Theory Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam Reading List  
Department of Sociology, University of Toronto  
Revised March 15, 2017

A. Foundations  
1. Metatheory  
2. Classic Thinkers

B. Traditions  
1. Marxism  
2. Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology  
3. Pragmatism, Symbolic Interactionism, and the Dramaturgical Approach  
4. Exchange Theory and Rational Choice Theory  
5. Functionalism  
6. Structuralism and Post-structuralism

C. Contemporary Developments and Debates  
1. Contemporary Syntheses  
2. Central Debates

D. Appendix: Exam Guidelines

Departmental Policy on Ph.D. Comprehensives Exam Reading Lists  
There will be a minimum of 150 and a maximum of 200 readings in each list, in article units. A book will count as five articles if it involves over 200 pages of assigned reading, as three articles if between 100-200 pages of assigned reading, and one article if less than 100 pages of assigned reading. Chapters and articles are considered equal. Any reading list with at least 20 books may have an upper limit of 240 readings. Supplemental reading lists for each module contain 3-4 readings.

A. Foundations

1. Metatheory


**Supplemental**


**2. Classic Thinkers**


**Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels**


**Max Weber**


Emile Durkheim


Georg Simmel


William E.B. Du Bois


Supplemental


B. Traditions

1. Marxism


Marcuse, H. (1964). One-Dimensional Society and One-Dimensional Thought One Dimensional Man (pp. 1-199). Boston, MA: Beacon Press. [1 unit]

Marcuse, H. (1969 [1932]). Contributions to a Phenomenology of Historical Materialism. Telos, 4, 3-34. [1 unit]


2. Phenomenology and Ethnomethodology


3. Pragmatism, Symbolic Interactionism and the Dramaturgical Approach


4. Exchange Theory and Rational Choice Theory


173). Berkeley: University of California Press. [1 unit]


5. Functionalism


Supplemental

6. Structuralism and Post-structuralism


C. Contemporary Developments and Debates

1. Syntheses


**Supplemental**


**2. Central Debates**

**Structure and Agency**


**Laws and Historicity**


**Constructivism vs. Realism**


29. [1 unit]

**Explanation and Mechanisms**


**Supplemental**


**D. Appendix: Exam Guidelines**

A competent (i.e., passable) exam answer will do each of the following:

- engage with the test question as asked
- present a thesis (a central argument to be defended)
- structure the answer so as to defend this thesis
- demonstrate familiarity with the key issues, thinkers and/or traditions pertinent to the exam question
- back up assertions with citations (and where necessary, quotes or other appropriate evidence)
- consider conflicting positions on the question asked
- present ideas in a style that is clear and cogent

A superior exam answer will also:

- display an awareness of hidden or deeper issues whose outcome affects or modifies the position advanced
- show a sufficient command of the literature to offer creative synthesis (e.g., by discerning hidden differences, connections, or implications)
- offer fresh insight into the question