

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN
SOCIOLOGY OF MENTAL HEALTH
Fall 2008

CORE QUESTIONS – ANSWER BOTH 1 AND 2

1. There are a number of **sociological explanations** for the causes of mental illness. Outline *two* of these explanations making sure that you describe their theoretical content completely. Identify and describe studies that you feel best represent each perspective. Do the theoretical explanations contradict one another or do they simply represent distinct explanations? Justify your position by showing how the studies you identified illustrate your position.

2. Sociologists often make group comparisons of mental health, across various types of social categories. For instance, they may focus on gender differences in mental illness or on variation in mental illness across racial/ethnic categories. Select *two* social categories from the list below and discuss measurement issues associated with making such comparisons. What assumptions are necessary in order to make these types of comparisons? What are the difficulties in making these comparisons? What can be done to strengthen work in the two areas to ensure that these comparisons make sense?
 - Gender
 - Race/Ethnicity
 - Social Class
 - Age
 - Marital Status