

# Find out how to prove — and improve — the effectiveness of your **Sociology** program with the ETS® Major Field Tests.

## Content Validity

The Major Field Test (MFT) in Sociology, first administered in 1989, assesses mastery of concepts, principles and knowledge by graduating Sociology students. To ensure fairness and content relevance, the test is revised approximately every four to five years.

## Developed by Leading Educators in the Field

Experienced faculty members representing all of the relevant areas of the discipline determine test specifications, questions and types of scores reported. ETS assessment experts subject each question to rigorous tests of sensitivity and reliability. Every effort is made to include questions that assess the most common and important topics and skills.

In addition to factual knowledge, the test evaluates students' abilities to analyze and solve problems, understand relationships and interpret material. Questions that require interpretation of graphs, diagrams and charts are included. Academic departments may add up to two subgroups and as many as 50 additional locally written questions to test areas of the discipline that may be unique to the department or institution.

## National Comparative Data

A *Comparative Data Guide*, published each year, contains tables of scaled scores and percentiles for individual student scores, departmental mean scores and any subscores or group assessment indicators that the test may support. The tables of data are drawn from senior-level test takers at a large number of diverse institutions. Nearly 1,500 colleges and universities employ one or more of the Major Field Tests for student achievement and curriculum evaluation each year.

### Who Develops the MFT in Sociology?

Individuals who serve or recently have served on the Committee for the MFT in Sociology are faculty members from the following institutions:

**Ball State University**  
**Fisk University**  
**Loyola Marymount University**  
**University of Minnesota**  
**William Paterson University**  
**Winthrop University**

### For more information about the MFT in Sociology:

Phone: **1-800-745-0269**  
Email: **highered@ets.org**  
Visit: **www.ets.org/mft**

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# Test Content — Sociology (4IMF)

The Major Field Test in Sociology consists of 140 multiple-choice questions, some of which are grouped in sets and based on such materials as diagrams, graphs and statistical data. Most of the questions require knowledge of specific sociological information, but the test also draws on the student's ability to interpret data, to apply concepts and ideas, and to analyze sociological data, theories and relationships, deductively and inductively. Programs can choose when and where to administer the test. It is designed to take two hours and may be split into two sessions. This test must be given by a proctor. Mathematical operations do not require the use of a calculator.

The broad field of sociology encompasses many subfields and specialties; the sociology test covers the major fields included in most undergraduate programs. The distribution of the content areas with some examples of the topics covered is as follows:

## The Test Outline

**I. General Theory (~15%):** General theory questions are classified under this category. All questions that deal with theory unique to a specific content area are classified under that content area.

- A. Classical and contemporary (including feminist perspectives)
- B. History of social thought
- C. Comparison of theories
- D. Theory construction

**II. Methodology and Statistics (~15%):** All questions that are focused on methodology are classified in this area, even if the content used in the example is from a specific content area (e.g., stratification), except for demographic methods, which are classified under **Demography and Urban Sociology**.

- A. Quantitative and qualitative methods
- B. Research design (including basic and applied approaches and ethics in research)
- C. Measurement
- D. Statistics with application to sociology
- E. Data analysis

**III. Criminology and Deviance (~11%)**

- A. Criminology/Criminal justice
- B. Juvenile delinquency (including violence and economic dislocation)
- C. Deviance and social control
- D. Types of deviance (e.g., white-collar crime, violence, drug use)
- E. Theories of crime, deviance and justice

**IV. Demography and Urban Sociology (~5%)**

- A. Population structure and dynamics (e.g., age, sex, race)
- B. Population dynamics (e.g., birth, death, migration)
- C. Basic demographic methods
- D. Demographic theory
- E. Urban, rural, community

**V. Organizations (~5%)**

- A. Organizational forms and change
- B. Organizational cultures
- C. Organization theory
- D. Voluntary organizations

**VI. Race, Ethnicity, Gender (~11%)**

- A. Prejudice and discrimination (including multigroup comparisons)
- B. Racial and ethnic stratification in the United States

- C. Historical and comparative trends in intergroup relations (including legislative and judicial responses)

**VII. Social Change (~8%)**

- A. Theory and models
- B. Comparative economic and social development (including industrialization and deindustrialization)
- C. Political change
- D. Social movements and collective behavior
- E. Technology and innovation

**VIII. Social Institutions (~11%)**

- A. Family
- B. Political systems and governments
- C. Education
- D. Medicine and science
- E. Religion
- F. Economic structure (including work and occupations)
- G. Mass media

**IX. Social Psychology (~8%)**

- A. Personality, culture and social structure
- B. Socialization and learning
- C. Social interaction (including social influence)
- D. Small groups

**X. Social Stratification (~11%)**

- A. Class, status and power
- B. Social inequality
- C. Theories and models
- D. Social mobility (e.g., intergenerational, intragenerational, structural)
- E. Work and labor force participation

**Critical thinking, gender and global questions are integrated into the entire Sociology Major Field Test**

**XI. Critical Thinking (~25%)**

Critical thinking questions may require students to:

- A. Draw inferences from theories and data
- B. Recognize unstated assumptions
- C. Deduce conclusions from information presented in statements or premises
- D. Interpret and weigh evidence as to whether asserted conclusions are warranted
- E. Evaluate the strengths of comparable arguments regarding a specific issue
- F. Apply sociological knowledge to new problems
- G. Read and interpret tables of data and graphs
- H. Recognize the strengths and limitations of both quantitative and qualitative data

**XII. Gender (~11%)**

Gender questions are centered on sociological topics such as the following:

- A. Feminist sociological theory (e.g., sex ratios and sex roles, nature vs. nurture controversy)
- B. Power
- C. Macrosociological issues (e.g., social movements, participation in labor force, the glass ceiling, deviant behavior, organizational participation, social mobility, and influence on organized religion)
- D. Microsociological issues (e.g., interpersonal relations, small groups, leadership, role models, socializing agents)
- E. Human sexuality

**XIII. Global (~9%)**

Global questions may require the following:

- A. International comparisons
- B. Knowledge of cultures outside the United States
- C. Understanding of processes of globalization
- D. Analysis of social forms and cultures outside the contemporary United States

### How scores for the Major Field Test in Sociology are reported:

**Total Score** — Reported for each student and summarized for the group

**Subscore** — Reported for each student and summarized for the group

- Core Sociology [General Theory and Methodology and Statistics] (42)
- Critical Thinking (35)

**Assessment Indicators** — Reported for the group\* only

- General Theory (21)
- Methodology and Statistics (21)
- Criminology and Deviance (15)
- Social Stratification (15)
- Race, Ethnicity, Gender (15)
- Social Institutions (15)
- Social Psychology (11)
- Gender (15)
- Global (13)

Numbers in parentheses are the approximate number of questions in each category.

\* A minimum of five (5) students is required for assessment indicators to be reported.