theory and demonstrate its relevance in contemporary life and lived experience. Participatory and interactive exercises will be employed to clarify and break things down as much as possible and examples will be utilised to substantiate criticisms and arguments. Students will have a major role to play in the seminars and tutorial sessions as they will be invited to critically engage with the concepts and theories addressed, to share their own understanding, critique, knowledge and experience, and to associate these with theoretical ideas.

The module is assessed by coursework. Students will choose from a number of essay questions each of which addresses a different social theory which they will be required to link to real life issues and problems and analyse from the perspective of social inequalities. Students will be required to search datasets and research studies in order to negotiate social inequalities and critically reflect upon social theory and contemporary understanding of the social.

Mode of Assessment

Type	Method	Description	Weighting
Summative	Coursework - Written	A critical evaluation of an aspect of contemporary policing explored in the module Essay (2500 words)	100%

Reading List

To access the reading list for this module, please visit <https://bradford.rl.talis.com/index.html>

Please note:

This module descriptor has been published in advance of the academic year to which it applies. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate at the time of publication, but minor changes may occur given the interval between publishing and commencement of teaching. Upon commencement of the module, students will receive a handbook with further detail about the module and any changes will be discussed and/or communicated at this point.