

FEDERATION COMPREHENSIVE THEORY EXAMINATION

Federated Ph.D. Sociology Program
Texas Woman's University
University of North Texas

Fall 2004

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BEFORE BEGINNING:

Read through the questions and instructions so that you may make wise use of your choices and time.

Try to focus on the intent of the questions and approach them as comprehensively as time allows.

You will have until 5:00 p.m. to complete the examination. You should spend approximately half of your time on Parts I and II (two questions) and half of your time on Part III (three questions). The questions of Part III are intended to be more focused and topically limited.

PLEASE **DOUBLE-SPACE** YOUR ANSWERS. THE BEGINNING OF EACH ANSWER SHOULD START AT THE TOP OF A NEW PAGE AND BE CLEARLY NUMERED.

Do not put your name on your paper. Use your assigned number, which is _____.

Part I. BROAD SUBSTANTIVE QUESTIONS – Choose and write on one question

1. Compare and contrast one project of general sociological theory from the classical period with one from the contemporary period:
 - Comte, Marx, Durkheim, Weber (classical)
 - Parsons, Bourdieu, Giddens, Habermas (contemporary)
2. Compare and contrast one classical and one contemporary version of structural-functionalism
 - Comte, Spencer, Durkheim, Malinowski (classical)
 - Parsons, Merton, Luhmann, Alexander (contemporary).
3. Compare and contrast the ideas of one classical and one contemporary sociological theorists on the source and nature of social conflict
 - Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Spencer (classical)
 - Parsons, Dahrendorf, Lenski, Collins (contemporary).
4. Using any two substantive areas of sociology as examples, explain the importance of theory in sociological research, while comparing and contrasting one classical and one contemporary theorist.
5. Compare and contrast one classical and one contemporary sociology theory of societal rationalization and differentiation
 - Marx, Weber, Simmel, Durkheim (classical)
 - Sorokin, Parsons, Collins, Smelser (contemporary).

Part II. DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL THOUGHT-Choose and write on one question

1. Trace the development of the concepts of social “structure” and “function” in 19th and 20th century sociological theory.
2. Document the influence of Marx on two 20th century U.S. sociologists, citing specific examples in the works of each.
3. Trace the development of the typology of societies into simple and complex and authoritarian and democratic from classical to contemporary sociological theory.
4. Trace the development of the concepts of “power and authority” from classical to contemporary sociological theory.
5. Document the influence of Simmel on two contemporary sociological theories or fields.

Part III. SHORT QUESTIONS – Choose and write on three of the following questions

1. Explain one attempt to integrate macro and micro approaches to the study of society, citing the works of at least one theorist.
2. Explain how Parsons used social action in his analysis of the social system.
3. Describe rational choice theory, citing the works of at least two theorists.
4. Select one substantive area of sociology and explain how theory has been used to orient research in that area.
5. Compare and contrast the use of the term “social class” by Marx and Weber.
6. Explain how Giddens uses ideas from Goffman to develop his theory of structuration.
7. Describe Comte’s stages of cultural development.
8. Define Spencer’s concepts of militant and industrial societies.
9. Present Marx’s view on the relations between feudalism and capitalism.
10. Present Weber’s view on the relations between traditional and modern capitalism.
11. Present Durkheim’s description of collective conscience and representations.
12. Explain briefly what Simmel means by the idea of social geometry.
13. Present Pareto’s views on logical and illogical human behavior.
14. Discuss briefly Malinowski’s functionalist conception of primitive cultures.
15. Describe briefly Sorokin’s types of social-cultural systems.