

Study Guide

First Exam, Fall 2009

The exam is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 18. Note that this is a change from the date (Sept. 16) that appears on the course outline. During the first 5-10 minutes of class, a sociology graduate student will be recruiting volunteers for an experiment. You can earn two extra-credit points by participating.

The exam will consist of about 40 multiple-choice questions covering both the text and lectures. You will need to study both to do well on the test. I can't ask questions about all the material on this study guide, but the questions will be a pretty good cross-section of the material. You don't need a Scantron—we will provide answer sheets.

Review session

There will be an optional review session at 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 16, in our regular classroom. You can leave at any time but please be there by 6:00. This will eliminate the problem of late arrivals asking questions that have already been answered. It's best to do the reading and go over your notes beforehand so you can come with questions. The TA's won't tell you what is on the test or give capsule summaries of the lectures. Their job is to clarify material in the lectures and text.

Tips on taking the exam

Don't get hung up on questions you're unsure of. Answer the ones you know first and then come back to the others. You won't feel as rushed that way, and something in a subsequent question may help you remember what you need to answer a question you left blank.

Each question will ask you to pick one correct answer out of four. If you think there might be two right answer, ask one of us for clarification, and be able to explain why you think each alternative could be right.

In case your answer sheet is lost, mark your answers on the exam too.

How to lose points unnecessarily

Because the exam will be graded by laying a template over your answer sheet, you must *mark through* your answers instead of circling them. Circling answers slows down the grading process, so you will be docked *two percentage points* for circling. If you mark more than one answer to a question, the question will be counted wrong. To receive a grade, you must turn in the exam along with your answer sheet, with your name and ID code on both. (Codes explained in next section.) No name or code, two more points off. In other words, you could drop almost half a grade just by annoying the person grading your exam.

Identification codes, checking grades, & going over the exam

To preserve anonymity when reporting grades, you must make up a five-letter code word for yourself that you will use on every exam. Grades will be posted on the Sociology web page using this code as your identifier. When taking the exam, be sure to put your code in the upper right corner of your answer sheet. Exams will not be returned, but the TA's will be available during their office hours (or by appointment) to go over the test. It is a good idea to find out what you missed because the final exam will be comprehensive.

Study tips

Use this study guide. I will follow it closely when I make up questions, and I'll try to cover as many terms and points as I can. When reviewing your class notes, remember that the more time I've spent on a subject, the more likely it will be covered on the exam.

Memorization is obviously important. You'll need to memorize a lot of facts, concepts, and theories, but if you only memorize terms and definitions, you will end up with a bunch of disconnected bits of information that you're likely to forget right away. A better way to understand and remember concepts is to put them in some sort of context. For example:

- What does a concept or a particular study have to do with the point of the lecture?
- How is a concept or principle illustrated by some real-life situation?
- How is a particular concept related to other concepts? (e.g., anomie & norms, norms & values, norms & roles, role & social structure)

Occasionally I might ask for just a definition (e.g., Which is the following is the definition of...), but more likely I'll ask you to apply the concept to a real-life event. For example, I might ask "Which of the following illustrates anomie?" and give you four hypothetical situations to pick from. Frequently the examples I use in my questions are *not* ones I have used in my lectures because to really understand a concept you need to be able to apply it to new situations.

If the material isn't clear, the best way to study is to re-write your notes, fleshing out details and incorporating examples that you might not have written down in class. Ideally you should do this when the lecture is still fresh in your mind. Rewriting your notes forces you to focus on the material in a way that just reading them doesn't, and it will also make you aware of things you don't understand. If you don't understand something, give one of us a call or come see us.

The same goes for the textbook. The best way to study is by outlining the chapters, putting the key points in your own words. Know the concepts and how they relate to the main points of each chapter. Know how the key findings of the studies described in the text relate to the central concepts of each chapter. You'll find that there is considerable overlap between the stuff I've covered in class and what is in the book. Whenever there is, look for the connection between what I said and what Stark says.

