# BSOC-111 : SOCIOLOGICAL THINKERS I

**Course Code: BSOC-111**
**Assignment Code: ASST/BSOC 111/ 2026-27**
**Total Marks: 100**

## Section I

**Answer the following Descriptive Category questions in about 500 words each.**

1. Explain Marx's analysis of class consciousness. 20

2. Critically examine Weber's idea of legitimacy. 20

## Section II

**Answer the following Middle Category questions in about 250 words each.**

3. Discuss Marx's idea of alienation. 10

4. Distinguish between normal and pathological social facts. 10

5. What is the role of bureaucracy in Weber's understanding of modern society? 10

## Section III

**Answer the following Short Category questions in about 100 words each.**

6. What do you understand by 'collective conscience'? 06

7. Explain the concept of historical materialism. 06

8. What is status group? 06

9. What do you understand by mechanical solidarity? 06

10. Explain the concept of surplus value. 06

## 1. Explain Marx’s analysis of class consciousness. 20

### Answer

### Introduction

Karl Marx connected social consciousness with the material organisation of society. In his view, people do not form their ideas in isolation from their economic lives. Their position in the relations of production shapes their interests, opportunities and experiences. Class consciousness develops when members of an economic class recognise their common position and interests and understand how these stand in conflict with the interests of another class. It is therefore more than awareness of being rich or poor: it is a collective grasp of the structure of exploitation and the possibility of changing it.

### Class structure in capitalism

For Marx, a class is primarily defined by its relationship to the means of production, such as land, machinery and factories. In capitalism the bourgeoisie own these means, while the proletariat possess labour-power which they sell for wages. The employer controls production and appropriates surplus value created by workers. Individual workers may experience low wages, insecurity or long working hours as private troubles, but Marx’s analysis links these experiences to the capitalist class relation. The conflict is structural because the capitalist seeks to increase profit, while workers seek higher wages, security and control over their work. Other classes and strata exist, yet this opposition is central to the capitalist mode of production.

### From a class in itself to a class for itself

A useful way to explain Marx’s argument is the distinction between a class “in itself” and a class “for itself,” often associated with his discussions of class formation. Workers constitute an objectively similar social group because they occupy a comparable position in production, even before they act together. They become a consciously organised class when they understand their shared interests, identify the social source of their difficulties and mobilise collectively. This change is neither automatic nor merely psychological. It emerges through experience, communication, organisation and struggles over working and living conditions. Trade unions, political movements and collective campaigns can turn isolated complaints into an understanding of common class interests.