

Department of Sociology
Undergraduate Assessment Plan – Social Theory
2019-2020
Michael Dreiling, Department Head

Undergraduate Assessment for Learning Outcome #2

In 2019-20, I worked to develop an assessment for Learning Outcome #2: “Students will be familiar with major theoretical traditions and be able to use sociological theories to critically analyze systems of social power, institutions, human difference, or behavior.” We were a bit delayed in developing the plan and intended to implement this assessment in the spring of 2020. Due to the pandemic crisis, we will need to complete the assessment, as described below, in the fall of 2020.

In response to the results of our 2017-18 undergraduate assessment, I also asked the departmental curriculum committee to increase the frequency of offering SOC 311 (Social Research Methods) so that students could benefit from smaller class experiences in their methods training. Our department now offers a variety of formats, based on instructor preference, for SOC 311. These include smaller classes enrolling under 40 students, larger classes enrolling between 70-110 students, and online classes enrolling between 30-40 students.

Moving forward, our 2019-20 assessment plan includes two different strategies. First, the assessment committee will evaluate department syllabi to assess which of sociology courses contribute to this learning outcome. Second the assessment committee will administer a survey to students in three sociology classes to evaluate their use of sociological theory. The assessment tool may be found on the following pages.

Year: 1 2 3 4 5

Major: _____

Minor: _____

What sociology classes have you taken?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 204 Introduction to Sociology | <input type="checkbox"/> 425/525 Issues in Family Sociology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 207 Social Inequality | <input type="checkbox"/> 442/542 Issues in Urban Sociology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 301 American Society | <input type="checkbox"/> 445/545 Sociology of Race Relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 303 World Population | <input type="checkbox"/> 446/546 Issues in Sociology of Work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 304 Community, Environment & Society | <input type="checkbox"/> 447/547 Issues in Sociology of Organizations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 310 Development of Sociology/Social Theory | <input type="checkbox"/> 450/550 Sociology of Developing Areas |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 311 Intro to Social Research/Research Methods | <input type="checkbox"/> 451/551 Social Stratification |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 312 Quantitative Methods in Sociology/Statistical Analysis | <input type="checkbox"/> 452/552 Issues of Migration |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 313 Social Issues and Movements | <input type="checkbox"/> 455/555 Issues in Sociology of Gender |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 328 Introduction to Social Psychology/Self & Society | <input type="checkbox"/> 456/556 Feminist Theory (|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 345 Race, Class & Ethnic Groups/Race & Ethnicity | <input type="checkbox"/> 457/557 Sex and Society |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 346 Work and Occupations | <input type="checkbox"/> 461/561 Sociology of Religion |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 347 Complex Organizations | <input type="checkbox"/> 464/564 Systems of War and Peace |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 355 Sociology of Gender | <input type="checkbox"/> 465/565 Political Sociology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 370 Urban Sociology | <input type="checkbox"/> 467/567 Economic Sociology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 380 Intro: Deviance, Control, and Crime | <input type="checkbox"/> 475/575 Marxist Sociological Theory |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 399 Special Studies | <input type="checkbox"/> 480/580 Crime and Social Control |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 408 Careers in Sociology | <input type="checkbox"/> 484/584 Issues in Deviance, Control, and Crime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 412/512: Sociological Research Methods | <input type="checkbox"/> 491/591 Sociology of Education |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 413/513: Sociological Research Methods | <input type="checkbox"/> 401 Research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 415/515 Social Demography (| <input type="checkbox"/> 404 Internship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 416/516 Issues in Environmental Sociology | <input type="checkbox"/> 405 Reading |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 420/520 Political Economy | <input type="checkbox"/> 406 Supervised Field Study |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> 407 Thesis for Honors Students |

As a discipline, sociology uses a variety of theories to critically analyze systems of social power, institutions, human difference, or behavior. Listed below are the central theoretical traditions in sociology, and one or two examples of scholars who wrote in that theoretical tradition. Please read the following questions and select which theoretical tradition might best be able to provide an answer to the question.

Theoretical Traditions

Conflict Theory (Karl Marx)

Symbolic Interactionism (Irving Goffman)

Structural Functionalism (Emile Durkheim)

Interpretive Sociology (Max Weber)

Intersectional Theory (Patricia Hill Collins)

Questions

In which theoretical tradition would we find the argument that unions are critical organizations in the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie, uniting the working class in the fight for social change in the organization of the means of production?

Answer:_____

Which social theory focuses on relations of production, and argues that at the core of human societies and their history is the relationship between those who produce what we need to live and those who own the means of production?

Answer:_____

What social theory might suggest that "gig economy" companies such as Lyft and Uber where people work as independent contractors who get paid for each job rather than receiving a set wage, or salary as an employee, are a new way for capitalists to try to accumulate more wealth for themselves?

Answer:_____

Which social theory describes how we constantly engage in "impression management" to communicate ideas about our identities and who we are?

Answer:_____

Which social theory uses theater metaphors to suggest that social life is made up of actors and audiences in which people perform a variety of roles?

Answer:_____

Which social theory would best explain how norms and behavior change in religious or sacred environments versus in profane or everyday environments?

Answer:_____

Which social theory addresses social solidarity, suggesting that there are two kinds of solidarity - mechanical solidarity (where all the members know each other and each member is important) and organic solidarity, (with weak or distant connections between some members and the ability to replace individual members if needed)?

Answer:_____

Which social theory suggests that in times of rapid social change the rules guiding behavior become less clear and that this period of rapid development of a new area of social life without defined rules for moral behavior is called anomie?

Answer:_____

Which social theory makes the connection between religious practices and economic behavior in a treatise famously titled: The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism?

Answer:_____

Which social theory expanded a theory of class conflict to argue that societies are stratified by status groups, based on many different attributes or identities, including religion, ethnicity, and race, that seek to close off opportunities to other groups?

Answer:_____

Which social theory might suggest that leaders of religious cults are "charismatic leaders?"

Answer:_____

Which theory can help explain that it is only by examining the intersections of race, class and gender that we can understand mass incarceration and the disproportionate amount of black men in prison in the United States?

Answer:_____

What theory is a framework for understanding and acting on different kinds of inequality and privilege for overlapping social groups simultaneously?

Answer:_____

What theory suggests that inequality can't be understood by a single measure, like race, gender *or* class?

Answer:_____