SOC1001 Understanding Sociology     Thursday 10\textsuperscript{th} June 2010

15.30 – 17.30

NO DICTIONARIES ALLOWED

Answer any two questions (50 marks each)

1. There is no common and accepted definition of class. Discuss.

2. The last century witnessed record demographic changes with respect to the ageing population. What challenges do these transformations pose for society?

3. The picture that we have today of Maltese families is that they are changing. Discuss.

4. Respect for religious institutions has declined. Discuss.
Answer any **TWO** questions. READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY, identifying their various components. Take some time (not longer than 5 minutes for each question) to PLAN and STRUCTURE your essays, and remember that legible handwriting is essential. You are encouraged to be original and innovative, as long as you can argue your case convincingly. The use of examples, and evidence of private reading, will help you get a better grade.

(Each question carries 50 marks)

1. In what ways is sociological research design a decision-making process involving the specific requirements of research question/s, resources, and available research techniques?

2. Explain and discuss the following key terms associated with sampling procedure: population; sampling frame; random sampling; non-random sampling; stratification of sample.

3. What is the logic behind triangulation, and what sorts of triangulation approaches are commonly used in sociological research?

4. Using an example of your choice, discuss how different research design approaches will ultimately result in different sociological perspectives of the same topic.

5. Explain and discuss the following key terms associated with research ethics: confidentiality; informed consent; covert research; data protection.

6. In what ways is ethical practice a commitment to sociological research as a process involving the academy, the state, and the communities within which we work?
Answer any **TWO** questions. READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY, identifying their various components. Take some time (not longer than 5 minutes for each question) to PLAN and STRUCTURE your essays, and remember that legible handwriting is essential. You are encouraged to be original and innovative, as long as you can argue your case convincingly. The use of examples, and evidence of private reading, will help you get a better grade.

(Each question carries 50 marks)

1. Using an example of your choice, outline the basic principles, procedures, and limitations of content analysis.

2. The point of a survey questionnaire is to locate ‘true’ variation and minimize variation due to error. List and discuss the main principles of question *wording*.

3. Decades of experience have shown survey researchers that the construction of questionnaires goes well beyond issues of wording. Discuss.

4. In what way/s does the ‘enumerative modality’ (Cohn) constitute a powerful means of governance and social control in the modern state, and how might one link this to Foucault’s discussion of ‘panopticism’?

5. Social statistics are of crucial importance to our understanding of society; however, we find ourselves increasingly bombarded with numbers from a proliferation of sources. As sociologists, which factors do we need to keep in mind when seeking to separate the useful from the useless numbers?

6. Explain the basics of the experiment as a form of research design, taking care to define and discuss the following key terms: control group; random assignment; independent variable; dependent variable; internal validity; external validity.
Answer one question (100 marks)

1. Compare and contrast different ‘Race-Related’ theoretical perspectives in social policy.

2. Given recent political and social developments, the ‘Third Way’ has been described as dead. Others say that the ‘Third Way’ has become the most mainstream ideology in social policy. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of this theoretical perspective.

3. There is no such thing as a universal welfare state model, but rather different models. Critically discuss the welfare-regime theory of Gosta Esping Andersen.
You have one hour to answer the following question.

1. Using an example of your choice, discuss how you would draw up an outline plan for a sociological research project, paying attention to the following three aspects of research design:

   • original sociological imagination and creativity;
   • issues of resources such as time and funding;
   • the strengths and limitations of each research technique you choose to employ.
Section A. Write an essay on one of the following topics (40 marks)

1. Delineate how Foucault defines power and why such a definition is limited.

2. Standpoint theories are based on the perspective of embodied actors within groups that are differentially located within the social structure. Discuss in relation to one form of standpoint theory – gender, race, sexuality, or disability.

3. Society is constituted through the activities and practices of human beings. Discuss in relation to Gidden’s structuration theory.

