



UExcel[®] Introduction to Sociology

The UExcel examination in Introduction to Sociology measures knowledge and understanding of the material and skills typically taught in a one-semester, undergraduate survey course in a baccalaureate program. The examination content reflects common knowledge drawn from courses with such titles as Introduction to Sociology or General Sociology. No prior knowledge or understanding of sociology is assumed. The examination tests for a knowledge of facts and terminology, an understanding of concepts and forms, and for the student's ability to apply the concepts learned in an introductory sociology course.

To Register for UExcel Exams:

Go to www.uexceltest.com. Follow the simple online instructions to register.

You may also register for a test by calling a Pearson VUE call center:

888.224.6383 (in the Americas)

6038319.1085 (in the Asia Pacific Region)

44.161.855.7455 (in Europe, Middle East, and Africa)

The Web site is your one-stop source for information about the UExcel program and includes:

- Free content guides like this one for all UExcel exams (www.uexceltest.com/exams)
- A registration guide with information on policies, procedures, and how to register for an exam (www.uexceltest.com/register)
- Learning resources, including access to textbooks, practice exams, and other preparation materials (www.uexceltest.com/resources)
- Information about how to have a UExcel transcript sent from Excelsior College to the school/university of your choice (www.uexceltest.com/credit)

Learning Outcomes

After you have successfully worked your way through the recommended study materials, you should be able to:

- demonstrate an understanding of the sociological perspective including classical and contemporary theories and the major sociological research methods
- explain the various aspects of the social framework including culture, society, socialization, social interaction, social groups, and organizations
- discuss the major issues surrounding differentiation and inequality, such as deviance and conformity, social stratification, race and ethnicity, sex and gender, and aging
- explain the major social institutions including the family, education, religion, politics, work and the economy, and health and medicine
- discuss the process of social change including population dynamics, urbanization, globalization, ecology, collective behavior, and the future of society

Uses for the Examination

Excelsior College and Pearson VUE, the test developers, recommend granting three (3) semester hours of lower-level undergraduate credit to students who receive a letter grade of C or higher on this examination. The American Council on Education's College Credit Recommendation Service (ACE CREDIT) has evaluated and made college credit recommendations for UExcel examinations. Ask your academic advisor to look at how UExcel examinations may fit your degree completion plan.

You can also address any questions that you may have regarding the minimum required grade and/or the amount of credit awarded for the examination. Colleges are not required to grant the amount of credit recommended by the developers.

If your desired institution does not yet accept UExcel examinations, ask your academic advisor to consider UExcel examinations as a credit earning option. Your advisor may contact the Center for Educational Measurement at Excelsior College at **888-647-2388 (ext. 166)** for additional information regarding the ACE CREDIT-evaluated UExcel examination series. Should you or your advisor wish to learn more about the ACE College Credit Recommendation Service, visit the ACE Web site at www.acenet.edu, then click on the following:

- Programs & Services
- College Credit Recommendation Service
- College & University Services

The ACE College Credit Recommendation Service office, located in the Center for Lifelong Learning, may also be reached by e-mail at CREDIT@ace.nche.edu or by phone at **866-205-6267**.

Examination Length and Scoring

The examination consists of approximately sixty (60) questions, including four-option multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blank question types. Some of the questions are unscored, pretest questions. The pretest questions are embedded throughout the exam, and they are indistinguishable from the scored questions.

It is to your advantage to do your best on all of the questions. You will have two (2) hours to complete the examination. Your score will be reported as a letter grade.

How to Study with UExcel Examination Content Guides

A committee of teaching faculty and practicing professionals determines the learning outcomes to be tested on each UExcel exam. Excelsior College test development and psychometric staff oversee the technical aspects of test construction in accordance with current professional standards. To promote fairness in testing, we take special care to ensure that the language used in the exams and related materials is consistent, professional, and user friendly. Editorial staff perform systematic quantitative and qualitative reviews that address accuracy, clarity, and compliance with conventions of bias-free language usage.

How Long Will It Take Me to Study?

