

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN
SOCIOLOGY OF MENTAL HEALTH
Spring 2009**

CORE QUESTIONS – ANSWER BOTH 1 AND 2

MHC1. Much of the work in the sociology of mental health centers around the study of stress. Describe the *stress process* as outlined by Pearlin. Provide an outline of the basic model of the stress process, review the major contributions to the literature, and discuss theoretical and methodological strengths and weaknesses of stress research. After describing the stress process, choose **one** additional perspective from another theoretical tradition and discuss how this perspective has been influenced by, and/or extends the basic stress process model. Use a particular research question or topic in mental health research to illustrate your points.

MHC2. In their continued efforts to understand how social forces impact health, sociologists in the recent past have argued that we need to examine more closely the nature of the mental health outcomes we study. Specific issues include examining the relevance of categorical versus continuous variables, multiple as opposed to single outcomes, and positive in addition to negative outcomes in mental health research. In your answer, please address the historical context of these issues, as well as the methodological and/or theoretical assumptions underlying each of these issues.