The exam will consist of materials covered in the text book (approximately 35%), class lectures (approximately 50%), and in the Classics reader (approximately 15%). The exam will be worth 75 points broken down this way: 40 pts multiple choice (20 Qs 2 pts each); 15 pts short answer (3 Q’s 5 pts each); 10 pts essay (1 Q 10 pts). This review sheet is meant to help you study, however it is not a recipe for what will be on the exam. There may be some items on the exam that are not explicitly listed on this review sheet.

Reading material to be covered in this exam:
   Ferrante text book Chapters 1-6
   Classics Readings by:
      C. Wright Mills
      Peter Berger
      Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels
      Horace Miner
      George Herbert Mead
      Erving Goffman

Lecture material to be covered on this exam:
   Wed., Jan. 23 – Wed., Feb. 20 (see syllabus for topics)

*Some key issues:*
   Sociological imagination
   Troubles versus issues
   Advantages/disadvantages of humans as the subject of study
   Sociological Theorists and Perspectives
   Research Methods (steps in the process, types of methods)
   Social Experiments
   Culture (material & nonmaterial)
   Cultural Change
   Ethnocentrism
   Cultural Relativity
   Subcultures
   Countercultures
   Socialization
   Nature/Nurture
   Social isolation, importance of social contact
   Socialization groups (primary group, in-group, out-group)
   Developing a social self
   Looking-glass self
   Mead’s I & Me
   Piaget’s stages of cognitive development
   Resocialization
Total Institutions
Agents of socialization
Styles of parental behavior
Class and gender differences in socialization
Social Interaction
Social Status (ascribed, achieved, master status)
Theatre analogy (roles, strain, conflict, back-stage, front-stage, impression management)
Attribution Theory
Social Networks (advantages/disadvantages)
Social Capital
Social Organizations
Rationalization in organizations
McDonaldization of society
Bureaucracy (characteristics, advantages/disadvantages)
Trained incapacity
Externalities
Alienation
1. Distinguish between troubles and issues.

Personal troubles are private matters connected with individuals’ characters or confined to their immediate relationships (with family members, friends, acquaintances, co-workers, etc.). The resolution of troubles thus lies with individuals or their relationships. Public issues are matters that transcend the lives of individuals and cannot be resolved by changing them or their personal relationships. Unemployment is a personal problem when it is confined to individuals who lose their jobs due to personal shortcomings such as incompetence or dishonesty. It is a public issue when large numbers of people are unemployed as a consequence of bankruptcies, company downsizings, plant shutdowns and relocations, and other large-scale changes in the economy.

2. What is the sociological imagination?

The sociological imagination is a unique perspective on the social world. It enables us to see the connection between private experiences and broad social and historical forces. More specifically, the sociological imagination is the ability to distinguish between personal troubles and public issues.

3. What major historical event shaped the discipline of sociology? Why?

The Industrial Revolution and all the changes that it encompassed had a tremendous impact on the discipline of sociology because it inspired the work of three of the most influential sociologists: Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx. All three thinkers devoted much of their professional lives to understanding the nature and consequences of the Industrial Revolution.

4. Distinguish between mechanical and organic solidarity.

Mechanical solidarity consists of social order and cohesion based on a common conscience or uniform thinking and behavior. In this situation everyone views the world in much the same way. A person’s “first duty is to resemble everybody else”—that is, “not to have anything personal about one’s [core] beliefs and actions.” A society with a complex division of labor is characterized by organic solidarity—social order based on interdependence and cooperation among people performing a wide range of diverse and specialized tasks. A complex division of labor increases differences among people, in turn leading to a decrease in similarity.

5. What is rationalization?

Rationalization is a process whereby thought and action motivated by emotion, superstition, respect for mysterious forces, and tradition become replaced by thought and action grounded in the logical assessment of the most efficient ways to achieve and valued goal or end.
6. Give an example of action/behavior driven by tradition and compare it with value-rational action.

Value rational thought or action guides modern medicine in that the most efficient way to treat a condition such as epilepsy is with a medication known as phenobarbital (even though many people suffer side-effects). Traditional thought or action guides a “treatment plan” that view the epileptic as both burdened and blessed (i.e., spiritually gifted) and that emphasizes protecting the epileptic from harm during seizures and drawing upon the services of a traditional healer.

7. Durkheim maintains that the sociologist’s task is to study social facts. What are social facts?

Social facts are ideas, feelings, and ways of behaving “that possess the remarkable property of existing outside the consciousness of the individual.” That is, social facts do not originate with the people experiencing them. From the time we are born, the people around us seek to impose upon us ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that we had no hand in creating. For example, the words and gestures people use to express thoughts, the monetary and credit system they use to pay debts, the rules governing games such as baseball, tennis, soccer, and basketball, the beliefs and rituals of the religions we follow—all were created before we came on the scene. Thus social facts have a life that extends beyond individuals.