A UExcel exam tests you on material comparable to the content of one or more college-level courses. To prepare, you should study and review as long as you would for a college course. Remember, as an independent student, you are acting as your own teacher. To fully prepare for a UExcel exam requires self-direction and discipline, careful reading and reflection, and systematic review. College professors advise that in each week of a semester, you should spend at least three hours studying for each credit you will earn. For example, for a three-credit course, you should study for nine hours a week, or 135 hours total for a 15-week semester:

$9 \times 15 = 135$ hours of study for a 3-credit exam

Use this system to determine how much time you should plan to spend studying and reviewing for your UExcel exam:

My exam is:

_____ credits \times 3 hours per week \times 15 weeks = _____ total hours of study.

The Content Outline

At the heart of this content guide is a content outline that describes the various content areas of the test and what is required to prepare for them. The content outline is like the syllabus for a course (for which you are your own teacher). Each content area in the outline includes (1) the minimum hours of study you should devote to that area and (2) the most important recommended resources for that area. To cover all of the material in the content outline, you may need to refer to other chapters in the recommended textbooks. Chapter numbers and titles may differ in later editions. Most content outlines contain many examples to illustrate the types of information you should study. Don't assume, however, that everything on the exam will come from these examples. Conversely, do not expect that every detail you study will appear on the exam. Any exam is only a broad sample of all the questions that could be asked about the subject.

Using the Recommended Resources

The Recommended Resources include regular college textbooks, primary and secondary source materials, publications prepared especially by UExcel staff to support your exam preparation, and in some cases audiovisual or Web-based materials. All questions on UExcel exams are referenced to the Recommended Resources. If you choose to study with a different textbook, you are responsible for ensuring that you have covered all the material adequately. A few alternative textbooks may be listed in the category of Additional or Other Resources.

If you encounter topics in the content outline that are not covered in the resource you are using, or that you feel you need more work on, try using one of the additional resources.

Some textbook publishers sell workbooks or study guides to accompany their texts. If the committee developing your exam has evaluated these materials, you will find them listed in the content guide.

Using the Sample Questions and Rationales

Each content guide provides sample questions to illustrate those typically found on the exam. The sample questions are not intended to serve as a practice test, but you may use them as models to create your own test questions for review purposes. In the last pages of this guide, you will find rationales for the multiple-choice sample questions. The key (correct answer) is indicated by an asterisk. The rationales explain why the key is the correct answer and what is wrong with the other answer choices. In addition, each question is referenced to the content outline. If you choose one of the wrong answers, you should return to the corresponding section of the content outline for additional study.

Online Practice Exams Available for UExcel Examinations

One of the most popular study resources, the online UExcel Practice Exams enable you to:

- Review the types of questions you may encounter on the actual exam. (Practice exams consist of items "retired" from actual exams.)
- Practice testing on a computer in a timed environment. Practice whenever and wherever it is convenient for you.
- Take one form of a practice exam within a 90-day period. You will receive your score immediately after you complete the practice test.
- Receive valuable feedback. After testing, you can check your performance on each question on line and find out why your answer was right or wrong. Feedback is not intended to predict your performance on the actual UExcel exam you will take for credit; rather, it will help you improve your knowledge of the subject and upgrade your test-taking skill.

Information about registering for a practice exam is on the UExcel resources page (www.uexceltest.com/resources).

Study Tips

You should be an active user of the resource material. Aim for understanding rather than memorization. The more active and involved you are when you study, the more likely you will be to retain, understand, and apply the information. As a preparatory activity, you may find it fun to search “learning style” on the web for tools to identify how you learn best. You may also find free college-level course material (sometimes called “open courseware”) on the Web or through iTunesU.

The following techniques are generally considered to be “active learning”:

- preview or survey each chapter
- highlight or underline text you believe is important
- write questions or comments in the margins
- practice re-stating content in your own words
- relate what you are reading to the chapter title, section headings, and other organizing elements of the textbook
- find ways to engage your eyes, your ears, and your muscles, as well as your brain, in your studies
- study with a partner or a small group
- prepare your review notes as flashcards or create audiotapes that you can use while commuting or exercising

When you feel confident that you understand a content area, review what you have learned. Take a second look at the material to evaluate your understanding. If you have a study partner, the two of you can review by explaining the content to each other or writing test questions for each other to answer. Review questions from textbook chapters may be helpful for partner or individual study, as well.

