

Soc 4141 Midterm Examination Guide (Uggen)

To prepare for the midterm exam, I suggest that you:

- A. **Catch up** on anything you may have missed or put off.
 1. Complete CWB, Rios, and Article readings.
 2. Make sure that your lecture notes are complete.
- B. Try to see the **big picture**:
 1. Revisit your syllabus to ensure that you understand the course objectives.
 2. Study this outline as you review your course notes
- C. **Outline** the sample questions (see below).
- D. Be **specific**. Show your knowledge by citing specific evidence.
- E. **Talk to each other** and contact me if you are confused on particular points. It is fine to work together, but be a good group member (nobody likes a “free-rider”).

OUTLINE TO DATE

I. Extent and distribution of Juvenile Delinquency

- I. Legalistic and Sociological Definitions of JD
 - A. LEGAL: law violation by persons who have not reached age of majority
 - B. SOC: concept of childhood, rules of age-appropriate behavior, formal institutional reaction
- II. The Official Delinquency Picture: UCR
 - A. Index v. Non-index Crimes
 - B. Status Offenses
 - C. Correlates and Trends
 - D. State and Local
 - E. Critique
- III. The Self-Report Delinquency Picture: MTF
 - A. Class Survey – methods and results
 - B. Prevalence and Incidence
 - C. Correlates and Trends
 - D. Critique
- IV. The Crime Victimization Picture: NCVS
 - A. Correlates and Trends
 - B. Critique
- V. Summary of 3 pictures and “bivariate correlates” (age, sex, race...)
 - A. 6 Social Sources of the crime drop (punishment, policing, opportunities, economics, demography, long-term social dynamics)
 - B. Sherman et al. 1998: What Works, What Doesn't, What's Promising
- VI. Angels with Dirty Faces (1938) and discussion
 - A. Differential association, social control, and labeling interpretations of film

II. Theories of Delinquency

- I. Transition: from Correlates to Causal Models
 - A. Why not skip theories?
 - B. Criteria of Causality
 - C. Levels of Explanation
- II. Biology, Psychology, and Individual Treatment
 - A. Background: early biological positivists
 - B. Terrie Moffitt's (1993) Adolescent-Limited and Life-Course Persistent typology
 - C. CWB evidence on Moffitt (by Moffitt)
- III. Classical School: Deterrence and Rational Choice
 - A. Background and Assumptions from Beccaria and Bentham
 - B. Conceptual Tools: General and Specific Deterrence
 - C. Simple model: $Y = P*(reward\$) - ((1-P)*costs\$)$
 - D. Critique and Extensions; CWB summary

- E. Anthony Petrosino et al. on Scared Straight
- IV. Sutherland's Differential Association Theory (1939)
 - A. Background and Assumptions (cultural relativism; human flexibility; learning; groups)
 - B. Conceptual Tools
 - 1. Normative Conflict
 - 2. Culture and Subculture
 - 3. Differential Association Process (know process, but needn't memorize 9 propositions)
 - 4. Differential Social Organization
 - C. Critique and Extensions (Akers; Sykes & Matza; Matsueda)
 - D. CWB Review by Akers & Jensen on Social Learning theory
 - E. Policy: Community Treatment/Guided Group Interaction (Provo and Silverlake)
 - F. Clampet-Lundquist et al. 2011. "Moving to Opportunity" in AJS (effects and group differences)
- V. Hirschi's Social Control Theory (1969)
 - A. Background and Assumptions (roots in Hobbes, Durkheim); normative consensus; crime is "natural"; absence of controls -> JD
 - B. Conceptual Tools: The Social Bond (Attachment, Commitment, Involvement, Belief)
 - C. Critique and Extensions (Gottfredson & Hirschi; Sampson & Laub)
 - D. Compare Differential Association and Social Control
- VI. Matza's Drift Theory (1964)
 - A. Conceptual Tools: Drift, Neutralization, "Sounding"
- VII. Labeling and Symbolic interaction in Life Course
 - A. Background: Self-image and identity; and Assumptions (Cooley; Mead); relativism, labels, power
 - B. Conceptual Tools
 - 1. Primary Deviance
 - 2. Secondary Deviance
 - 3. Rule creators/moral entrepreneurs
 - C. Critique and Extensions: Matsueda's symbolic interactionist theory
 - D. Massoglia and Uggen 2011. "Settling Down and Aging Out"
 - E. Policy: Diversion, decriminalization, due process, deinstitutionalization
 - F. Wilson & Hodge 2013. Meta-analysis on diversion
 - 1. Intervention v. Caution programs
 - 2. Effectiveness relative to standard treatment
- VIII. Rios: know specific people and events & connect to delinquency theories
 - A. Gang definitions
 - B. Transition to social-structural theories

