



**Indiana State University**  
**College of Technology**  
**Electronics, Computer and**  
**Mechanical Engineering Technology Department**

**AET 461 – Evolution of the Automobile Industry through  
the Lens of Sociology**

**Syllabus**

**I. Course Purpose**

This course meets the Foundational Studies requirement for the category of Social or Behavioral Sciences. Thus, this course is designed to introduce you to the social or behavioral sciences and demonstrate the impact these disciplines have on our society. The social sciences explore aspects of human society. Social science often uses empirical methodologies including observational, experiential, and experimental methods to explain and predict. Behavioral sciences explore the activities of and interactions among individuals.

In this class we will come to know four social theories from which we will study the evolution of the automotive industry: structural functionalism, critical theory, conflict theory, and interpretive theory. The first three of these theories are well grounded in social science while interpretive theory tends to cross the boundaries into behavioral science. As we learn these four theories, we will investigate how the theories are applied to the American education system. As you are likely very much aware of the American education system this portion of the course will allow you to see how the theories explain and provide avenues for change in how schools work. It is then through these newly formed lenses that we will explore the evolution of the automobile industry.

**II. Catalog Description**

Through the lenses of Sociology, including such theories as functionalism and conflict theory, the evolution of the automobile industry is explored, focusing on relevant social conditions and events that have advanced the automobile industry from inception to the present and future. Through the medium of student-developed presentations, students will utilize sociological concepts and theories to explain and even predict outcomes in the automotive industry, enter into dialogue with their peers, and participate in critiquing fellow student presentations.

**III. Prerequisite:**

Junior standing – 63.0 credits

#### **IV. Foundational Studies**

This course satisfies the social and behavioral science requirement in the Foundational Studies (FS) program. The ten FS program objectives are listed below. This course will NOT necessarily adequately address the FS Program Objectives numbered 4 and 9, nor will it address each of the following outcomes to the same degree.

##### **a. Foundational Studies Program Objectives (FS:PO)**

1. Locate, critically read, and evaluate information to solve problems
2. Critically evaluate the ideas of others
3. Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing (natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, mathematics and history)
4. Demonstrate an appreciation of human expression through literature and fine and performing arts
5. Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship
6. Demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures within and across societies
7. Demonstrate the skills to place their current and local experience in a global, cultural, and historical context
8. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions
9. Apply principles of physical and emotional health to wellness
10. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing

##### **b. Foundational Studies skill and applied learning objectives applicable to the Social or Behavioral Science category (FS:SALO)**

1. Developing critical thinking skills
2. Developing information literacy skills
3. Including a graded writing component

##### **c. Foundational Studies Specific Social or Behavioral Science Learning Objectives (FS:SBS)**

1. Describe how individual choices and or evolving social institutions affect human decision-making
2. Utilize discipline specific methodologies to predict an individual or social outcome

3. Connect discipline-specific content and methodology to contemporary social issues
4. Explain how the specific discipline informs and contributes to other disciplines

## V. Course Objectives

This course's learning objectives are integrated into the learning and program objectives prescribed for all Foundational Studies - Social and Behavioral Science courses. The specific course objectives below, which are identified by bullets, are mapped onto the FS Objectives from section IV.

### a. Foundational Studies Program Objectives

- i. Locate, critically read, and evaluate information to solve problems
  - identify and locate automotive related primary historical documents, writings and artifacts to interpret differences in social perspectives relative to the times
- ii. Critically evaluate the ideas of others
  - dialogue with peers concerning interpretations of social constructs surrounding the automobile industry
- iii. Apply knowledge and skills within and across the fundamental ways of knowing (natural sciences, social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, mathematics and history)
  - demonstrate knowledge of automotive industry contributions of the early business leaders, designers and engineers
- iv. Demonstrate the skills for effective citizenship and stewardship

The automobile is ubiquitous in society today. This fact offers any college student the ability to relate the past with the "here and now." The automobile is a unique construct for studying the social interactions of peoples throughout the world. Developing an understanding of past social constructs, and the developments leading to the present, facilitates student abilities to adapt to an ever-changing world. The automobile represents the technology integration of society. Using and understanding technology's limitations, then understanding the limitations of society, encourages participatory citizenship

- v. Demonstrate an understanding of diverse cultures within and across societies
  - understand social complexities surrounding the evolution of the automobile industry
    - Comparing the two textbook authors will reveal distinctly different viewpoints. One is an American woman and the

other a German man. Their distinct styles are influenced by personal beliefs and cultures. This divide will be a powerful aspect in demonstrating the influence of cultural perspectives.