4. Post-structural and postmodern theories reject totalising theories. Illustrate why by focusing on the work of a particular approach in sociology.

5. Queer theory rejects a single identity. All identities are perceived as multiple, unstable and exclusionary. Discuss.

6. Feminist theory is defined as a generalized, wide-ranging system of ideas about social life and human experience developed from a woman-centered perspective. Why is this theory considered as general, and hence not applicable to all women?

7. Contemporary sociology promotes identity politics. Which theory does so, and for which purpose?

8. Disability is a social construct. What do you understand by this, and what are the limitations of such a statement?

9. Whiteness is not natural. It is a social construct which structures the lives of whites and non-whites. Illustrate.

Section B. Define 6 of the following concepts. When possible mention the exponents who wrote about these issues. Do not write more than 1 page for each concept (10 marks each)

1. Essentialism

2. Genealogy of power

3. Archaeology of knowledge
4. Poststructuralism
5. Postmodernism
6. Iterability
7. Citational performativity
8. Disciplinary regimes
9. Epistemology of the closet
10. Post-identity
11. Heteronormativity
12. Afrocentricity
13. Interlocking oppressions
14. Critical race theory
15. Affirmative politics
16. Hybridity
17. Situated knowledge
18. Postcolonial theory
19. Subaltern
20. Neo-colonialism
21. Epistemic privilege
22. Simulacra
23. Cognitive map
24. Reproductive technology in postmodernism
25. Informationalism
26. Advanced modernity
Answer one question.
(100 marks)

1. Compare and contrast the perspectives of Charles Murray and Frank Field on social welfare and self-interest.

2. The Welfare State has been considered as limiting freedom. Discuss with reference to Hayek and Nozick.

3. Environmentalism has brought about a rethinking of mainstream social policy. Elaborate.

4. The Welfare State is a site of struggle. Discuss in relation to a sociological theory of your choice.
Answer any TWO questions. READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY, identifying their various components. Take some time (not longer than 5 minutes for each question) to PLAN and STRUCTURE your essays, and remember that legible handwriting is essential. You are encouraged to be original and innovative, as long as you can argue your case convincingly. The use of examples, and evidence of private reading, will help you get a better grade.

(Each question carries 50 marks)

1. Explain how you would go about setting up a focus group, and discuss the characteristics, strengths, and limitations of this research approach.

2. Discuss the following two qualities commonly attributed to qualitative research:
   a. its usefulness in studying the interaction of a relatively large number of variables among a relatively small group of people;
   b. its insights into the fine-grain, nuanced aspects of society as a lived experience.

3. In what ways, if at all, is an ethnographer a ‘professional stranger’, and how does this methodological stance translate into tangible sociological data?

4. Interviews very often constitute the mainstay of a qualitative research project. What sort of methodological and practical issues might one want to keep in mind when planning and conducting field interviews?

5. Discuss the following with special reference to qualitative research design: online research; standards of ethical practice; the use of social, spatial, and other visual techniques as a research tool.
SOC 2004 Sociology of Family Life

Thursday 28th January 2010
10.30 – 11.30

Answer one question.
(100 marks)

1. Sociobiology asserts that individual, couple and family patterns are determined by biology. Critically assess this perspective.

2. Parents with children adopt various strategies to balance employment with family life. Elaborate.

3. Discuss the influence of the ideology of ‘companionship’ on family life.

4. Compare and contrast different social policy discourses on single-mothers.
Section A – Write an essay on one of these topics (40 marks)

1. Which theoretical shifts have we seen in the study of social class?

2. Sociology has moved on from focusing on just one social variable as being the cause of social inequality, to studying ‘interlocking oppressions’. Why has this happened?

3. Are social stratification theories relevant in today’s society?

4. Sexual identity, according to Sedgwick, can be established by taking into consideration a variety of elements. What are these elements, and how do they affect one’s status in society?

5. The public’s reaction to gays and lesbians is based on morality and civil liberties. Discuss on how one impinges on the other.

