MCAT Standards Mapping Guide

***To instructors and students using this resource:***

*In 2015, the MCAT (Medical College Admission Test) began to include the social and behavioral sciences (Section 3 Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior). Sociological content constitutes thirty percent of Section 3. This material is organized under four Foundational Concepts with a range of subtopics known as “Content Categories.” The four Foundational Concepts are:*

* [Foundational Concept 7](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-7/): Biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors influence behavior and behavior change.
  + [Read more about Foundational Concept 7](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-7/)
* [Foundational Concept 8](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-8/): Psychological, sociocultural, and biological factors influence the way we think about ourselves and others, as well as how we interact with others.
  + [Read more about Foundational Concept 8](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-8/)
* [Foundational Concept 9](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-9/): Cultural and social differences influence well-being.
  + [Read more about Foundational Concept 9](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-9/)
* [Foundational Concept 10](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-10/): Social stratification and access to resources influence well-being.
  + [Read more about Foundational Concept 10](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-10/)

*This guide links the four MCAT Foundational Concepts and Subtopics to appropriate text chapters. It is organized in a chapter-by-chapter manner. It first summarizes the main topics covered in each chapter, and then shows the relevant MCAT topics below the summary. Each chapter entry also contains resources that allow students to understand and explore specific topic areas in more detail. These resources include tutorials, graphics, fact sheets, news, and journal articles. Some of these resources fill in material that a chapter covers only briefly but that the MCAT includes in the content category area. Many of the resources make explicit connections to health.*

*Because each chapter covers theoretical perspectives, they are introduced as the primary material of Chapter 1 and highlighted where they become particularly salient or detailed in the chapters that follow.*

*The MCAT also tests four different scientific inquiry skills. These are also detailed at the end of this document. Chapter Three is crucial for developing students proficiency’s in this skill based area.*

# Chapter 1: Training Your Sociological Eye

Chapter 1 introduces sociology as a scientific discipline and a social science. It addresses the sociological imagination and the concepts of stereotyping contrasted with good generalizations. Overall, Chapter 1 is an important introduction to the sociological approach covered in the MCAT. The resources below provide some additional supplementary materials for an introduction to thinking sociologically.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 8B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8b/)**: Social Thinking**   * **Prejudice and bias**   + Stereotypes |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Ted Talk: The Wisdom of Sociology: Sam Richards at TEDxLacador**   <https://youtu.be/gWD6g9CV_sc>  Sociologist Sam Richards enlists sociological insights to reveal the crucial way in which society shapes individuals and their decisions, even with one as personal as suicide.   * **Stereotypes, Stereotype Threat, and Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/stereotypes-stereotype-threat-and-self-fulfilling-prophecy>  This six-minute video introduces stereotype, stereotype threat and self-fulfilling prophecy. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **What is Sociology?**   <http://www.asanet.org/about-asa/asa-story/what-sociology>  The American Sociological Association link provides a definition of Sociology and a link to the latest insights in Sociological topics. This site also addresses the role of Sociology in the MCAT. |

# Chapter 2: Understanding Theory

Chapter 2 introduces sociological theories and illustrates how these can help us understand social phenomenon. This chapter is an essential introduction to the “theoretical approaches” section of MCAT [Foundational Concept 9](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-9/), Content Category 9A. [Note: this chapter does not introduce rational choice theory, which is on the MCAT. That theory is provided in a link below]. Chapter 2 also introduces the concept of “social institutions.” Further, in addition to introducing theoretical approaches, it briefly introduces concepts associated with those approaches. As such, it also links to Foundational Concept 7, Content Category 7B and Foundational Concept 8, Content Categories A and C.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 7B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-7b/)**: Social Processes that influence human behavior**   * **Normative and Non-normative behavior**   + Social norms   [**Content Category 8A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8a/)**: Self-Identity**   * **Formation of Identity**   + Influence of social factors on identity formation   + Influence of individuals (looking glass self)   + Influence of culture and socialization on identity formation   [**Content Category 8C**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8c/)**: Social Interactions**   * **Self presentation and interacting with others**   + Presentation of the self   + Impression management   + Front stage versus back stage (dramaturgical approach)   + **Elements of Social Interaction**   + **Groups**     - Primary groups   [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * Theoretical Approaches   + Micro versus macro   + Functionalism   + Conflict   + Symbolic interactionism   + Social constructionism   + Feminist theory * Social Institutions   [**Content Category 10A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/)**: Social Inequality**   * **Social Class**   + Aspects of social stratification     - Class consciousness and false consciousness |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Sociological Theories**   <https://quizlet.com/9936274/sociological-theories-unit-1-flash-cards/>  This series of flash cards allows students to review functionalism, conflict, symbolic interactionism, and exchange theories.   * **Rational Choice Exchange Theory**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/rational-choice-exchange>  This seven-minute clip explains and critiques rational choice theory. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Macrosociology Versus Microsociology**   <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-BVeSykcQeE>  This short YouTube clip differentiates between macro and micro sociology. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University, it also touches on functionalism, conflict, and symbolic interaction theories.   * **Social Construction**   <https://youtu.be/GVVWmZAStn8>  This ten-minute YouTube clip provides a detailed exploration of the concept of social construction. It was compiled by two sociologists, Gwen Sharp and Lisa Wade, the founder of the very popular Sociological Images website. Sociological Images provides a huge repository of sociological concepts made visual, and is an excellent additional resource for MCAT users (https://thesocietypages .org/socimages/). |