- vi. Demonstrate the skills to place their current and local experience in a global, cultural, and historical context
  - understand elements of the socio-economic structure of the United States and Europe in the early 1900s
  - discuss the concept through interpretive theory, as it relates to the automobile, that the power of one individual's idea, when working in a team effort, can change the world
- vii. Demonstrate an understanding of the ethical implications of decisions and actions
  - utilize sociological theories to determine authors' interpretation strengths and weaknesses of events pertaining to the evolution of the automotive industry
- viii. Express themselves effectively, professionally, and persuasively both orally and in writing
  - develop a presentation using one or more sociological theories effectively interpreting social issues and or events from an assigned reading

## **b. Foundational Studies skill and applied learning objectives**

### **i. Developing critical thinking skills**

Students will be reading with a critical eye, and concluding for themselves, the strengths and weaknesses of an author's interpretation of historical events. The four reflection/impression assignments, which challenge students to communicate their impression of the readings, drawing together the text and the current social constructs of the students

### **ii. Developing information literacy skills**

Although the material presented is somewhat chronologically organized, much is organized by events or ideas that occur or come to fruition over a period of time. Many unfolding events overlap other important events. Thus, the students must interpret given material, research additional sources, then analyze and synthesize the material to construct their own organization of events leading to each new stage of automotive development.

iii. Include a graded writing component

Several writing assignments are incorporated into the course and the quality of writing is assessed both formatively and summatively

**c. Foundational Studies Social or Behavioral Science Learning Objectives**

i. Describe how individual choices and or evolving social institutions affect human decision-making

- apply sociological theories including functionalism, conflict theory, and critical theory to interpret and explain events affecting the automotive industry Utilize discipline specific methodologies to predict an individual or social outcome

Each automotive phase - conceptualizing, sorting, industrializing, mass producing and consumer producing depicts how society dealt with issues and problems of the specific time period, how society solved them and how the solutions created new problems and new issues. Each phase had to occur. Understanding social constructs and concepts, in the context of the automobile, will help students grasp the development process of societies.

ii. Utilize discipline specific methodologies to predict an individual or social outcome

- discuss, using sociologic theories, the various world crises leading to the development of today's automobile industry
- discuss how society reacted to, and resolved, automotive issues and problems in specific time periods

iii. Connect discipline-specific content and methodology to contemporary social issues

- understand how automotive-related solutions created new industrial and social conflict, problems and issues

The automobile, and all its nuances, has been a complex part of our way of life for over a hundred years. The need for transportation, both personal and commercial, has influenced all aspects of our society. The personal transportation of a social group is a reflection of that group. With Kimes, we understand the shaping of the American society through the automobile. With Eckermann, we understand the European society through his German perspective of the automobile.

iv. Explain how the specific discipline informs and contributes to other disciplines

- discuss major changes in the automotive industry using sociological theories and explain how such discussion contributes to other disciplines such as economics and history

Through the lenses of sociological theories, our study of the evolution of the automobile industry will better our understanding of how the world works. We will discuss how the social theories can be used to analyze decision making in a broad respect and to analyze current policy issues. We focus our attention on the evolution of the automotive industry.

We will study four social theories and apply those theories to the evolution of the automotive industry using empirical methodologies. Through these lenses we will better understand why Ford built the same exact Model T and in only one color for several years. Further analysis will help us understand why and how, through advertising and other manipulative techniques, corporations standardized automotive buyers' wants creating a standardized market for which to sell cars. In the 1920's GM arranged its product in a stylist hierarchy, changed superficially every couple of years, stimulating consumers to upgrade their cars due to want and desire, thus aesthetically depreciating models with years of functionality remaining. Through our analysis of societal conditions, historical events and artifacts, we will better understand the conditions necessary to allow the concepts of change and diversity to lead to mass production.

