

## SOCIOLOGY SENIOR EXERCISE, 2015-2016

The senior exercise asks you to explore central themes in sociology and articulate an in-depth understanding of the discipline. Accordingly, two of its main components speak to those tasks: *the faculty forums* and *the oral examination*. The third component links these two together: you and your colleagues must collaborate to provide the themes for the forums and the questions for the exam.

### **FACULTY FORUMS**

**No later than September 30 by 5pm, seniors will propose a list of four (4) themes for sociology faculty forums.**

These 90-minute forums will address broad issues regarding the character of the discipline that are of interest to majors. Faculty will review these themes and select two for panel discussions in mid-October and mid-November. Seniors must attend; the forums are, however, open to all majors.

The themes may be anything of your choosing, but they should adhere to the following:

- Each theme should be sociological in character, i.e., they must excite a sociological imagination.
- Each theme should be broad enough to allow all the faculty to speak to the topic, but coherent enough for each theme to be distinguishable from the others.
- Each theme should have a 3-5 sentence justification and include a few potential questions emerging from the theme itself.
- Students should also propose two dates for these forums – one for mid-October and one for mid/early November.

### **ORAL EXAMINATION**

**No later than Friday, November 20 by 5pm, seniors will submit to the faculty four (4) questions for their oral examinations.**

The faculty will proactively review the questions submitted, and at their discretion, accept particular questions as presented, make modifications, or provide alternative questions. This finalized list of questions will be presented to senior majors soon after December 1.

The format of these questions can vary, but they must conform to the following general guidelines:

- Questions must be sociological in character, i.e., they must excite a sociological imagination.
- Taken together, the questions must address all four divisions of the sociology curriculum: (1) theory, (2) methods, (3) institutions and change, and (4) culture and identity. Any particular question may address one or more of these divisions.
- Questions must be sufficiently broad to be answered by all majors, regardless of the specific courses they have taken in the department.
- Questions must enable each major to demonstrate his or her distinctive command of the discipline.

## THE ORAL EXAMINATION

**On Sunday, February 14**, you will complete an oral examination before the sociology faculty. At the examination, **you will select and answer one question from a choice of two**. You will provide a ten-minute response to your selected question. Following the response, faculty will ask follow-up questions based upon your presentation for an additional ten minutes.

SOCY 2015 and 2014 comprehensive exam questions can be found here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s2pSnsn4Z\\_2ZqgzzHrPMHyr6hCR4kJ3YQ5LGT8VKyEA](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1s2pSnsn4Z_2ZqgzzHrPMHyr6hCR4kJ3YQ5LGT8VKyEA)

Your work in the senior exercise will be evaluated on two primary criteria: (1) your demonstrated command of sociology as conveyed through your response to the question posed, and (2) the clarity and effectiveness of your oral presentation. The result of the evaluation will be provided to you in writing following completion of the examination for all students, indicating whether you have passed and whether you have earned distinction. To receive distinction, you must show excellence with respect to both evaluation criteria. Students who fail the oral examination will be required to submit five-page written responses to two additional questions selected by the faculty no later than March 21.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **September 30 by 5pm** – Seniors submit themes for faculty forums via e-mail attachment to Prof. Kohlman ([kohlmann@kenyon.edu](mailto:kohlmann@kenyon.edu)). In addition, the body of the senior majors must submit dates in mid-October and mid-November as well as the times for the forums. Ensure that all of you can attend.
- **Mid-October and Mid-November** – Two sociology faculty forums, one per month.
- **November 20 by 5pm** – Seniors submit questions for the oral examination via e-mail attachment to Prof. Kohlman.
- **December 1** – Faculty will review the questions for the oral exam and will return a finalized list to the seniors via e-mail attachment.
- **February 14** – Seniors will take their oral exams. Specific time for each student's exam TBA.
- **March 21** – Deadline to submit written essays for seniors who fail their oral exams.