Content Outline

The major content areas on the examination and the percent of the examination devoted to each content area are listed below.

Content Area	Percent of the Examination
I. The Sociological Perspective	10%
II. The Social Foundations	20%
III. Differentiation and Inequality	30%
IV. Social Institutions	30%
V. Social Change	10%
Total	100%

I. The Sociological Perspective (Ch. 1–2 and 4) (10%) (14 hours)

- A. What is sociology?
- B. Contemporary sociology and society
 1. Symbolic interactionism
 2. Structural functionalism
 3. Conflict perspective
 4. Feminist theory
 5. Race-conflict approach
 6. Famous social theorists
 - a. Marx
 - b. Weber
 - c. Durkheim
 - d. DuBois
 - e. Martineau
 - f. Mills
 - g. Merton
 - h. Lenski
- C. Research methodologies
 1. Critical research methods
 2. Interpretive research methods
 3. The scientific method
 - a. Formulating hypotheses
 - b. Testing hypotheses
 - c. Steps in conducting an investigation
 - d. Inductive vs. deductive thought

II. The Social Foundations (Ch. 3 and 5-7) (20%)
(27 hours)

- A. Culture
 - 1. Elements of culture
 - a. Language
 - b. Norms
 - c. Symbols
 - d. Values and beliefs
 - e. Technology
 - f. Real vs. ideal culture
 - 2. Cultural diversity
 - a. High culture and popular culture
 - b. Subculture
 - c. Multiculturalism
 - d. Counterculture
 - e. Cultural relativism and ethnocentrism
 - 3. Theoretical analyses of culture
- B. Socialization
 - 1. The socialization process
 - 2. Agents of socialization
 - a. Family
 - b. School
 - c. Peers
 - d. Media
 - 3. The life course
 - 4. Theoretical analyses of socialization
- C. Social interaction
 - 1. Status
 - 2. Role
 - 3. Social construction of reality
 - 4. The presentation of self
- D. Social groups
 - 1. Primary and secondary groups
 - 2. Leadership
 - 3. Conformity
 - a. Ingroups and outgroups
 - 4. Networks
- E. Formal organizations
 - 1. Types and origins of formal organizations
 - 2. Bureaucracy
 - a. Characteristics
 - b. Problems
 - c. Oligarchy
 - d. Challenges of race, sex, and the changing nature of work
 - e. McDonaldization of society

III. Differentiation and Inequality (Ch. 8 and 10-15) (30%)
(41 hours)

- A. Social stratification
 - 1. Caste and class
 - 2. Wealth and income
 - 3. Power
 - 4. Prestige
 - 5. Social classes in the US
 - 6. Social mobility
 - 7. Poverty
 - 8. Theoretical perspectives on stratification
 - a. Functionalism
 - b. Conflict
 - c. Symbolic interactionism
- B. Global stratification
 - 1. High income countries
 - 2. Middle income countries
 - 3. Low income countries
 - 4. Global wealth and poverty
 - 5. Slavery
 - 6. Explanations of global poverty
 - 7. Modernization theory
 - 8. Dependency theory
- C. Race and ethnicity
 - 1. Prejudice, stereotypes, and racism
 - 2. Discrimination
 - 3. Dominant-minority group relations
 - a. Pluralism
 - b. Assimilation
 - c. Segregation
 - d. Genocide
 - 4. Diversity in the US
 - a. Native Americans
 - b. Categories of White Americans
 - c. African Americans
 - d. Asian Americans
 - e. Hispanic Americans/Latinos/Latinas
 - f. Arab Americans
- D. Gender and sexuality
 - 1. Gender inequality and stratification
 - a. Patriarchy
 - b. Sexism
 - c. Women's second shift
 - d. Intersectional theory
 - 2. Gender and socialization
 - 3. Theoretical analyses of gender
 - a. Structural functionalism
 - b. Social conflict
 - c. Feminism

4. Sexuality
 - a. The sexual revolution
 - b. Sexual orientation
 - c. Adolescent pregnancy
 - d. Pornography
 - e. Prostitution
 - f. Sexual violence
 - g. Theoretical analyses of sexuality
 - a. Structural functionalism
 - b. Symbolic interactionism
 - c. Social conflict