We will discuss the limitations of the theories and sociology in general to place sociology in context with the other social science disciplines. Then we can discuss how sociological theories applied to political and social institutions may predict outcomes and perhaps influence world politics and social structure. You will gain a new perspective on your role as a citizen in understanding political and social boundaries. In the process you will see how sociology informs public policy and several disciplines in business.

## **VI. Course Content**

The following table is reflective of a typical schedule

Week	Lecture Topic	Assignment	Overview of lecture/discussion
			List of objectives that are addressed in some fashion during lecture and or through assignments – students will demonstrate/apply/express objectives through interactive discussions and through assignments
1	Course Introduction Social Theories and School History of the Society of Automotive Engineers	The Way Schools Work pgs 1-42	This overview lecture introduces the student to the social theories to be discussed in the course, which includes functionalism, conflict theory, critical theory and interpretivism. The reading introduces, defines, and applies the social theories in a school setting. The school setting is one in which every student has knowledge and therefore serves as a practical application of the theory  <b>FS:PO - 3, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2; FS:SBS - 3, 4</b>
2	Social Theory: Functionalism Discussion and application demonstration	School and Society (S&S) pgs 6-8, 29-58 Quiz #1- Theory identification	Functionalism theory and the theory of transmission are discussed. Sociological empirical methodologies introduced.  <b>FS:PO - 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
3	Conflict Theory and Critical Theory	S&S pgs 81-97 World History of the Automobile (WHA) pgs 1-25 Quiz #2 –Theory application	Conflict Theory and Critical Theory are more fully discussed by utilizing education as a frame of reference.  <b>FS:PO - 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
4	Pre-history of the Automobile leading up to 1880's "Conceptualizing Phase" And discussion of Interpretive Theory	Pioneers, Engineers, and Scoundrels (PES) chptr 1-3 & Reflection #1	In this week, automotive related material enters back into the lecture/discussion.  <b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
5	World Pioneering Age of the Automobile: 1880 - 1920	PES Chapters 4 – 8 Quiz #3 - methodologies	The conceptualizing phase from the European perspective is addressed through the lens of social theories of functionalism and conflict theory.

		Theory Paper	<b>FS:PO - 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>6</b>	The “Sorting” Process in the US Automobile Industry / Henry Ford	WHA Chapter 2 Pgs 26-78 & Reflection #2 Quiz #4	The sorting process is addressed through critical theory and early years of Henry Ford are addressed using interpretive theory
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>7</b>	Billy Durant: One Man, One Company; General Motors The application of Interpretive Theory	PES Chapters 9 - 15 Quiz #5	Another opportunity to use interpretive theory to discuss how individual choices and evolving social institutions affect human decision-making.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>8</b>	Students Present	PES Chptrs 16 – 20	This is one of two weeks where students present and critique other’s presentations. A detailed rubric for creation and critique is given to students in advance.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>9</b>	“Industrializing” the Automobile: 1920 – 1945 Conflict Theory	PES Chptrs 21 – 25 Reflection #3 Quiz #6	Using social theories the discussion reflects how the automotive industry moved from craftsmanship to assembly line production
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>10</b>	The Impact of WWI: The US Perspective	PES Chapters 26 – 30 Quiz #7	Social conditions in the US changed and the automotive industry changed with it. Social theories applied to automotive industry are explored in the discussion.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>11</b>	Preston Tucker: The Man and his Dream	Chapters 31 – 35 Quiz #8 Reflection #5	Students provided with instructions, then watch the video. Discussion of the videos includes ethical decision making, social implications, and a discussion of how social theory contributes to other disciplines and ways of knowing.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>

<b>12</b>	“Mass Production” Around the Globe 1945 – 1980 Using Critical Theory and Functionalism	WHA Pgs 79-152 Quiz #9	A global perspective of the automotive industry through the lens of functionalism.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>13</b>	“Consumer Production” 1980 – Present	WHA Pgs 153-196 Reflection #6 Quiz #10	Predicting the future of the automotive industry through one of the social theories; critical, conflict, or functionalism.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>14</b>	Students Present	WHA pgs 197-271  Field Trip Writing Assignment is due	This is one of two weeks where students present and critique other’s presentations. A detailed rubric for creation and critique is given to students in advance.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
<b>15</b>	Study Week “Connection”		Discussion of connecting the past, present, and future of the automotive industry using sociology.
<b>16</b>		Final Exam	Comprehensive exam paying particular attention to sociological theories and their application.
			<b>FS:PO - 1, 3, 6, 7, 10; FS:SALO – 1, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4</b>

## VII. Course Assignments

### a. Quizzes

You are expected to complete the required reading and assignments in a timely manner.