6. Which social division is the most insidious and affects social inclusion the most? Give reasons for your answer.

7. Physical factors can be utilized as a basis of discrimination. Illustrate by analyzing the theories relating to one issue.

8. What are the limitations of anti-discrimination legislation?

Section B – choose 6 concepts from this section and define them. Include exponents who wrote about these issues and those who critiqued the issues you write upon (60 marks, 10 marks for each concept). Do not write more than half/three fourths of a page on each concept.

1. New middle class
2. Sociobiological approach
3. Ethnicity
4. Direct and indirect discrimination
5. Homophobia
6. Xenophobia
7. Ethnocentrism
8. Institutional or structural discrimination  
9. Tangible and intangible resources  
10. Regulation school  
11. Cultural imperialism  
12. Age-set societies  
13. Human Development index  
14. Absolute vs relative poverty  
15. Modernisation theory  
16. Objective vs subjective definition of social class  
17. Intersexed or transgendered  
18. Embourgoisement theory  
19. Equality of opportunity and equality of outcome  
20. Globals vs locals  
21. Life chances  
22. Working poor  
23. Impairment  
24. Medicalisation of disability  
25. Individualism  
26. Deserving and undeserving poor  
27. Social construction of disability  
28. Institutional racism  
29. Anti-discrimination legislation  
30. Equality bodies
Answer one question.
(100 marks)

1. Green politics can be seen as postmodern politics. Discuss.

2. Peter Dickens divides the world into three ‘consumption classes’. Elaborate, in relation to the impact of consumption on nature and society.

3. Ecocentrism regards humans as subject to ecology. What impact does this have on sociology?

4. Environmental Policy in the European Union is subject to conflicting interests and pressures. Discuss.
SOC2013 Classical Sociology

9.15 – 11.15

Monday 31st May 2010

NO DICTIONARIES ALLOWED

Answer in essay form ONE question from each section:
(50 marks each)

SECTION 1

1. In his book *The Division of Labour in Society*, Emile Durkheim examines the phenomenon of the division of labour from a structural-functional approach. Discuss.

2. Through his study on suicide, Emile Durkheim attempts at analyzing suicide as a social fact. Discuss.

SECTION 2


4. Through his Pattern Variables, Talcott Parsons wanted to show that an actor’s situation is not entirely unstructured or uncertain. Elaborate.
Section A - Choose one topic from this section and write an essay (50 marks)

1. Which institutions and/or social groups promote the concept of sustainable tourism, and why?

2. Differentiate between different typologies of tourists and underline which type of tourist promotes sustainable development and why.

3. Is eco tourism sustainable tourism when it only focuses on environmental issues?

4. Why would small scale tourist development generate more direct employment?

5. The tourism industry is said to generate dependency when established in Third World countries. Why and in what way?

6. Ruth Young regards tourism as a neo-colonial experience. In what way can tourism be said to be neo-colonial?

7. Which socio-cultural impacts can tourism have on a nation state?

8. The environmental impact of tourism has been well documented. What impact has tourism had on the environment of a given country?

9. What do you understand by ‘irritation index’, and where would you locate the Maltese tourism industry on this index?

10. In what way can one say that tourism within peripheral economies is dependent on core capitalist economies?

11. In what way can tourism result in the development or protection of a particular culture or environment?

Section B - Choose 2 of these terms and define them in around 1 page of a script (50 marks)

a. carrying capacity
b. economic sustainability
c. eco-colonialism
d. preservationism
e. post-material culture
f. biodiversity
g. debt-for-nature-swaps
h. anthropocentric approach
i. traveller
j. ego- vs eco-tourism
k. carbon footprint
l. pro-poor tourism
Section A. Write an essay on 1 of these topics (50 marks)

1. There are different theories on how we learn to be a particular gender - sociobiology, gender socialisation, identification theory, gender performativity. Which theory do you adhere to, why and what are its limitations?