E. Aging

1. Life expectancy
2. An aging society in the US
3. Age stratification
4. Retirement and poverty
5. Caregiving and elder abuse
6. Ageism
7. Death and dying
8. Theoretical analyses of aging
 - a. Structural functionalism
 - b. Symbolic interactionism
 - c. Social conflict

IV. Social Institutions (Ch. 9 and 16-21) (30%)
(41 hours)

A. Economy and work

1. Agricultural revolution
2. Industrial revolution
3. Information revolution
4. Global economy
5. Economic systems
 - a. Capitalism
 - b. Socialism

6. The US economy

7. Corporations

B. Politics and government

1. Power and authority
2. Democracy
3. Authoritarianism
4. Totalitarianism
5. Special-interest groups
6. Revolution
7. Terrorism
8. War and peace
9. Theoretical analyses of power
 - a. Pluralist model
 - b. Power elite model
 - c. Marxist model

C. The family

1. Marriage and marriage patterns
2. Stages of family life
3. US families
4. Problems of family life
 - a. Divorce
 - b. Blended families
 - c. Family violence

5. Alternative family forms

6. Theoretical analyses of families
 - a. Structural-functional analysis
 - b. Social conflict and feminism
 - c. Symbolic interactionism
 - d. Social-exchange theory

D. Religion

1. Religious organizations

- a. Church
- b. Sect
- c. Cult

2. Secularization

3. Civil religion

4. New age seekers

5. Theoretical analyses of religion

- a. Structural functionalism
- b. Symbolic interactionism
- c. Social conflict
- d. Weber's The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism

E. Education

1. The functions of education

- a. Socialization
- b. Cultural innovation
- c. Social integration
- d. Social placement
- e. Latent functions

2. Education and social inequality

- a. Problems in the schools
- b. Other issues
 - a. School choice
 - b. Home schooling
 - c. Special needs students
 - d. Teacher shortage

F. Health and medicine

1. Health and society

- a. Smoking
- b. Eating disorders
- c. Obesity
- d. Sexually transmitted diseases
- e. Inequality and health

2. The medical establishment

- a. Scientific medicine
- b. Holistic medicine
- c. Paying for medical care

3. Theoretical analysis of health and medicine

- a. Structural-functional analysis
- b. Symbolic-interaction analysis
- c. Social-conflict and feminist analysis

- G. Crime and deviance
 - 1. Deviance
 - 2. Crime
 - a. Types of crimes
 - b. The US criminal justice system
 - 3. Social control
 - 4. Theoretical approaches
 - a. Structural functionalism
 - b. Symbolic interactionism
 - c. Social-conflict analysis

V. Social Change (Ch. 22-24) (10%) (14 hours)

- A. Demography
 - 1. Fertility
 - 2. Mortality
 - 3. Migration
 - 4. Population composition
- B. Theories of population growth
- C. Cities and urbanization
- D. The environment
- E. Social change
 - 1. Collective behavior
 - 2. Social movements
 - 3. Causes and approaches to social change
 - 4. Theoretical analyses of modernity
 - a. Structural functionalism
 - b. Social conflict
 - c. Tönnies
 - d. Durkheim
 - e. Weber
 - f. Marx
 - g. Postmodernism

Sample Questions

The questions that follow illustrate those typically found on this exam. Answer rationales can be found on pages 13–14 of this guide.

1. According to Auguste Comte, which stage came first in the development of history?
 - 1) metaphysical
 - 2) prescientific
 - 3) theological
 - 4) traditional
2. What is the job of sociological theory?
 - 1) to control people's behavior in large groups
 - 2) to explain social behavior in the real world
 - 3) to promote peace and harmony throughout the world
 - 4) to determine the correct research methodology that should be used