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

I. Sample Multiple Choice Questions

1. A key assumption of Hirschi's social control theory is that
 - (a) various subcultures in society endorse different norms and values
 - (b) there is no general consensus in society over values and beliefs
 - (c) societal reactions to deviance increase the likelihood of future deviance
 - (d) criminologists must ask why we obey the law rather than why we disobey it.
 - (e) both (a) and (b) are correct
2. For all of the boys in Rios' sample (p. 57), their first encounters with police took place...
 - a. in the streets outside their homes
 - b. in or near hospitals
 - c. in or near their schools
 - d. in or near police stations
 - e. none of the above – few boys in the sample had ever interacted with the police
3. According to Petrosino et al. (p.53), Scared Straight programs result in
 - a. "a decrease in criminality in the experimental group when compared to a no-treatment control"

- b. "an increase in criminality in the experimental group when compared to a no-treatment control."
- c. "no difference in criminality in the experimental group when compared to a no-treatment control."
- d. None of the above. Petrosino et al. evaluated diversion programs rather than Scared Straight

SHORT ESSAYS (1-2 PARAGRAPHS)

I. A Minnesota political party recently put this statement in its official Minnesota House Agenda: "Juvenile crime is more violent, sophisticated and prevalent than before." Write a paragraph supporting, qualifying, or refuting this statement. Be sure to refer to the trends in self-report and victimization surveys as well as official statistics.

II. Briefly explain Moffitt's original 2-group typology, citing an example of each type and the sort of criminal career that they may have. What sort of policies to prevent or control delinquency does this model imply?

III. Some delinquent acts are "predominantly male" and others as "about equally male and female." Based on national surveys, briefly discuss at least 1 "predominantly male" act and 1 act that females are about as likely to report as males. How might this pattern help you understand the "Moving to Opportunity" findings of Clampet-Lundquist et al.?

IV. Riku has close and intimate relationships with both her parents and friends. Both parents and friends, however, often violate the law.

- A. Would differential association theory predict that Riku is likely to become a criminal? Explain in a paragraph.
- B. Would social control theory predict that Riku is likely to become a criminal? Explain in a paragraph.

MEDIUM ESSAYS (2-3 BLUEBOOK PAGES)

V. Uggen argues that the "official picture" of juvenile delinquency is somewhat different than the self-report picture and the victimization picture.

- A. Briefly explain these differences, including race and sex differences and overall trends since 1980.
- B. What methodological factors might account for these differences? Critique both official statistics and the self-report method (you might refer here to our class self-report survey and victimization data).
- C. How would labeling theory account for these differences? How would Rios interpret them?

VI. Criminologists have written about the "age-crime curve" since the 1830s, trying to make sense of the fact that so much crime is committed by young people.

- A. Summarize the age distribution of crime.
- B. What is Moffitt's (1991) explanation for the age-crime curve? Is there empirical support for her view?
- C. How do theories based on learning, social control, and labeling make sense of the age-crime curve?
- D. Massoglia and Uggen (2011) argue that people must "settle down" and desist from delinquency to be considered adults in society. How is delinquency and desistance tied to our subjective sense that we have become adults? What else predicts subjective adulthood?

