

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
PH.D. COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION IN *Work, Stratification and Markets*
August 23-27, 2021

You are required to answer THREE (3) QUESTIONS (ONE QUESTION FROM EACH OF PARTS A, B & C). Each answer should be 10-12 pages (12-point font and double-spaced) in length. The complete exam should not total more than 36 pages in length (double-spaced, 12-point font), not including references. THE COMMITTEE WILL NOT READ PAST THE 36TH PAGE.

Part A

1. Discuss how economic activity is analyzed by economists versus sociologists, noting the differences between the two disciplinary approaches. Drawing from readings from at least three modules, discuss and provide examples of how social norms and cultural values shape economic activity.

OR

2. Financialization has fundamentally reshaped the character of the contemporary economic order. First, outline major trends and manifestations of financialization both at the firm and household levels. Then, discuss the causes of these transformations. Finally, describe the social implications of financialization, with particular attention to growing inequality.

Part B

3. Critically evaluate scholarship on the changing nature of work since the mid 1970s. What are the major trends toward insecurity? How is insecurity and precarity conceptualized by different authors? What are the strengths and weaknesses of different conceptualizations? What does each reveal, or conceal? What lines of inquiry are examined insufficiently in scholarship on insecurity?

OR

4. Critically evaluate scholarship on the labour process. How have scholars extended this tradition from its origins in factory work to explain different dynamics of control and resistance in service work? Evaluate how (and how much) this extension has moved beyond its Marxist roots. What other theoretical frameworks have scholars integrated into the study of the labour process? Where do you think studies of the labour process need to go next?

Part C

5. Discuss major trends in class mobility and stratification. Identify how different ways of conceiving of status and class underwrite our analyses and explanations of the shape and extent of inequality.

OR

6. Wage disparities are persistent across jobs and professions. Provide a brief overview of the contours of these disparities. Drawing on at least three modules, provide an overview of the mechanisms that underlie wage disparities.