



LEAD CITY UNIVERSITY
Faculty of Social and Management Sciences
Department of Sociology and Psychology

COURSE PARTICULARS

Course Code: SOC 113
Course Title: Elements of Scientific Thought
No. of Units: 3
Status: Compulsory

LECTURER DETAILS

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Area of Specialization: Criminology and Penology

Course Description:

This course introduces the scientific nature/status of Sociology and the principles and tools of Science and their application to Sociological study. The course will discuss the meaning/explanation of Science and Sociology, various sources/approaches to Sociological knowledge, the different perspectives on the scientific nature/status of Sociology, features and tools of scientific research applicable to Sociology.

Objectives:

This course examine the scientific status of Sociology and the principles of science and its application to Sociology, will differentiate Sociology discipline as a social science from disciplines in pure/natural sciences, it will examine the different sources of Sociological knowledge. It will examine the different perspectives on the scientific nature of Sociology as a science (i.e. Positivism and Phenomenology, Interpretivists and Postmodernist. It will examine the relationship between Sociology and other social science disciplines, to know the scientific tools/principles and their application to Sociological research, to know the relevance of Sociological explanation to Scientific nature of Sociology.

Course Assessment: Grand Total = 100%

-Attendance: 5 marks
-Test(s) and Assignments: 25 marks
-Final Examination: 70%

LECTURE PLAN

Weeks	Topics
1	Sociology as a science: Meaning/explanation of Science; scientific nature of Sociology
2	Sources/Approaches to Sociological Knowledge: the scientific approach (Positivism)
3	Sources/Approaches to Sociological Knowledge: the humanistic/behavioural approach
4	Positivists, Interpretivists and Postmodernists perspectives of Sociology as a Science and Sociological knowledge
5	Some objections on the Science of Sociology: Positivism versus Phenomenology
6	Features/characteristics of Scientific research: validity, certitude, causality,

	refutability
7	Features/characteristics of Scientific research: testability, reliability, objectivity, universality.
8	Principles of Science (Tools/instruments of science) and their application to Sociological research
9	Epistemology: Empiricism and Rationality; Epistemological Dualism
10	Sociology and the Specializing Social Sciences: Economic, Geography, Political science, Anthropology and Psychology
11	Sociological Explanation; Relationship of theory and research in Sociology.
12	Uses of Sociological knowledge and the role of Values

READING LISTS:

1. Haralambos, M. & Holborn, M. 2007. Sociology: Themes & Perspectives. 7th Ed. HarperCollins Pub. London.
2. Giddens Anthony. 2009. Sociology. 6th ed. Wiley India Pvt. Ltd. New-Delhi, India.
3. DiRenzo, J. Gordon. 1987. Human Behaviour, Concept & Principles of Sociology.
4. Inkeles Alex. 1964. What is Sociology: An Introduction to the Discipline & Profession. Prentice-Hall Inc. New-Jersey. Foundations of Modern Sociology Series.

TUTORIAL QUESTIONS:

1. (a). Discuss the Scientific nature of Sociology.
(b). Differentiate between Sociology and natural science disciplines
2. Sociology as an academic discipline is standing on two pillars: “Research and theory”. Discuss their relationship
- 3 a). Vividly discuss the Qualitative method in conducting Sociological research
b). Vividly discuss the Quantitative method in conducting Sociological research
4. Positivist scholars differ from Antipositivist scholars on status of Sociology as a science. Discuss.
5. Sociology is described ‘jack of all trade’. Discuss the relationship between Sociology and Other specializing sciences
6. Auguste Comte described Sociology as the Queen of all science. Explain why.
7. Discuss Epistemological Dualism in line with Rationality and Empiricism.
8. Explain the following features of scientific research:
(a) Validity (b) Certitude (c) Causality (d) Testability (e) Refutability (f) Reliability
9. List and explain the characteristics of Quantitative and Qualitative methods.
10. Discuss how Sociology emerged as an academic discipline.
- 11a) Describe some of the tools used by Sociologists in conducting quantitative research.
b) Describe some of the tools used by Sociologists in conducting qualitative research.

- 12.** Auguste Comte laid the foundation on which Sociology as an academic discipline was built through his Comtean methodology. Discuss