3. Which is most heavily emphasized by critical sociology?
 - 1) not imposing one's values on one's research
 - 2) the meaning people attach to their world
 - 3) systematic observation
 - 4) the need for change
4. Which is one type of formal organization identified by Amitai Etzioni (1975)?
 - 1) pragmatic
 - 2) cooperative
 - 3) coercive
 - 4) conjunctive
5. Which is an example of the "McDonaldization" of society?
 - 1) A person obtains cash from an automatic teller machine.
 - 2) A couple negotiate the particulars of a vacation with a travel agent.
 - 3) A professor tailors an exam to the unique needs of each student.
 - 4) A traveler spends the night at a local bed and breakfast.
6. Which is the result of a postindustrial economy?
 - 1) Organizations have more levels of authority than ever before.
 - 2) Organizations have become more flexible than ever before.
 - 3) There has been a decrease in productivity.
 - 4) There has been a decrease in the number of routine service jobs.
7. Which statement is correct about premarital sex in the United States?
 - 1) Premarital sex is accepted by a majority of young people today.
 - 2) Three-quarters of high school seniors have had premarital sexual intercourse.
 - 3) Since 1900, fewer women are having premarital sex.
 - 4) There has been a sharp increase in premarital sex among men in their 50s to mid-60s.

8. Which country has the highest rate of prostitution?
- 1) Iran
 - 2) Brazil
 - 3) China
 - 4) United States
9. Merton's strain theory of deviance uses which term to describe someone who accepts society's conventional goals but rejects the conventional means to obtain them?
- 1) conformist
 - 2) innovator
 - 3) retreatist
 - 4) ritualist
10. What is meant by the term glass ceiling?
- 1) an informal barrier that prevents women from being promoted at work
 - 2) measuring a woman's worth in terms of her physical appearance
 - 3) a form of social organization in which males dominate females
 - 4) defining administrative support work as women's work
11. According to Weber, which accounts for the Protestant work ethic?
- 1) Most religions claimed that much of human suffering is just punishment from God. Therefore, people hoped for a better life in the after world.
 - 2) Christians believed that their numbers would grow if they formed large corporations. Therefore, increasing numbers of Americans worked for these companies.
 - 3) Early Calvinists believed that prosperity was a sign of God's favor. Therefore, they were willing to work hard in order to accumulate wealth.
 - 4) Nineteenth century preachers taught that the more people worked, the richer they would become. Therefore, as people's wealth increased, they donated more to the church.
12. Which is the most common Protestant denomination in the United States?
- 1) Episcopalian
 - 2) Presbyterian
 - 3) Baptist
 - 4) Methodist
13. How is the crude birth rate calculated?
- 1) Divide the number of live births in a year by the total population.
 - 2) Divide the number of live births in a year by the number of females of child-bearing age in a population.
 - 3) Divide the number of live births in a year by the total population and multiply the result by 1,000.
 - 4) Divide the number of live births in a year by the number of females of child-bearing age in a population and multiply the result by 1,000.
14. Which is true of rumors?
- 1) They arise only when people have clear information about a subject.
 - 2) They interest only a small circle of people who know a particular person.
 - 3) They remain unchanged as they are passed along from person to person.
 - 4) They are difficult to stop unless a credible source provides factual information
15. Which is most likely a fad?
- 1) denim jeans
 - 2) movies
 - 3) Pokémon cards
 - 4) tattoos

Learning Resources for this Exam

The study materials listed below are recommended by UExcel examinations developers as the most appropriate resources to help you study for the examination. For information on ordering from the UExcel Bookstore, go to www.uexceltest.com/bookstore. You may also find resource materials in college libraries. Public libraries may have some of the textbooks or may be able to obtain them through an interlibrary loan program.

You should allow sufficient time to obtain resources and to study before taking the exam.

Recommended Resources

Macionis, J. (2012). *Sociology (14th ed.)*.
Upper Saddle River NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Rationales for Sample Questions

1.

- 1) This was the second stage.
- 2) This was not a stage identified by Comte.
- *3) **This was the first stage followed by metaphysical and scientific.**
- 4) This describes a world view addressed by sociologist Max Weber.

2.

- 1) See 2).
- *2) **The purpose of a theory is to explain observable phenomena. In the case of sociology, theory exists to explain observed social behavior.**
- 3) This is a desirable goal, of course; however, it is not the purpose of sociological theory.
- 4) Theory does not necessarily determine the correct course of action to be taken by a researcher.