8. According to the functionalist perspective, why has poverty not been eliminated?

Poverty exists because it makes a contribution to order and stability. If poverty did not make a contribution it would cease to exist. Poverty performs many functions. Some of these functions are: (a) The poor do the unskilled, dangerous, temporary, dead-end, undignified, menial work of society at low pay, (b) Affluent persons contract out at low wages many time-consuming activities such as housework, yard work, and child care, (c) The poor are medical guinea pigs of sorts (for example, they are the ones most likely to volunteer for over-the-counter and prescription drug tests), (d) Certain middle-class occupations exist to serve the poor, (e) Poor people purchase goods and services that would otherwise go unused.

9. What are the major shortcomings of the functionalist perspective?

Critics argue that the functionalist perspective has a number of shortcomings. For one, it is a conservative perspective because it seems to defend the existing order of things. Two critics also take issue with the functionalist assumption that a part exists because it serves a purpose: there are too many examples where a part's function does not become evident until it has been in existence for a long period of time. Third, a part may not perform a function in the most efficient way (e.g., public transportation versus the automobile). Fourth, sometimes functionalists' explanations can border on the absurd. Finally, functionalists have trouble explaining social conflict and other forms of instability.

10. What concepts did Robert K. Merton introduce to counter criticisms of the functionalist perspective? Briefly define each concept and explain how they strengthen the perspective. What criticism is not addressed by Merton’s concepts?

Robert K. Merton introduced the concepts of dysfunction, manifest and latent. These concepts encourage a more detailed and balanced analysis of a part than the single concept of function. Although a part may contribute to order and stability at some level, it is also clear that parts can have dysfunctions (disruptive consequences to the system or to some segment of the society) and can have manifest and latent consequences. Manifest refers to the intended, recognized, and
expected consequences. Latent refers to the unintended, unrecognized, unanticipated, or unpredicted consequences. The concepts can be used in combination with function and dysfunction. Manifest dysfunctions are the expected or anticipated disruptions that a part causes in some segment of the system. Latent dysfunctions, on the other hand, are the unintended, unanticipated consequences. Similarly, manifest functions are the intended, recognized, expected, or predictable consequences that contribute to the smooth operation of some segment of society. Latent functions are the unintended, unrecognized, unexpected consequences that contribute to the smooth operation of some segment of society. The broader functionalist perspective introduces a new problem: it gives us no technique for adding up the pluses and minuses and thus determining the overall impact of an event.

11. Distinguish between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. Which of the two is the exploiting class? Why? How is exploitation justified?

The bourgeoisie own the means of production (land, machinery, buildings, tools) and purchase labor. They are motivated by the desire for profit. As a result capitalists seek to expand their markets, to make the production process more efficient and less dependent on human labor, and to find the cheapest sources of labor and raw materials. The less powerful class, the proletariat, own nothing of the production process but their labor. The proletariat's labor is a commodity no different from machines and raw materials. The bourgeoisie (or the capitalists) wield considerably more power than the proletariat. Conflict exists between proletariat and bourgeoisie because those who own the means of production exploit workers by "stealing" the value of their labor. That is, the capitalists pay workers only a fraction of the profits they make from the workers' labor and push them to increase output without a commensurate pay raise. Capitalists justify their actions with the argument that the proletariat are free to take their labor elsewhere if they don't like the arrangement.

12. What are the major shortcomings of the conflict perspective?

Critics of conflict theory argue that it overemphasizes tensions and divisions in society between dominant and subordinate groups and underemphasizes the stability and order that exists within societies. Conflict theorists write as if capitalists are all-powerful and as if they face no resistance from workers. This theory also ignores real contributions industrialization had made in improving people's standard of living and building relationships between inhabitants of different countries.

13. What central concepts and questions guide the symbolic interactionist perspective? What are the major shortcomings of this perspective?

The central question that guides the symbolic interactionist perspective is: How do people define reality? Critics of this perspective point out that symbolic interactionists have established no systematic frameworks for predicting which symbolic meanings will be generated, for determining how meanings persist, or for understanding how meanings change.

14. What is the Hawthorne effect?

The Hawthorne effect is a phenomenon whereby research subjects alter their behavior when they learn they are being observed. This is a danger when conducting participation observation.
15. Distinguish between beliefs and values. Give example of each.

Beliefs are notions that people accept as true about how the world operates and where individuals fit in it. Beliefs can be rooted in blind faith, experience, tradition, or scientific observation. Values are general and shared conceptions of what is good, right, appropriate, worthwhile, and important with regard to modes of conduct and states of existence.