REVIEWING THE LECTURES

Intro to the course

1. What is sociology and what sort of things do sociologists study at the macro & micro levels?
2. How does soc differ from psychology and anthropology?
3. What points was I trying to make when I described the social organization of our classroom? Social interaction in elevators?
4. What role did the 19th c. Industrial Revolution play in the origins of sociology?
5. What changes occurred in American society between the 1950s and the late '60s that illustrate anomie at the societal level?
6. Terms: norm, status, role, social structure, anomie, personal space, civil inattention, studied nonobservance, primary & secondary relationships, formal organization, reductionism

Research methods (note – not sure how much of this I will get through)

1. What methodological philosophy was shared by all the 19th century social sciences? What's the gist of this philosophy?
2. When trying to study people, what problems are you likely to encounter that probably wouldn't be an

issue in the natural sciences?

3. What problems arise when using available data (e.g., statistics compiled by governments and private organizations)?
4. What common problems threaten the validity of survey research? Know how my examples illustrate those problems (e.g., the Hite & ABC-Washington Post surveys).
5. Understand the ethical & methodological aspects of undercover field research.
6. Terms & names: objectivity, reactivity/observer effects, Hawthorne effect, Wichita Jury Study, secondary analysis, self-report survey, social desirability effect, sample & population, random sample, self-selected sample, response rate

9/11 & collective behavior (here also I'm not sure how much I'll be able to cover)

1. How do the events following 9/11 illustrate collective behavior?
2. What factors contribute to collective behavior?
3. How does 9/11 illustrate typical disaster behavior?
4. How & why were the reactions to 9/11 different from responses to natural disasters?
5. How did 9/11 affect social solidarity in American society?
6. What was the role of religion in the aftermath of 9/11?
7. How much did 9/11 change American society?

MACIONIS TEXT (pronounced Ma-sho'-nis) --Note the handy glossary at the end of each chapter. Know these terms.

Chapter 1 – The Soc Perspective

1. What is sociology? The sociological perspective?
2. What does Macionis (Ma-sho'-nis) mean when he says sociologists focus on individuality in social context?
3. How does Emile Durkheim's research on suicide illustrate the sociological perspective?
4. Understand the social & economic factors that contributed to the origins of sociology.
5. Who is considered to be the father of sociology? When & where did he live, and what philosophy did he espouse?
6. Who were the "marginal voices" in early sociology? What made them marginal? What are they remembered for?
7. Know the basic ideas of the three main paradigms in sociological theory, i.e., perspectives on how societies work. This includes the key terms and the author's evaluation. (Subsequent chapters build on this stuff)
8. What's the point of the box on p. 21?

Chapter 2 – Sociological Investigation

1. What are the characteristics of social scientific investigation? How does this illustrate Comte's philosophy of positivism?
2. The material on pp. 30-33 is very important. Know the terms & what they mean, especially pertaining to relationships among variables.
3. How important is objectivity in research? What did founding father Max Weber (Vay-ber) have to say about this?
4. How do the interpretive and critical perspectives differ from the standard scientific perspective?
5. How do Macionis's comments on gender & research illustrate what I said in class about hidden bias in sociological investigations?
6. What methodological problems are illustrated by the box on p. 39?
7. Know how experiments work, and why they can be distorted by the Hawthorne effect.
8. What did Zimbardo do in his famous experiment? What did he find, and why was the study controversial?

9. What are the distinctive features of survey research using both questionnaires & interviews?
10. How does Whyte's study of "street corner society" illustrate the key features of field research?
11. What does Macionis mean by secondary analysis of available data?
12. Know the gist of the box on pp. 52-53, especially how graphs can be manipulated to give misleading impressions.

Chapter 23, pp. 601-610 only – Collective behavior (pertinent to 9/11 lecture)

1. What is collective behavior?
2. What is a "collectivity" and how is it different from an ordinary group? What do collectivities have to do with collective behavior?
3. What are the main ideas in each of the three theories of crowd behavior?
4. Understand the different types of "mass behavior," i.e., rumors, public opinion, etc.
5. How is this section relevant to 9/11?