2. Kanter in “Men and Women of the Corporation” found that women’s and men’s power within a structure is affected by the gender make up within an organisation. Does women’s over-representation within a social structure facilitate an equitable access to wages and positions of power?

3. The sexual division of labour refers to the process where tasks are assigned on the basis of gender. Where does this take place, and how does this affect women’s access to positions of power or access to marketplace?

4. Mention and discuss some of the factors that push and pull women into the labour market.

5. Hall maintains that stereotypes essentialise, naturalise and fix difference. Why is this problematic?

6. Which two social factors affect positively the amount of time men spend on household labour?

7. Sex is an unstable and regulated performance. Discuss.

8. Jencks identifies five types of employer discrimination. When are these economically irrational?

9. Women are neglected in criminology. Why, and with what consequences?

10. Media portrayals of men and women reinforce assumptions on how women and men should think about themselves, and treat each other. How would you respond to such a statement?

Choose five concepts and write a short paragraph (not more than one page) on each. (10 marks each)

a. the feminisation of the labour force
b. gender pay gap
c. gender atypical work
d. chivalry thesis
e. sexual harassment
f. feminisation of poverty
g. homophily
h. tokens and dominants
i. segregation and segmentation
j. glass escalator
k. sticky floor syndrome
l. infinite plasticity of human sexuality and gender
m. citational performativity
n. equality difference debate
SOC2031 Understanding Disability

Tuesday 1st June 2010

9.15 – 11.15

NO DICTIONARIES ALLOWED

Answer in essay form ONE question from each of the following Sections:
(50 marks each)

**Section A**

1. “Persons with disabilities in the Maltese islands are not fully integrated in mainstream society”. Discuss, substantiating your answer with suitable examples.

2. Discuss the differences in social policies and strategies as laid down by the Welfare State and the Welfare Society ideologies vis-à-vis persons with disability.

**Section B**

3. The Persons with Disability (Employment) Act is a clear example of a top-bottom approach in Social Policy. Discuss in detail.

4. Social integration of Persons with Disability goes beyond services. Discuss.
Answer TWO questions.

1. Weber relates the rise of modern rationalized law to political and economic factors. Discuss, and illustrate by concrete examples, how rationalized law is executed in the bureaucratic apparatus of the state but also serves the free-market economy.  
   (50 marks)

2. In Parsons’ view, society’s integrative function is so important that he regards it as constituting no less than “the central core of the concerns of sociological theory” (1961:41). What’s more, he sees the societal community’s functional requisite of internal integration as the one that the legal system most directly serves in a society. Discuss.  
   (50 marks)

3. The sociology of law has benefitted from symbolic interactionism which led to the development of labelling theory. This is best represented in the classic work of Howard S. Becker (1963). Discuss this approach in relation to its concern with the process of labelling individuals as deviant.  
   (50 marks)

4. Foucault sees discipline as an important feature of modern societies. Instead of punishing bodies, the state tries to produce docile bodies which pose no threat to order because they are self-disciplined, thus rendering discipline as a crucial part of governing. Discuss in relation to Foucault’s insights into the nature of power.  
   (50 marks)

5. “We must not underestimate the importance of fair representation of women among the judiciary. If a group does not see itself reflected in the judicial system, members of that group may question – with cause – the system’s ability to deal fairly with its experiences and interests” - gender specialist Mary Lou Stirling. Discuss.  
   (50 marks)
SOC2042 Sociology of Governance     Tuesday 1st June 2010
14.15 – 15.15

NO DICTIONARIES ALLOWED

Answer two questions (50 marks each)

1. “The day-to-day exercise of authority was in the hands of the bureaucracy and even success in the struggle for votes and in parliamentary debate and decision-making would come to naught unless it was translated into effective control over administrative implementation.” (Max Weber in Gerth and Wright Mills, 1991:433). Discuss with regards to the sociology of governance and the forces at play in the actual operation of a democratic society.