16. What are norms? Distinguish between folkways and mores.

Norms are the written and unwritten rules that specify how people should behave in particular kinds of situations. There are two categories of norms: folkways and mores. Folkways are customary ways of doing things that apply to everyday matters -- appearance, ways of greeting others, eating, sleeping arrangements, and so forth. People follow folkways without giving much thought to the matter. Mores are norms that people consider pivotal to the well-being of the nation or the group. People who violate mores often provoke intense reactions or may be severely punished by society.

17. What is the connection between geographical/historical forces and culture?

Geographical and historical forces shape the character of culture. Sociologists operate under the assumption that culture is the buffer between people and their habitat. That is, material and nonmaterial aspects of culture represent the solutions that people of a society have worked out over time to meet their distinctive and geographical challenges.

18. How are people products of cultural experiences yet not cultural replicas of one another?

People are products of cultural experiences yet not cultural replicas of one another because individuals are products and carriers of cultural experiences and pass on those experiences selectively with varying degrees of clarity and confusion. The people to whom they transmit these experiences then repeat the process. Because individuals perceive, interpret, select, manipulate, revive, and create culture, they cannot be viewed as passive agents who absorb one version of culture.

19. What is the relationship between material and nonmaterial cultures? Give an example.

Nonmaterial aspects of culture shape material culture. To illustrate, the flag of the United States is nothing but a piece of cloth that displays colors and designs. But the stars represent the 50 states and the stripes represent the original 13 colonies. The fact that stars and stripes do not overlap reflects the value placed on independence from a strong central power. Beyond even this specific symbolism, the flag as a whole commands respect because it signifies the power of our nation and its whole way of life.

Just as nonmaterial aspects of culture shape material ones, the reverse is also true. An example is the microwave oven. Approximately 70 percent of American households have microwave ovens, which have eliminated one of the incentives for families to eat together. Before the microwave was available, it was more efficient for one member of the household to cook for everyone because of the time required to cook a meal. Now that meals take only minutes to prepare, one person does not save time when somebody else does the cooking. The microwave also enhances independence in another way; a person is not tied to a particular meal schedule or even family group.
20. What is diffusion? Give two examples of the diffusion process. Why is diffusion a selective process?

Diffusion is the process by which an idea, invention, or some other cultural item is borrowed from a foreign source. In recent times we have observed the diffusion of technology from developed countries like the United States to China and other industrializing nations. But for centuries, Chinese innovations spread to Western societies where they have become indispensable to modern life. The West is indebted to China for a wealth of basic inventions and discoveries: navigational aids such as ships' rudders, the seed drill, the iron plow, and printing. People may forget what items they borrow from other cultures, but the diffusion process is not indiscriminate. People of one society borrow selectively from others, taking only what is useful to their own culture.

21. What are the various types of ethnocentrism? Give examples of each. (Don't forget reverse ethnocentrism.)

The mildest form of ethnocentrism is simply defining the ways of foreigners as strange or peculiar. This is the basis of American jokes about the Korean practice of eating dogs. Another type of ethnocentrism is acting as though other cultures do not concern us, that we have no use for them. Americans show this kind of ethnocentrism by the fact that we rarely study and learn other languages, yet expect foreigners to know English. This sort of ethnocentric thinking is also apparent in the unwillingness of Americans stationed in Korea to learn about Korean culture and the refusal of American producers to customize their products for Koreans. The most extreme form of ethnocentrism is cultural genocide, wherein one culture finds the other so intolerable that it actively seeks to destroy it. This form of ethnocentrism was responsible for the Nazi extermination of millions of Jews in Europe during World War II. Closer to home, it inspired the killings of Native Americans and the confiscation of their lands by whites during the westward expansion. A final form of ethnocentrism is reverse ethnocentrism -- the tendency to see the home culture as inferior to a foreign culture.

22. Why do Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza receive special attention in a chapter on socialization?

Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza receive special attention in a chapter on socialization because the century-long conflict between Jews and Arabs has been passed on from one generation to another. Drawing on socialization concepts and theories helps us understand how the conflict has been “pass down” from one generation to the next.

23. With regard to socialization, what questions would sociologists find interesting to ask about this conflict?

Two questions could be of particular interest: (1) How do members of a new generation learn about and come to terms with the environment they inherited and (2) How is conflict passed down from one generation to another.

24. What is resocialization?

Resocialization is the process of discarding values and behaviors unsuited to new circumstances and replacing them with new, more appropriate values. Unsystematic resocialization involves no formal preparation. People resocialize as they go, when they remarry, change jobs, become
parents, retire, and so on. A more formal kind of resocialization, called systematic resocialization, can be either voluntary or imposed. It is voluntary when people choose to participate in a process to "remake" themselves, such as enrolling in a recovery program for alcoholics, or training for a profession like medicine. Resocialization is imposed when people are forced to undergo a program designed to rehabilitate them. Prisons, mental institutions, and military boot camps are a few examples of environments where this occurs.

