

CLEP® Introductory Sociology: at a Glance

Description of the Examination

The Introductory Sociology examination is designed to assess an individual's knowledge of the material typically presented in a one-semester introductory sociology course at most colleges and universities. The examination emphasizes basic facts and concepts as well as general theoretical approaches used by sociologists. Highly specialized knowledge of the subject and the methodology of the discipline is not required or measured by the test content.

The examination contains approximately 100 questions to be answered in 90 minutes. Some of these are pretest questions that will not be scored. Any time candidates spend on tutorials and providing personal information is in addition to the actual testing time.

Knowledge and Skills Required

Questions on the Introductory Sociology examination require candidates to demonstrate one or more of the following abilities. Some questions may require more than one of these abilities.

- Identification of specific names, facts, and concepts from sociological literature
- Understanding of relationships between concepts, empirical generalizations, and theoretical propositions of sociology
- Understanding of the methods by which sociological relationships are established
- Application of concepts, propositions, and methods to hypothetical situations
- Interpretation of tables and charts

The subject matter of the Introductory Sociology examination is drawn from the following topics. The percentages next to the main topics indicate the approximate percentage of exam questions on that topic.

20% Institutions

- Economic
- Educational
- Family
- Medical
- Political
- Religious

10% Social Patterns

- Community
- Demography
- Human ecology
- Rural/urban patterns

25% Social Processes

- Collective behavior and social movements
- Culture
- Deviance and social control
- Groups and organizations
- Social change
- Social interaction
- Socialization

25% Social Stratification (Process and Structure)

- Aging
- Power and social inequality
- Professions and occupations
- Race and ethnic relations
- Sex and gender roles
- Social class
- Social mobility

20% The Sociological Perspective

- History of sociology
- Methods
- Sociological theory

Study Resources

Most textbooks used in college-level introductory sociology courses cover the topics in the above outline, but the approaches to certain topics and the emphases given to them may differ. To prepare for the Introductory Sociology exam, it is advisable to study one or more college textbooks, which can be found for sale online or in most college bookstores. As you read, take notes that address the following issues, which are fundamental to most questions that appear on the test:

- What is society? What is culture? What is common to all societies, and what is characteristic of American society?

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- What are other basic concepts in sociology that help to describe human nature, human interaction, and the collective behavior of groups, organizations, institutions, and societies?
- What methods do sociologists use to study, describe, analyze, and observe human behavior?

A recent survey conducted by CLEP® found that the following textbooks are among those used by college faculty who teach the equivalent course. You might find one or more of these for sale online or at your local college bookstore. HINT: Look at the table of contents first to make sure it matches the knowledge and skills required for this exam.

Alexander and Thompson, <i>A Contemporary Introduction to Sociology: Culture and Society in Transition</i> (Paradigm)
Andersen and Taylor, <i>Sociology: The Essentials</i> (Wadsworth)
Brinkerhoff et al., <i>Essentials of Sociology</i> (Wadsworth)
Brym and Lie, <i>Sociology: Your Compass for a New World</i> , Brief Edition (Wadsworth)
Curry et al., <i>Sociology for the Twenty-First Century</i> (Prentice Hall)
Ferris and Stein, <i>The Real World: An Introduction to Sociology</i> (W. W. Norton)
Giddens et al., <i>Essentials of Sociology</i> (W. W. Norton)
Henslin, <i>Essentials of Sociology</i> (Allyn & Bacon)
Hughes and Kroehler, <i>Sociology: The Core</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Macionis, <i>Society: The Basics</i> (Prentice Hall)
Newman and O'Brien, <i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i> (Pine Forge)
Schaefer, <i>Sociology: A Brief Introduction</i> (McGraw-Hill)
Stark, <i>Sociology</i> (Wadsworth)
Sullivan, <i>Introduction to Social Problems</i> (Allyn & Bacon)
Thompson and Hickey, <i>Society in Focus: An Introduction to Sociology</i> (Allyn & Bacon)
Tischler, <i>Introduction to Sociology</i> (Wadsworth)
Witt, <i>SOC</i> (McGraw-Hill)

These resources, compiled by the CLEP test development committee and staff members, may help you study for your exam. However, none of these sources are designed specifically to provide preparation for a CLEP exam. The College Board has no control over their content and cannot vouch for accuracy:

www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/resource.html
(General Sociological Links)

Visit clep.collegeboard.org/test-preparation for additional sociology resources. You can also find suggestions for exam preparation in Chapter IV of the *CLEP Official Study Guide*. In addition, many college faculty post their course materials on their schools' websites.

Sample Test Questions

The following sample questions do not appear on an actual CLEP examination. They are intended to give potential test-takers an indication of the format and difficulty level of the examination and to provide content for practice and review. For more sample questions and info about the test, see the *CLEP Official Study Guide*.

- Which of the following religious organizations seeks to maintain exclusiveness, claims to represent the true faith, and is most likely to have split off from a larger religious group?
 - Cult
 - Sect
 - Church
 - Denomination
 - Ecclesia
- Which of the following concepts seeks a consensus of opinion, or group conformity, by taking a narrow view of an issue?
 - Groupthink
 - Resocialization
 - Institutionalization
 - Mass hysteria
 - Resource mobilization
- Which of the following groups have the lowest intermarriage rates in the United States?
 - American Indians and Whites
 - Latinos and Whites
 - Asian Americans and Whites
 - African Americans and Whites
 - Jewish Whites and Protestant Whites

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4. Marguerite recently moved to the United States from Spain for better economic opportunity. Her move is an example of which of the following processes?
 - A. Forced migration
 - B. Voluntary migration
 - C. Step migration
 - D. Selective immigration
 - E. Internal migration

5. Which of the following is true of a random sample?
 - A. It provides every member of the population with an equal chance of being selected.
 - B. It is biased, and therefore cannot be used to make generalizations about a population.
 - C. It is mostly used when the research assumes multiple causation.
 - D. It is mostly used in qualitative research.
 - E. It is a census list of all households.

6. With which of the following statements would a sociologist adhering to the disengagement theory most likely disagree?
 - A. It is less disruptive to society when older people live beyond retirement age.
 - B. When older people retire, it creates opportunities for younger people.
 - C. When workers retire, it means a loss of experienced labor for businesses.
 - D. Mandatory retirement is beneficial because older workers tend to experience a decline in physical abilities that can negatively affect work performance.
 - E. Retirement improves morale and happiness.

7. In the United States, which family members are primarily responsible for what is known as the second shift?
 - A. Fathers only
 - B. Mothers only
 - C. Both fathers and mothers
 - D. Children
 - E. Grandparents

8. Maria woke up with a fever. She called in sick to work, took medicine, and spent the rest of the day in bed. Maria's actions are most representative of
 - A. a sick role
 - B. a role strain
 - C. a role conflict
 - D. medicalization
 - E. socialized medicine

Credit Recommendations

The American Council on Education has recommended that colleges grant three credits for a score of 50, which is equivalent to a course grade of C, on the CLEP Introductory Sociology exam. Each college, however, is responsible for setting its own policy. For candidates with satisfactory scores on the Introductory Sociology examination, colleges may grant credit toward fulfillment of a distribution requirement, or for a particular course that matches the exam in content. Check with your school to find out the score it requires for granting credit, the number of credit hours granted, and the course that can be bypassed with a passing score.

Answers to Sample Questions: 1-B; 2-A; 3-D; 4-B; 5-A; 6-C; 7-B; 8-A