Module Descriptor

Title	Understadning Society: Introduction to Social and Political Thinking		
Session	2026/27	**Status**	
Code	PLTC08006	**SCQF Level**	8
Credit Points	20	**ECTS (European Credit Transfer Scheme)**	10
School	**Education and Social Sciences**		
Module Co-ordinator	Michael Pugh		

Summary of Module

This module introduces students to the central role of social and political theory in understanding social change, power, and inequality in modern and global societies. It explores the development of social theory from its Enlightenment origins and its entanglements with colonialism, modernity, and global transformation. Through lectures and applied examples, the module encourages students to develop their knowledge and critical understanding by using theory to interpret everyday experiences and social issues. The module situates theories within broader schools of thought and examines how concepts such as agency, structure, power, inequality, and "the social" itself are theorised in different ways. By examining objects, practices, and social phenomena through different theoretical lenses, students learn how social theory provides tools for making sense of social change and lived realities shaped by race, gender, class, and colonial histories. The module equips students with the conceptual foundations needed to critically analyse society and apply theory beyond the classroom.

Module Delivery Method	**On-Campus[1]** ☒	**Hybrid[2]** ☐	**Online[3]** ☐	**Work -Based Learning[4]** ☐
Campuses for Module Delivery	☐ Ayr ☐ Dumfries	☒ Lanarkshire ☐ London ☒ Paisley	☐ Online / Distance Learning ☐ Other (specify)	

[1] Where contact hours are synchronous/ live and take place fully on campus. Campus-based learning is focused on providing an interactive learning experience supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[2] The module includes a combination of synchronous/ live on-campus and online learning events. These will be supported by a range of digitally-enabled asynchronous learning opportunities including learning materials, resources, and opportunities provided via the virtual learning environment. On-campus and online contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[3] Where all learning is solely delivered by web-based or internet-based technologies and the participants can engage in all learning activities through these means. All required contact hours will be clearly articulated to students.

[4] Learning activities where the main location for the learning experience is in the workplace. All required contact hours, whether online or on campus, will be clearly articulated to students

Terms for Module Delivery	Term 1	☒	Term 2	☐	Term 3	☐
Long-thin Delivery over more than one Term	Term 1 – Term 2	☐	Term 2 – Term 3	☐	Term 3 – Term 1	☐

Learning Outcomes	
L1	Demonstrate understanding of key concepts within social and political theoretical approaches to social change and lived realities.;
L2	Apply social and political theory to interpret everyday experiences and contemporary social issues, using different theoretical perspectives;
L3	Demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively in a group to produce and effectively communicate a presentation using appropriate technology;
L4	
L5	

Employability Skills and Personal Development Planning (PDP) Skills	
SCQF Headings	**During completion of this module, there will be an opportunity to achieve core skills in:**
Knowledge and Understanding (K and U)	**SCQF 8** Demonstration of knowledge and understanding of understanding key concepts within social and political theoretical approaches.
Practice: Applied Knowledge and Understanding	**SCQF 8** Application of knowledge and understanding of the key concepts within social and political theoretical approaches. Apply understanding derived from module readings, workshop activities and independent study to evaluate issues using different theoretical perspectivesc.
Generic Cognitive skills	**SCQF 8** Presentation and evaluation of information on social and political theory.
Communication, ICT and Numeracy Skills	**SCQF 8** Communication of complex ideas using appropriate technology and in written form.
Autonomy, Accountability and Working with Others	**SCQF 8** Work with others in a way that recognizes contribution of self and peers.

Prerequisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**
	Other	
Co-requisites	**Module Code**	**Module Title**

Learning and Teaching

In line with current learning and teaching principles, a 20-credit module includes 200 learning hours, normally including a minimum of 36 contact hours and maximum of 48 contact hours.