Quizzes will be posted periodically to Blackboard. These quizzes are short answer, multiple-choice, or short essays requiring students to complete the readings and draw conclusions based on lectures and other information given during the class. Specifically, these quizzes are designed to demonstrate your understanding of, and ability to apply, the four social theories. (FS:PO1)

Up to ten quizzes, worth ten points each, and relevant to class assignments will be posted. One advantage of on-line quizzes is the relative feedback. You often will receive a score and/or be able to see the correct responses immediately. This method prevents learning the wrong answer as true. Faster feedback also contributes to more meaningful student learning.

This assignment incorporates

**FS:PO - 1, 3, 6, 7; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 3**

### b. Theory assignment

You will research two of the four theories used in the course. Your paper should detail the current status of the theory, a brief history, and include a detailed perspective. The paper should contrast the two theories. The paper should follow APA manuscript format, be approximately 1600 words in length and include more than five references. A more formal rubric will be given.

This assignment incorporates

**FS:PO - 1, 3, 6, 7, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS – 1, 2, 3, 4**

### c. Presentation:

You will be required to create a 20-30 minute PowerPoint presentation (including audio for online students) interpreting one chapter of the assigned readings, using at least one sociological theory, and post that presentation in the discussion board section for all to view. The presentation should discuss the chapter through one or more social theories and connect the situation to a current event. The presentation should include a resolution of the situation from the past and a possible resolution of the current event as derived from the social theory. Fellow classmates will provide constructive feedback, criticism, and have influence on the overall grade of the presentation.

This assignment demonstrates an understanding of the application of social theories. In addition, the review process encourages critical thinking as

students are required to give constructive feedback to the presenter. A rubric is utilized for creation of the presentation and to deliver constructive criticism.

This assignment incorporates

**FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4**

**d. Reflections or impressions**

You will write four reflections/impressions of assigned reading assignments or chapters. Any two reading assignments from the Eckermann text and any two chapters from the Kimes text may be chosen. The fifth reflection will cover the video *Tucker: the Man and His Dream*. Reflections must be completed and *submitted via Turnitin* prior to the date noted in the course schedule.

Reflections should not merely be a summary of the chapter. Reflections should include a brief summary of the material, with significant emphasis on the social theory chosen and the subsequent analysis. In addition a significant portion should include a social perspective of how the events of the past relate to current events. These writing assignments are intended to be approximately 1000 words in length. A more detailed rubric will be given for completion of the video (fifth) reflection allowing the student to watch the video through a more critical perspective.

This assignment incorporates

**FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4**

**e. Individual Field Trip – Writing Project**

A research-style paper in APA Manuscript Style will be due near the end of the course. It will be based upon student interviews of Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA) members and additional research. The AACA will recruit individual members *close to each student's location*. The AACA member's antique automobile, its manufacturer and other aspects will be the subject of the student's paper. The interview will only be one resource for the paper that will require a minimum of five different resources.

This paper is expected to be at least 2000 words. The integration of at least one of the social theories discussed in the course as well as the cultural and historical context of the time period should be adequately addressed. The paper should reflect how individual choices or social institutions affect decision-making. Connection with other time periods i.e. events from the current decade should also be implicated in the paper. A detailed grading rubric will be provided.

This assignment incorporates

**FS:PO - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4**

The club will select a limited number of papers for future publishing in *The Antique Automobile*, its bi-monthly publication. An interview with each published student will be included. The publication is a glossy, high quality magazine distributed to members world-wide. In addition, the AACA will provide each student with a complementary one-year membership, which includes a subscription to *The Antique Automobile*.

This assignment presents a unique opportunity (exclusively between the AACA and Indiana State University) for students. They will come face to face with authentic primary artifacts from the first 100 years of the automobile. Historical materials, such as books, magazines and training manuals pertaining to their topic automobile will provide insights to the needs of people and relevant social systems in place during the automobile's early days.