25. How is the Democratic Republic of the Congo related to issues of social interaction and the social construction of reality?

The Democratic Republic of the Congo is related to issues of social interaction on a global scale. Specifically, focusing on The Democratic Republic of the Congo and its relationship to other countries helps us to connect the transmission of HIV to a complex set of international, intercontinental, and intrasocietal interactions. The Democratic Republic of the Congo is also important in showing that Africans have different values and beliefs regarding the AIDS phenomenon than do Westerners. The differences demonstrate that reality is socially constructed, with enormous consequences for the decisions made and the actions taken to deal with the disease.

26. How can people interact smoothly with people they know nothing about? Explain.

They eliminate "strangeness" by identifying the social position or social status of the strangers with whom they interact. Knowing a person's social status gives us some idea of the behaviors we can expect from someone in that status. It also affects how we will interact with that person.

27. What is impression management? What interaction dilemmas are associated with impression management?

Impression management is the term Erving Goffman applied to the process by which people in social settings manage how they present themselves to correspond to the impressions they are trying to make or the image they are trying to project. Impression management presents the following dilemma. If we do not conceal inappropriate thoughts and behavior, we risk losing or offending our audience. If we do conceal our true reactions, we may feel we are being dishonest or deceitful. Usually people try to strike a balance between the two extremes in the course of social interaction.

28. What sociological concepts would you draw upon to analyze the content of interaction?

When examining content sociologists identify the statuses of those people involved. Once statuses have been identified, they focus on the roles expected of each status in relation to the other, with emphasis on rights and obligations. Sociologists use a dramaturgical model to think about how people enact roles. Thus they focus on impression management (how people manage the setting, their dress, their words, and their gestures) to correspond to role expectations. Knowing about status, roles, impression management, and front/back stages helps sociologists predict much of the content of social interaction. During interaction people also position explanations for their own and others' behavior and act accordingly. A theoretical approach that sociologists draw upon to understand how people arrive at explanations is attribution theory.

29. People usually attribute cause to either dispositional traits or situational factors. What is the difference between dispositional traits and structural factors? Give an example of each.
People usually attribute cause to either dispositional factors or situational factors. Dispositional factors include personal or group traits such as motivation level, mood, or inherent ability. Situational factors are forces outside an individual's control, such as environmental conditions or bad luck. Both Americans and Africans engage in dispositional thinking to explain the origin and spread of AIDS. Dispositional thinkers in the United States maintain that AIDS is confined to certain groups, notably male homosexuals and IV drug users. Members of these groups get the disease as punishment for engaging in high-risk behavior. Americans also tend to dispositionally regard HIV infection as originating in Africa and as being transmitted through bizarre or promiscuous behavior. Africans, in turn, use dispositional thinking in their tendency to regard AIDS as an "American" disease. In this view, AIDS exists in Africa because Americans have imposed the disease on Africans.

30. Why is the McDonald’s corporation the focus of a chapter on social organization?

McDonald’s is the number one fast food chain in the U.S. and the world. Through its organizational structure it manages to feed 38 million customers a day and billions of customers each year. It markets its products to children and it has franchises in 111 countries.

31. What is an organization? How do sociologists approach the study of organizations?

An organization is a coordinating mechanism created by people to achieve stated objectives. From a sociological perspective, organizations can be studied apart from the people who make them up. This is because organizations have a life that extend to some degree beyond the people who constitute them.

32. What is trained incapacity? Give an example of a work environment that promotes trained incapacity. Contrast that work environment with one that promotes empowering behavior.

Trained incapacity is the inability of workers to respond to new and unusual circumstances, or to question official policies, because they have been trained to do their jobs in a rote manner. An example of an environment that promotes trained incapacity is one in which management chooses to use computers as automating tools. To automate means to use the computer to increase workers' speed and consistency, as a source of surveillance and to maintain divisions of knowledge and thus a hierarchical arrangement between management and workers. A work environment that promotes empowering behavior is one in which management chooses to use computers as informating tools. To informate means to empower workers with the knowledge of the overall production process, with the expectation that they do make critical and collaborative judgments about production tasks.

33. How did Karl Marx define alienation? What are the four levels of alienation? Give concrete examples of alienation.

Alienation in general is a state in which human life is dominated by the forces of human invention that give us control over nature. The particular alienation that Marx described is the loss of control people feel in the workplace as a result of the separation of workers from the products of their labor. The four levels of alienation are alienation from (1) the process of production, (2) the product, (3) the family and the community of fellow workers, and (4) the self. Workers are alienated from the process of production because they do not produce products for themselves or known consumers but for an abstract, impersonal market. They are alienated from
the product because their roles are rote and limited. Workers are alienated from the family and fellow workers because work and family environment are separate from one another. Workers are alienated from themselves because their skills are used at the convenience of management in the quest for private profit.