

# Social Organization

1. There are those who have said that the field of sociology is the study of social organization, or at least that social organization is the heart of sociology. You may choose to attack or defend this view. Whichever approach you choose, be sure to bring specific evidence to your answer, and organize your argument into a coherent and rational whole.
2. Some writers have stated that we can largely do away with traditional institutions of education because information on most all subjects is now available on the net, is faster and easier to access, and is readily available to anyone with a computer. You should use one of the major theories of social change to support or attack this position. Bring all the evidence you are able in developing an orderly, sociological position on the issue.
3. Discuss the nature of interorganizational relations and the way they can aid or hinder an organization. What are the important variables in this area?
4. List and briefly discuss the contributions to social organization of the following list of theorists.
  - a. Elton Mayo
  - b. Amitai Etzioni
  - c. Derek Pugh & the Aston Group
  - d. Max Weber
  - e. Alvin Gouldner
  - f. William H. Whyte
  - g. William F. Whyte
5. Give definitions and show how these concepts have been used in organizational research. How are these concepts related?
  - a. Organizational size
  - b. Organizational conflict
  - c. Centralization
  - d. Span of control
6. Apply a world systems theory to explain the conditions found in both developed cities and in developing cities.

7. Apply a modernization theory of social change to understand what social policy for third world development would logically flow from this perspective? Provide critical thinking to the logic of these relationships and present what you see as the most likely future for these areas of the world.
8. In what major ways is U.S. society becoming more diverse? Why is that occurring?
9. In what ways is the growing diversity of the U.S. mirrored in South Dakota's population? In what ways does South Dakota differ from the U.S. in the trend toward increased diversity? Why is that (i.e., differences between S.D. and U.S. in terms of diversity)?
10. Generally, two theoretical perspectives are contrasted in the study of social stratification. Lenski referred to these as the conservative (functionalist) and radical (conflict) perspectives.
  - What is the basic argument or position taken in each of those two perspectives on social stratification?
  - How did Lenski attempt to develop a synthesis from those two perspectives?
11. Harold Kerbo (and many other contemporary writers on social stratification) identify five basic social classes in the U.S. What are those five social classes, and how are they distinguished from one another?
12. Compare and contrast a conflict theory of social change with more technological theories of change, such as the adoption-diffusion theory.
13. Choose one perspective or theory of social change, and show how this paradigm can be used to explain the social impacts of computers on society.
14. Compare and contrast the major theories of social change.
15. There is a good deal of discussion and promotion of distance learning (i.e., use of technologies which allow students to take courses and pursue degrees without being resident on campus) in higher education today. Little study has been done on the *effectiveness* of this approach to higher education. Choose a method that you have studied for measuring organizational effectiveness and suggest how that method could be used to measure the effectiveness of distance learning in higher education.

16. Briefly define and discuss the following variables in relation to social organizations, indicating their relationships to one another and the relevant literature on those relationships:
  - a. Formalism
  - b. Complexity
  - c. Span of control
  - d. Size
  - e. Structural differentiation
17. Given the demographic changes that are occurring in the U.S. today, *what impact* do you expect these changes to have on our political, economic, and educational institutions? Why is that (i.e., why would you predict those impacts)? Note: you might consider such things here as “how business is conducted” in these institutions, representation, participation, leadership, conflict, etc.
18. According to Schafer, how are subordinate groups created? What consequences does subordinate-group status have?
19. What is a minority group? For any immigrant-minority group, describe the push/pull factors and intervening variables associated with immigration. What problems did it face once members resided in the United States? How did they respond?
20. What contributions did the following persons make to the Sociology of Diversity: W.E.B. Du Bois; Robert Ezra Park; Gunnar Myrdal; Louis Wirth; Emory Bogardus; T.W. Adorno et. al.; Milton Gordon?
21. What is resource competition? Describe majority and minority relations from this perspective. Provide examples. In general terms, what do the Noel hypothesis and resource competition have in common? How do they differ?
22. What is "population diversity?" How do the six fundamental "facts" of populations help us understand population diversity? How do population pyramids help us understand population diversity?
23. Discuss the major immigration policies and their impact on who has immigrated to the United States. Also discuss two contemporary concerns regarding immigration and immigration policies.

24. What is the difference between community planning and community development? Briefly describe “projects” of each type.
25. What are the major issues related to community planning? Discuss in detail and provide plenty of examples.