By observing the transportation aspect of various cultures, students can better compare and contrast the social constructs of one culture to their own values and beliefs (i.e. a third world country, with a transportation system much like that of the late-1800s United States, may well have other values and beliefs common to that era).

**f. Final Exam**

A comprehensive final will be given. Reading assignments, class lectures and guest presentations are likely to be included in the final exam. The exam will be short answer and short essay.

**FS:PO - 1, 3, 6, 7, 10; FS:SALO - 1, 2, 3; FS:SBS - 1, 2, 3, 4**

**VIII. Course Evaluation**

The final grade is based on total points accrued in:

Reflections 5 @30 points ea.	=	150
Theory paper	=	100
Class Participation	=	050
Quizzes 10 @ 10 each	=	100
Presentation	=	100
Final Exam	=	100
Field Trip Writing Assignment	=	<u>100</u>
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>=</b>	<b>700</b>

Assignments, quizzes, etc, may not always coincide with the reading schedule.

<b>Grading Scale</b>	
A	92-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	88-90%
B	82-88%
B-	80-82%
C+	78-80%
C	72-78%
C-	70-72%
D+	68-70%
D	62-68%
D-	60-62%
F	0-60%

## **IX. Course Materials**

- Textbooks: *School and Society, 5th edition*  
Walter Feinberg and Jonas Soltis  
ISBN: 978-0-8077-4985-2
- Pioneers, Engineers, and Scoundrels*  
*The Dawn of the Automobile in America*  
Beverly Rae Kimes  
ISBN: 0- 7680-1431-X
- World History of the Automobile*  
Erik Eckermann  
ISBN: 0- 7680-0800-X
- Reference Materials: *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition*  
ISBN: 1-55798-810-2
- Excerpts from: *The Way Schools Work, 3rd edition*  
Kathleen deMarrais and Margaret LeCompte
- Software: Access to the Internet is essential  
MS Word  
MS PowerPoint
- Required viewing: *Tucker: The Man and His Dream* [motion picture].  
Coppola, Francis Ford (director). Lucasfilm (available from Amazon.com and other sources).
- Other Materials, Fees: To be determined

## **X. Contacting the Instructor**

## **XI. Right of Revision**

The instructor reserves the right to amend the course syllabus. Students will be notified in advance of any changes to the syllabus.

## **XII. Attendance**

Students are expected to attend (and participate in) all class sessions. Please refer to the University Policy on attendance as published in the University Standards.

Students are expected to regularly login to the course via blackboard. indstate.edu, complete assignments and participate in sessions as assigned. The drop procedure is the student's responsibility and the student should not expect the instructor to do it for them.

### **XIII. Academic Honesty Statement**

The University is committed to academic integrity in all its practices. The faculty value intellectual integrity and a high standard of academic conduct. Activities that violate academic integrity undermine the quality and diminish the value of educational achievement.

Cheating on papers, tests or other academic works is a violation of University rules. No student shall engage in behavior that, in the judgment of the instructor of the class, may be construed as cheating. This may include, but is not limited to, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty such as the acquisition without permission of tests or other academic materials and/or distribution of these materials and other academic work. This includes students who aid and abet as well as those who attempt such behavior. Such violations **will result in grade reduction** and may lead to expulsion from the class.

#### **I. ADA Statement**

Indiana State University seeks to provide effective services and accommodation for qualified individuals with documented disabilities. If you need an accommodation because of a documented disability, you are to register with Disability Support Services at the beginning of the semester. Contact the Director of Student Support Services, Gillum Hall, room 202A, 237-2301. The director will ensure that you receive all the additional help that ISU offers. If you will require assistance during an emergency evacuation, notify your instructor immediately. Look for evacuation procedures posted in your classroom.

#### **II. Laptop Usage**

##### **When this class is taught face-to-face:**

Laptop Not Required for Course: Usage Permitted: While there will be no assignments or examinations for which the laptop will be used, your use of a laptop is generally permitted as long as such usage remains within the bounds of the Code of Student Conduct and it conforms to the provisions of its use as laid out in this syllabus. There may be occasions where laptop usage is forbidden and if that occurs, failure to comply with this direction will be viewed as a violation of the Code of Student Conduct.