

Syllabus: FORE 6331 Social Change

Fall 2025

Course Time/Location: Tuesdays, 5:30-8:30 pm US Central Time

Virtual Class on Zoom:

Instructor: JT Mudge

Office Hours: by appointment

Contact: jmudge@uh.edu

WELCOME CHANGEMAKERS!

The study of change is in many ways the study of everything - we perceive our world mainly through changes and comparisons. Change happens all around us, all the time. Philosophers and sociologists debate the various theories of change while physicists and biologists study it to unravel the mysteries of our physical and natural world. And don't get me started on historians' points of view! **Change is at the heart of what we study and practice as futurists.**

This class will focus on many elements of change, from social theory to practical toolkits. Mastering concepts of change will require a firm understanding of different theories and models and the ability to apply that knowledge to real world systems and strategic foresight. No small task (this class has been considered by many to be the most difficult in the course).

Each week we will review different viewpoints on how change happens (both well established theories and some less well-known ideas). It will be up to each student to keep up on readings, find examples of theories in our world, and then apply a deeper understanding of change to foresight work.

In this class we will focus on readings and discussions – there is so much to read and we only cover a small slice, your time is best spent diving into as many theories as we can cover, doing the readings, and breaking it open with others so we can explore those ideas. Understanding the various theories of change and how we can apply them will make us better futurists and change makers. I am not here to judge your grammar or paper writing skills, just that you can explore and convey ideas of change in a clear and concise manner.

WARNING: This class may challenge many of your long-held beliefs on politics, power, economics, religion, history, value... you name it. You should explore each new idea with an open mind and feel free to respectfully debate and critique the various theories.

Objectives

You will understand and become familiar with:

- Various theories of change
- Ability to identify various change drivers
- Examples of change and the theories that apply to those changes
- Applying theories of change to foresight

Required Text

- **History of Tomorrow** by Roman Krznaric
- **The Toynbee Convector** by Ray Bradbury
- Optional but highly recommend - Trevor Noble (2000), **Social Theory and Social Change**, New York: St Martin's Press (available used as well as some libraries such as <https://archive.org/details/socialtheorysoci0000nobl> (Links to an external site.)

Other texts, articles, podcasts, and videos will be assigned in class with some options to choose what you read. Remember, you can always read more! If you find something interesting not on the list or in our Canvas library, let me know!

What does a typical class look like?

Review

- Most classes will start with a review of the readings and assignments of the past week. We will go over any questions, any hot new ideas, or any burning insights.
- We will then have 1 or 2 students present a short review of one of the readings from **History for Tomorrow**.
- We will then usually do a breakout exercise or discussion.

New Stuff

- The second half of the class I will give a lecture on new concepts.
- We may then have a breakout exercise to cover or discuss new material
- I will then review the new readings and homework for the next week

Note: This is subject to change but should be pretty consistent. Also, if there is ever a week where I cannot attend (I have at least one date in late September), class will still go on and I will record any lecture. You will be learning as much from the texts and each other as you will from me.

Class Interaction

Classes are held virtually on Tuesday evenings via Zoom

(<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82922703910?pwd=U1pVK2t4ZEcx2pEUjVXBNdDlqUT09>) . If you can't make the virtual class, you can listen to an archived recording. Links to the recordings will be posted in the Zoom discussion forum in Canvas. Regular communication with the instructor should be through blackboard, but you can use regular email if it's urgent (jmudge@uh.edu).

NOTE: please be sure to **download all materials you want to keep** as class materials are removed after the semester ends.

Activities and Assignments

See separate schedule document.

(Note: activities and readings will be updated as new readings or examples arise. Assignments are more or less set at this point to help you plan)

Students should plan to spend around 10 hours per week on this class, which includes the three hours of class time. The other seven hours typically include readings, online discussion posts, readings, assignments, and surprise... readings.

Feedback: My goal is to provide feedback to discussions and regular assignments within a week of the submission deadline. For the group project and final project, there may be a little more time required.

The main assignment for this class is Applied Change. Each student will present their theory of change and how that can be applied to foresight, using an already existing foresight for reference. We will discuss more if this after a couple of weeks into the course.

There are also weekly discussion posts and analysis of theories as well as a group project.

Grading

The breakdown:

Assignments: Examples of theories in real world	15% (3@5% each)
Activities: Discussion postings and participation and reading review	15%
Readings Journal	15%
Theorist Presentation	10%
Your theory of change presentation or paper	15%
Assignments: Final - <i>Applied Change</i>	30%

Criteria

Points	Category	Description
95	Excellent; 100 for super- awesome!	Demonstrates exceptional mastery of concepts, expression, and application of course materials. No real improvable items
90	Very Good	Only one or two minor improvable items.
85	Solid Competence	Demonstrates good ability to meet specifications of assignments and evaluation criteria. Only one major <i>or</i> more than two minor improvable items
80	Meets Minimum Expectations	Demonstrates adequate performance on assignments and meeting evaluation criteria. More than one major improvable item.
75	Below Expectations	Some value, but serious deficiencies

Resubmitting Assignments

Students may re-submit assignments **one time** to make improvements based on instructor feedback. Please **highlight your changes in a different color font!**

Late Assignments

Assignments are given due dates in the schedule and in Blackboard. Late assignments are deducted a one-time 10 point penalty and may be submitted any time thereafter with just that penalty. So, there is no good excuse not to submit an assignment!

Discussion Post Scoring

For discussion posts, it's a simple two point system: 2 points if you are on time, and one point if you are late, but you can post late right up until the final deadline for all work.

Other policies

Academic honesty policy. All UH students are responsible for knowing the standards of academic honesty. Please refer to the UH catalog. Plagiarism, using research without citations or using a created production (such as other people's words) without quotations or citations, will result in a grade penalty or failure of the course. Internet sources must be credited according to the sites recommended citation guideline if available. If no citation guideline is provided by the web source, then the date, URL site owner, and author must be included with the web material used.

AI Policy: As far as I know, the UH policy on AI is not yet official in regard to submitting work. However, the following is my policy. If UH comes out with an official policy on any point, their policy would overwrite any contradictions I have. You may use generative AI to ASSIST you in your homework and readings, but not to do a majority of the work for you (for example, no providing a cliff notes version of a required reading.) There are many nuances to the readings and there is a reason they are required. When you use AI, you must note how you used it and any prompts you used. This can be done much like footnotes or at the end of a discussion post. Transcripts of AI recordings should be used in the final assignment as an appendix.

Disabilities: If you have a disability and need a special accommodation consult first with the Coordinator of Health Disabilities Services, Bayou 1402, telephone 283-2627, and then discuss the accommodation with me.

Incompletes: A grade of "I" is given only in cases of documented emergency or special circumstances late in the semester, provided that the student has been making satisfactory progress. An Incomplete Grade Contract must be completed.

Last day to drop a course or withdraw with a 'W' is **November 19, 2025.**

Last day to submit any corrections or late assignments is December 9, 2025.

The UH official Fall 24 schedule can be found here: <https://www.uh.edu/enrollment-services/registrar/academic-calendars/2025-2026/fall/>