

Corvinus University of Budapest

BA in Sociology

Final Examination Topics

Yeargroup 2018/19

1. Theory

Foundations of Sociology

Reading:

- Anthony Giddens: Sociology. 5th edition (especially the pages listed at the questions)

Questions:

1. Asking and answering sociological questions. Understanding cause and effect. Overview of research methods. Illustrate theoretical thinking in sociology with one example from classical sociology (e.g., from Weber, Durkheim, Simmel). Giddens, Chapters 3 and 4.
2. Try to fit to an empirical case of your choice (e.g., ministries, universities, firms, courts, sport associations, etc.) the idealtypical model of bureaucracy by Weber. Giddens, Chapter 16.
3. Compare the concepts of racial differentiation and ethnicity. Explain the major theories and perspectives of racial and ethnic discrimination and integration. Chapter 15.
4. Explain the concepts of sex and gender. What are the main ideas of 'gender socialization'? What are the main ideas related to 'gender order' (R.W. Connel)? Chapter 6.
5. Compare market-oriented, dependency, and world-system theories and how they can explain global inequality. Chapter 13.

Economic Sociology

Readings:

- Swedberg, Richard (2003). Principles of Economic Sociology. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Polanyi, Karl (1944) The Great Transformation. Beacon Press

Questions:

6. Introduce and compare the economic and sociological theories of the modern firm. Demonstrate the similarities and differences regarding research perspectives. (Swedberg, pp 75-103)
7. Explain the development of markets in history (external, internal markets, the European fair, national and rational markets), and demonstrate the social conditions (technological and institutional) of modern market. (Swedberg, pp 133 - 151)
8. Compare Marx's, Weber's, and Polányi's theories regarding the development and the functioning of capitalism from the perspective of economic sociology. (Swedberg, pp 8-18 and 26-28)
9. Explain how Polanyi understands forms of integration and whether these forms can be put into a historical development or not. Swedberg pp. 26-30, Polanyi: The Great transformation, Chapter 4, Societies and Economic Systems. 45- 58
10. Introduce economic theories of firms and the problem and the relevance of transaction costs. Swedberg 75-88

Introduction to Sociological Theory

Readings:

- Ritzer, George (2010). Sociological Theory. Eighth Edition. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Said, Edward (1977): Orientalism. London: Penguin. Introduction

Questions:

11. Explain what social facts mean according to Durkheim. How he used this concept in his famous book Suicide. What are the four types of suicide and what are their main characteristics? Chapter 3
12. Explain the main ideas of structural functionalism in particular with a focus on the work of Talcott Parsons and Robert Merton. Explain manifest and latent functions. Chapter 7
13. Describe the main ideas of Conflict Theory with a focus on the work of Ralf Dahrendorf. Chapter 7.
14. What are the main ideas of symbolic interactionism? Explain the concept of the 'self' and 'impression management' in Goffman's work. Chapter 10.
15. Summarize the major statements of Edward Said's Orientalism! Please present and develop your argument by providing several distinct pieces of references in support of it!

2. Methodology

Social Science Research Methods

Reading:

- Neuman, W. L. (2014): Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches. Pearson Education Limited

Questions:

16. What are the main features of research using administrative data? What are the strengths and weaknesses?
17. What are the main features of experimental research? What are the strengths and weaknesses?
18. What are the main features of survey research? What are the strengths and weaknesses?
19. Please summarize the ethical rules researchers should obey during research design, data analysis and publication!

The Methodology of Sociological Research I.

Readings:

Lecture notes, Glossary of key terms, and PowerPoint slides that are available for download from the webpage of Professor Ferenc Moksony (http://web.uni-corvinus.hu/moksony/research_methods_1_lecture_notes.htm)

Questions:

20. Describe the main steps involved in the process of empirical theory testing. Why is it that a theory can be false even if the empirical implications derived from this theory are consistent with facts? What do we mean by suppressor effects? What is a crucial experiment and how does it work? How did Émile Durkheim test his explanation of why suicide is more frequent in warmer seasons than in colder ones?
21. What are the main types of alternative explanations and how can we eliminate them? What is randomization and how does it differ from random sampling? How does the use of control variables help rule out non-random alternative explanations? Why is randomization more effective than the use of control variables in eliminating non-random alternative explanations?
22. How can we use categorical independent variables (including those with more than two categories) in linear regression analysis? What are interaction effects and how can we examine such effects with linear regression?
23. Describe the basic logic of significance test. What is sampling distribution? What is standard error? What are the factors that affect the magnitude of the standard error? Why is hunting for significance dangerous? What is publication bias?

The Methodology of Sociological Research II.

Readings:

- Lecture notes, Glossary of key terms, and PowerPoint slides that are available for download from the webpage of Professor Ferenc Moksony (http://web.uni-corvinus.hu/moksony/research_methods_2_readings.htm)

Questions:

24. Describe the three main types of percentages that can we calculate in a contingency table. How does the aim of research affect which type of percentage is appropriate in a particular research situation? How does the sampling design affect which type of percentage is appropriate in a particular research situation?
25. Describe and compare the two types of statistical measures that we commonly use in contingency table analysis to summarize the magnitude of the effect that the independent variable has on the dependent variable. What is the measure called Lambda used for in contingency table analysis? Explain the principle of proportional reduction in error. What is the measure called Chi-squared used for in contingency table analysis? Compare the various measures commonly used in contingency table analysis in terms of their sensitivity to sample size and the variance of the independent variable.
26. What is the linear probability model? What are the main problems of this model and how can these problems be solved? What is the logistic transformation and what is the reason for performing it? Explain the meaning of the logistic regression coefficient and the anti-logarithm of this coefficient. What are the main differences between these two statistical measures? What is multinomial logistic regression?

Project Work - Interviews

Readings:

- Videos + Ppt files (in Moodle)
- Vicsek, Lilla (2007): A Scheme for Analyzing the Results of Focus Groups. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 6 (4), available at: <http://ejournals.library.ualberta.ca/index.php/IJQM/article/view/982>
- Vicsek, Lilla (2010): Issues in the Analysis of Focus Groups: Generalisability, Quantifiability, Treatment of Context and Quotations. *The Qualitative Report*, 1. available at: <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR15-1/vicsek.pdf>

Questions:

27. What are the advantages and disadvantages of homogenous and heterogeneous focus groups? (video)
28. a. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of focus group research to individual interviews! b. Compare the advantages and disadvantages of (individual/group) interview research with the large-scale survey method, and the observation method! (video)
29. Discuss issues in the analysis of focus groups! In your answer discuss generalizability, quantifiability, treatment of context and quotations! (Vicsek 2010, videos)
30. What are some rules for formulating questions for interviews? (videos)