3.

- 1) This is the opposite of what critical sociology emphasizes.
- 2) This is valued by interpretive sociology.
- 3) This is valued by scientific sociology.
- *4) **This is valued by critical sociology.**

4.

- 1) See 3).
- 2) See 3).
- *3) **Etzioni distinguishes among utilitarian, normative, and coercive organizations according to why people participate in them. People usually join coercive organizations involuntarily, as an aspect of punishment or medical treatment.**
- 4) See 3).

5.

- *1) **This is an example of McDonaldization, because it is modeled after a fast food restaurant. It emphasizes efficiency, uniformity, and control.**
- 2) This is not an example of McDonaldization, because it involves customization.
- 3) See 2).
- 4) This is not an example of McDonaldization, because it involves patronizing an independent business instead of a chain hotel.

6.

- 1) Organizations have become flatter.
- *2) **Communication and creativity are valued more highly.**
- 3) Organizations have become more productive.
- 4) There are more routine service jobs.

7.

- *1) **The clear majority of young people today accept premarital sex.**
- 2) Only slightly more than half of high school students have had premarital sexual intercourse.
- 3) The percentage of women engaging in premarital sex has increased sharply.
- 4) The increase for men of this “baby boomer” generation has been slight, but for women, the increase has been large.

8.

- 1) Iran has an extremely low rate of prostitution. Although it is a patriarchal society, strong Islamic teachings keep the rate very low.
- *2) **Brazil's rate of prostitution is extremely high. Prostitution is more common in poor countries where a strong patriarchal tradition combines with limited opportunities for women.**
- 3) China has an extremely low rate of prostitution, probably because official government policies enforcing sexual equality portray prostitution as oppression.
- 4) The United States has a moderate rate of prostitution: in a recent survey, one in six men reported paying for sex. This is typical in high-income nations with "Western" norms.

9.

- 1) A conformist accepts both goals and means.
- *2) **An innovator accepts goals but rejects means.**
- 3) A retreatist rejects both goals and means.
- 4) A ritualist rejects goals but accepts means.

10.

- *1) **This is the definition of a glass ceiling.**
- 2) This is part of what Noami Wolf called the beauty myth.
- 3) This is patriarchy.
- 4) This is the definition of pink-collar jobs.

11.

- 1) This describes a social-conflict approach to religion.
- 2) Weber did write about the relationship between religion and the rise of industrial capitalism, but he did not say this.
- *3) **According to Weber, Protestant religion informed an entire economic system.**
- 4) This is more similar to the contemporary "prosperity gospel" than to the idea of the Protestant work ethic as outlined by Weber.

12.

- 1) Less than 2 percent of Americans who indicate a preference claim to be Episcopalian.
- 2) Less than 3 percent of Americans who indicate a preference claim to be Presbyterian.
- *3) **Over 17 percent of Americans who indicate a preference claim to be Baptist.**
- 4) Less than 7 percent of Americans who indicate a preference claim to be Methodist.

13.

- 1) This is not the correct formula.
- 2) See 1).
- *3) **This is the formula used by demographers for computing the crude birth rate.**
- 4) See 1).

14.

- 1) Rumors thrive in a climate of uncertainty.
- 2) This is true of gossip, not rumors.
- 3) Rumors are unstable as they are passed along.
- *4) **Rumors are difficult to stop without convincing information to the contrary.**

15.

- 1) Jeans have been around since the 1870s.
- 2) Movies have been around for over a century and continue to be extremely popular.
- *3) **Like all fads, these were extremely popular for a brief time only.**
- 4) Tattoos have been around for many years and continue to be popular.

UExcel Examination Development Committee in Introduction to Sociology

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When you're ready to test, you can schedule to take your exam at a Pearson VUE testing center through our Web site: www.uexceltest.com.

UExcel Examinations Offerings

Calculus	4 lower-level credits
College Writing	4 lower-level credits
Introduction to Psychology	3 lower-level credits
Introduction to Sociology	3 lower-level credits
Physics	6 lower-level credits
Political Science	3 lower-level credits
Spanish Language	6 lower-level credits
Statistics	3 lower-level credits