VII. Choice and deterrence

- A. Does rational choice and deterrence theory only apply to economic or property crimes? Explain why or why not using the ideas, assumptions, and conceptual tools of the theory.
- B. To what extent does "choice" play a role in learning/differential association, social control, and labeling theories? Cite specific examples.
- C. What sort of policies does rational choice and deterrence theory suggest? How do they operate in the juvenile justice system?

VIII. A juvenile court official asks you, a local delinquency expert, to assist with a recent case: "before a 9-year-old boy stowed away on a flight to Las Vegas last week, he had already stolen a car, sneaked into a Bloomington water park without paying and come under the scrutiny of child protection investigators." Because of his age, he cannot be charged with a crime. How might you use our course materials to help make sense of this history and suggest some treatment alternatives. What is typical about it and what is atypical? Be sure to address the behaviors, age, and the conceptual tools of the theories, and the past success of the programming options you discuss.

LONGER ESSAYS (3+ PAGES)

IX. Feminist criminologists, such as Meda Chesney-Lind, have argued that female delinquency cannot be explained by theories designed to explain the behavior of boys: the "just adds girls and mix" approach to female delinquency is ineffective.

- A. What do arrest and self-report data tell us about gender differences in delinquency?
- B. How would Sutherland's differential association theory explain this gender gap? (1 paragraph)
- C. How would Hirschi's social control theory explain this gender gap? (1 paragraph)
- D. How would labeling theory explain this gender gap? (1 paragraph)
- E. Which of these explanations do you find most convincing? (1 paragraph)

X. Rios and individual-level delinquency

- A. Are the data from Rios' first three chapters more consistent with a social control or a differential association or a labeling or a rational choice interpretation of delinquent behavior? Cite specific people and events regarding the role of the family, schools, peers, and other factors. (2-3 bluebook pages)
- B. Briefly explain why his ethnography is not consistent with the other theories mentioned? (1-2 bluebook pages)
- C. What are the strengths and limitations of the ethnographic approach to studying delinquency? What sort of biases might enter if we had no other sources of data on delinquency? (1-2 paragraphs)

XI. Sutherland wrote that criminals learn both "techniques of committing crime" and "motives, drives, rationalizations and attitudes" about crime.

- A. Briefly explain what sort of things are learned, citing at least 3 examples of each type of learning in Rios' ethnography. (1-2 pages)
- B. Do you think delinquency came naturally for the boys that Rios studied, or did it have to be learned in interaction with family and friends? (1-2 paragraphs)
- C. Based on our class survey and other course materials, do you think that boys like Jose and Tyrell commit acts that are "typical" of those our class committed, or are they very exceptional? List at least one piece of evidence for your position.

XII. Throughout the course, we consider how delinquency theory maps onto delinquency policy.

- A. To what degree are diversion programs consistent with the concepts and assumptions of labeling theory? How successful are these programs? Name several of their advantages and disadvantages.
- B. To what degree is community treatment consistent with the concepts and assumptions of differential association theory? Is it successful relative to, say, institutionalization?
- C. To what degree is scared straight consistent with the concepts and assumptions of deterrence theory?
- D. How would you implement a program based on social control theory? Is there any program in Sherman et al's *What Works* summary that applies the principles of social control theory?
- E. Identify which approach you find most promising in preventing and/or controlling delinquency and explain why you find it convincing in a sentence or two.

XIII. The FBI Uniform Crime Reports divides its crime index of serious offenses into "crimes against persons" and "crimes against property."

- A. About what percentage of total juvenile arrests are for personal index crimes such as armed robbery? How has this changed since 1960? Since the mid-1990s? Can you see similar trends in the victimization data? (1 paragraph)
- B. Explain the sex and race distribution of larceny-theft according to the self-report data presented in lecture. Does the "self-report picture" for this crime match the "official picture"? (1 paragraph)
- C. According to Uggen and McElrath (2014), what factors might account for the big decline in theft and (especially) motor vehicle theft? (1 paragraph)
- D. Of the individual-level theories we've discussed, which one seems most useful for explaining overall crime *trends* over the last 20 years? Refer to the assumptions and concepts of the theory in your answer. (1 paragraph)