Learning Activities During completion of this module, the learning activities undertaken to achieve the module learning outcomes are stated below:	**Student Learning Hours** (Note: Learning hours include both contact hours and hours spent on other learning activities)
Lecture / Core Content Delivery	24
Tutorial / Synchronous Support Activity	12
Asynchronous Class Activity	10
Independent Study	154
Please select	
Please select	
TOTAL	200

Indicative Resources

The following materials form essential underpinning for the module content and ultimately for the learning outcomes:

Bhambra, G.K. (2014) *Connected sociologies*. 1st edn. London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Brock, T. (2023) *Welcome to social theory*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Calhoun, C., Gerteis, J., Moody, J.W., Pfaff, S. and Virk, I. (eds.) (2022) *Contemporary sociological theory*. 4th edn. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Deutsch, K.L. and Fornieri, J.R. (2009) *An invitation to political thought*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Higher Education.

Dillon, M. (2020) *Introduction to sociological theory: theorists, concepts, and their applicability to the twenty-first century*. 3rd edn. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.

Inglis, D. and Thorpe, C. (2024) *An invitation to social theory*. 3rd edn. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Ramgotra, M. and Choat, S. (2023) *Rethinking political thinkers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

(N.B. Although reading lists should include current publications, students are advised (particularly for material marked with an asterisk*) to wait until the start of session for confirmation of the most up-to-date material)

Attendance and Engagement Requirements

In line with the Student Attendance and Engagement Procedure, Students are academically engaged if they are regularly attending and participating in timetabled on-

campus and online teaching sessions, asynchronous online learning activities, course-related learning resources, and complete assessments and submit these on time.

For the purposes of this module, academic engagement equates to the following:

The university is committed to providing a supportive learning environment that actively facilitates student success. In this module, there is a high degree of student-led flexibility. You are academically engaged if you are regularly engaged with scheduled live sessions on-campus, learning activities in your own time, course-related learning resources, and with timely completion and submission of assessments.
Whilst we understand that there may be times when conflicting priorities make participation challenging, for you to gain the most from this module it is recommended that you participate in all scheduled live classes and complete your self-directed learning activities in a timely manner.
It may be difficult to pass the assessment associated with this module if you are not regularly engaging with the module work and live classes. We may reach out to check how things are going and offer support if we observe that you have not been attending sessions or completing online activities.

Equality and Diversity
The University's Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Procedure can be accessed at the following link: UWS Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Code. In line with current legislation (Equality Act, 2010) and the UWS Equality, Diversity, and Human Rights Code, our modules are accessible and inclusive, with reasonable adjustment for different needs where appropriate. Module materials comply with University guidance on inclusive learning and teaching, and specialist assistive equipment, support provision and adjustment to assessment practice will be made in accordance with UWS policy and regulations.
(N.B. Every effort will be made by the University to accommodate any equality and diversity issues brought to the attention of the School)

Supplemental Information

Divisional Programme Board	**Social Sciences**
Overall Assessment Results	☐ **Pass / Fail** ☒ **Graded**
Module Eligible for Compensation	☒ **Yes** ☐ **No** **If this module is eligible for compensation, there may be cases where compensation is not permitted due to programme accreditation requirements. Please check the associated programme specification for details.**
School Assessment Board	Undergraduate Social Sciences
Moderator	
External Examiner	J Halsall
Accreditation Details	
Module Appears in CPD catalogue	☒ **Yes** ☐ **No**
Changes / Version Number	1

Assessment (also refer to Assessment Outcomes Grids below)

Assessment 1
Group Presentation (40%)
Assessment 2
Individual Written Assignment (60%)
Assessment 3
(N.B. (i) Assessment Outcomes Grids for the module (one for each component) can be found below which clearly demonstrate how the learning outcomes of the module will be assessed. (ii) An indicative schedule listing approximate times within the academic calendar when assessment is likely to feature will be provided within the Student Module Handbook.)

Component 1							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Group PowerPoint Presentation	☒	☐	☒	☐	☐	40	1

Component 2							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
Individual Written Assignment	☒	☒	☐	☐	☐	60	2

Component 3							
Assessment Type	**LO1**	**LO2**	**LO3**	**LO4**	**LO5**	**Weighting of Assessment Element (%)**	**Timetabled Contact Hours**
	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐		
Combined total for all components						100%	hours

Change Control

What	**When**	**Who**
Module title, description of the module and content	Feb 2026	Emilia Pietka-Nykaza