

## Comprehensive Exam Templates

Department of Sociology

The University of Texas at Austin

Rev 11/11/14; 9/14/2018

The Sociology Department offers graduate comprehensive exams in the following areas: [crime, law, and deviance](#); [demography](#); [education](#); [family](#); [gender](#); [health](#); [political sociology](#); [race and ethnicity](#); [theory](#); and [work, occupations, and organizations](#). Each area has a standardized exam template below approved by the Graduate Steering Committee that must be followed unless officially revised. Revisions must be approved by the GSC by the end of the semester before the semester in which the exams are taken. Area coordinators and faculty can be found at:

[www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/sociology/faculty/specializations.php](http://www.utexas.edu/cola/depts/sociology/faculty/specializations.php)

### Crime, Law, and Deviance

#### Format

- Take-home.
- Up to 54-hour turnaround (if picked up at 9 am on first day and returned at 3 pm two days later).
- Open-book, open-note.

#### General Examination Organization

- First section of the exam but can be completed in any order during exam period.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- Two required questions, plus a choice of one of two others.

#### Specialization Examination Organization

- Second section of the exam but can be completed in any order during exam period.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- One question required, plus two chosen from a set of three or four others.

#### Reading

- Initial list constructed by student based on main coursework syllabi or independent study readings; expected to have strong methods background as well.
- Final list constructed after consultation of student with area coordinator and examination committee chair about additions/subtractions to initial list.

#### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/sociology/graduate/Degree%20requirements/Exams.php>

## Demography

### Format

- In-class.
- Timed.
  - Up to six hours.
- Without notes.
  - International students can use a dictionary.

### General Examination Organization

- Day 1.
- Four total questions to be answered.
- One question apiece chosen from each of four sets of two questions.

### Specialization Examination Organization

- Day 2.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- One question apiece chosen from each of three sets of two questions.

### Reading

- Initial list constructed by student based on demography coursework syllabi.
- Final list constructed after consultation of student with area coordinator and examination committee chair about additions/subtractions to initial list.

### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at:  
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## **Education**

### Format

- Take-home.
- Timed.

### General Examination Organization

- Day 1.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- One question apiece chosen from each of three sets of two questions.

### Specialization Examination Organization

- Day 2.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- One question apiece chosen from each of three sets of two questions.

### Reading

- Initial list constructed by student based on main education coursework syllabi.
- Final list constructed after consultation of student with area coordinator and examination committee chair about additions/subtractions to initial list.

### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at:  
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## **Family**

### Format

- In-class.
- Timed.
- Without notes.

### General Examination Organization

- Day 1.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- One question apiece chosen from each of three sets of two questions.

### Specialization Examination Organization

- Day 2.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- One question apiece chosen from each of three sets of two questions.

### Reading

- Initial list constructed by student based on main family coursework syllabi.
- Final list constructed after consultation of student with area coordinator and examination committee chair about additions/subtractions to initial list.

### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/sociology/graduate/Degree%20requirements/Exams.php>

## Gender

### Format

- In-class.
- Two days.
- Timed (four hours each).
- Without notes.
- Reading lists are allowed.

### Committee

- A committee of three professors is appointed by the area coordinator of the gender area, in consultation with the student. One faculty member is designated as the chair of the committee.
- The same committee of three professors evaluates the student's Day 1 and Day 2 examinations.
- The student's committee is responsible for preparing the questions and delivering the examinations to Sociology staff at least one week prior to the examination.

### General Examination Organization

- Day 1.
- Two total questions to be answered, chosen from a set of four or five questions.

### Specialization Examination Organization

- Day 2.
- Two total questions to be answered, chosen from a set of four or five questions.

### Reading

- Day 1 list is prepared for all the students taking the exam. This list is updated periodically and approved by all the professors in the gender area.
- Day 2 lists are prepared in consultation with the student's three committee members. They must be approved by all three members. The chair of the committee is responsible for finalizing the list and circulating it to all members.

### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/sociology/graduate/Degree%20requirements/Exams.php>

## Health

### Format

- In-class.
- Timed.
  - Up to six hours.
- Without notes.
  - International students can use a dictionary.

### General Examination Organization

- Day 1.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- One question apiece chosen from each of three sets of two questions.

### Specialization Examination Organization

- Day 2.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- Three questions chosen from a set of six.

### Reading

- Initial list constructed by student based on health coursework syllabi and prior reading lists.
- Final list constructed after consultation of student with area coordinator and examination committee chair about additions/subtractions to initial list.

### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at:  
<https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/sociology/graduate/Degree%20requirements/Exams.php>

## **Political Sociology**

### Format

- In-class.
- Timed.
- Without notes. Only reading lists allowed.

### General Examination Organization

- Day 1.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- The three questions can be the same for all or choices can be given out of several questions (exact number of questions or set of questions offered to be determined by the committee).

### Specialization Examination Organization

- Day 2.
- Three total questions to be answered.
- The three questions can be the same for all or choices can be given out of several questions (exact number of questions or set of questions offered to be determined by the committee).

### Reading

- Initial list constructed by students.
- Final list constructed after consultation of student with members of the area examination committee and approved by the area chair.
- Same reading list for all for Day 1.
- Customized reading list for each student for Day 2.

### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/sociology/graduate/Degree%20requirements/Exams.php>

## **Race and Ethnicity**

### Format

- In-class.
- Timed (four hours).
- Without notes.

### General Examination Organization

- The comprehensive examinations (comps) committee will consist of three to four faculty who will oversee both Day 1 and Day 2 exams.
- To get a “pass with distinction” all answers across both days will have to be considered excellent/grade “A” answers.
- Students will have one chance to retake the exam. If the second exam results in a fail grade then the student will be deemed to have failed their R&E area comps and no subsequent attempts will be allowed.
- Day 1: Two questions to be answered from a list of six to eight.

### Specialization Examination Organization

- Day 2: Two questions to be answered from a list of six to eight.

### Reading

- The area coordinator will prepare a core reading list for Day 1.
- Day 1: List will be a set of key race and ethnicity texts; students will answer questions related to core conceptual debates.
- Day 2: Initial list constructed by student based on relevant specialist area key texts. The final list for Day 2 will be constructed after consultation of student with examination committee chair and other committee members about additions/subtractions to initial list.

### Supplemental Materials

- Repositories of past examinations and reading lists as available will be created.
- These repositories will be archived on the Sociology Department website at: <https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/sociology/graduate/Degree%20requirements/Exams.php>

## **Theory**

Please consult the area coordinator.

## **Work, Occupations, and Organizations**

Please consult the area coordinator.