2. Steven Lukes (1974) argues that the one-dimensional and two-dimensional views of power are inadequate, and claims that the three-dimensional view is a better means for the investigation of power relations, democracy and governance. Discuss.

3. ‘Dominant groups in society, including fundamentally but not exclusively the ruling class, maintain their dominance by securing the ‘spontaneous consent’ of subordinate groups, including the working class, through the negotiated construction of a political and ideological consensus which incorporates both dominant and dominated groups.’ (Dominic Strinati, 1995:165). Discuss in relation to Gramsci’s concept of hegemony.

4. Elite theory sees power in society as being monopolized by a minority through persuasion and manipulation. Thus democratic elections have a symbolic character which rarely alters the elite structure but are important for the orderly circulation of elite personnel. Discuss this statement in relation to democratic governance.

5. Sociology can best contribute to innovations in governance by critically examining existing forms of power. Discuss this statement in view of Anthony Giddens’ claim that we have to essentially ‘look for a form of political philosophy which both allows us to produce a society which is competitive in the new global market-place and the knowledge-based economy and at the same time addresses norms of solidarity and equality. ....... It involves the extension of forms of government above the levels of the nation, because globalization is a reality, and therefore you can't just approach it locally. I mean, you must approach it locally, but you can't only approach it locally’. The Second Globalization Debate A Talk With Anthony Giddens (30.1.00) published in Edge.
Answer any **TWO** questions. READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY, identifying their various components. Take some time (not longer than 5 minutes for each question) to PLAN and STRUCTURE your essays, and remember that legible handwriting is essential. You are encouraged to be original and innovative, as long as you can argue your case convincingly. The use of examples, and evidence of private reading, will help you get a better grade.

(Each question carries 50 marks)

1. In what ways are nations ‘imagined communities’, and which cultural processes does Benedict Anderson outline as having produced the ‘space’ necessary for national imaginings?

2. What are the main tenets of Gellner’s theory of nationalism, and why is it described as ‘modernist’?

3. In what way/s, if at all, is it valid to say that the Herderian model of nationalism is alive and well among nationalists?

4. How relevant is ‘banal nationalism’ to the continued significance of the nation as a dominant form of social grouping?

5. D’Azeglio’s “We have made Italy, now we have to make Italians” (said at the time of Italian unification) has become one of the staple quotes of the scholarship on nationalism. In what way/s is nationalism linked to ethnic identities?
Answer in essay form **ONE question from each of the following Sections:**
(50 marks each)

**Section A**

1. Through his analysis of systems, Talcott Parsons attempted to give an overall picture of how societies are structured and fit together. Discuss.

2. The concept of a system is at the core of any discussion of Parsonian theory. Elaborate.

**Section B**

3. Discuss Niklas Luhmann’s Neo Functionalist theory of systems.

4. Discuss the extent to which the structural parts that make up a system are actually integrated with one another.
Answer in essay form ONE question from each of the following Sections:
(50 marks each)

**Section A**

1. Talcott Parsons’ theory of social change is based on his evolutionary universals and processes. Elaborate.

2. Discuss to what extent can the theories of social stratification brought forward by Karl Marx and Talcott Parsons be considered as theories of social change.

**Section B**

3. Elaborate on Rudolf Herberle’s definition of social movement as “a collective effort to transform some established social relation”.

4. "Endogenous change is but one kind of structural change while Social conflict is but one of the causes of endogenous change”.

   Discuss with reference to Ralf Dahrendorf.
NO DICTIONARIES ALLOWED

Answer one question (100 marks)

1. How can social policy relate to the rise of lifestyle? Discuss, with reference to an issue of your choice.

2. An issues based approach to social policy can involve an assessment of social trends and their future impacts. Discuss, in relation to an issue of your choice.

3. Even though efficiency is a desirable end for social policy, it is not the only one. Discuss.