# Chapter 3: Using Research Methods

Chapter 3 addresses sociological methods. It introduces students to research and explores methods of data collection, analysis, hypothesis testing, and research evaluation. It also broaches the protection of human subjects. As such, it is tied to all four skill categories explored in the MCAT Scientific Inquiry and Reasoning Skills section at the end of this document (see Appendix B). The resources below provide additional insight into the topics that are covered in Scientific Inquiry and Reasoning Skills.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| (See Appendix A) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Adventures in Garbage Millennial Confirmation Bias**   <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2017/04/03/adventures-in-garbage-millennial-confirmation-bias/>  This brief article highlights the problems of confirmation bias in several journalist accounts of millennial men and sexist notions of gender, or “millennials as garbage.”   * **Observational Studies and Experiments**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/math/probability/study-design-a1/observational-studies-experiments/a/observational-studies-and-experiments>  This video tests students’ knowledge of the difference between observational studies and experiments. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Correlation and Causality**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/correlation-and-causality>.  This ten-minute video explores the difference between correlations and causality. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **MCAT Psychology and Sociology Statistics Review**   <http://schoolbag.info/test/mcat/9.html>  This website provides accessible and useful information about the level of statistical knowledge statistics required on the MCAT. |

# Chapter 4: Recognizing Culture

Chapter 4 introduces the sociological study of culture. It shows how culture is socially constructed, and identifies elements of culture such as values, beliefs and norms, symbols and language. It also introduces “statuses” and “roles” covers cultural differences, addressing a broad range of concepts associated with MCAT Foundational Concept 9, [Content Category 9A](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/). It also addresses the concept “cultural capital” and thus links with MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category 10 A. [Note: Chapter 4 does not cover evolution and human culture nor cultural relativism and ethnocentrism—topics that are on the MCAT. The “Evolution and Human Culture” and “Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism” video links provided below give a brief overview of those topical areas within category 9A. Ethnocentrism is addressed in Korgen, Chapter 9].

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * Culture   + Elements of culture (beliefs, language, rituals, symbols, values)   + Material vs symbolic culture   + Multiculturalism   + Subcultures and countercultures   + Mass media and popular culture   + Transmission and diffusion   [**Content Category 10A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/)**: Social Inequality**   * **Social Class**   + Aspects of social stratification   ▪ Cultural capital |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| |  | | --- | | * **Evolution and Human Culture**   [https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-andculture/culture /v/evolution-and-human-culture](https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-andculture/culture%20/v/evolution-and-human-culture)  This basic five-minute video collaboration provides a brief discussion of culture, cultural universals, human culture, and evolution. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Ethnocentrism and Cultural Relativism In Group and Out Group**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/ethnocentrism-and-cultural-relativism-in-group-and-out-group>  This basic eight-minute video provides a brief discussion of ethnocentrism, cultural relativism, in-group, outgroups, and suggests connections with discrimination. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Jim Goes to College Subculture**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-and-culture/culture/v/jim-goes-to-college-subculture>  This brief two-minute video uses the example of a student named Jim to examine and apply the subculture concept. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. | |

# Chapter 5: Understanding Socialization

Chapter 5 is an important chapter for MCAT concept linkages. Chapter 5 explores socialization. It also reintroduces and develops some of the theories explored in Chapter 2 such as George Herbert Mead’s theories of the development of self, Charles Horton Cooley’s Looking Glass Self, and Erving Goffman’s dramaturgy and presentation of self. It explores the process of socialization and the array of agents of socialization that shape social selves and behavioral choices. It also addresses gender socialization, social roles, and identity. Chapter 5 also covers social interaction and group interactions. As such, it is linked to [MCAT Foundational Concept 7, Content Category 7B and MCAT Foundational Concept 8](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-8/), Content Categories 8A and C.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 7B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-7b/)**: Social Processes that influence human behavior**   * **Socialization**   + Agents of socialization (family, mass media, peers, workplace)   [**Content Category 8A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8a/)**: Self-Identity**   * Self-concept, self-identity, and social identity   + Different types of identities (race/ethnicity; gender, age, sexual orientation, class) * Formation of Identity   + Theories of identity development (e.g. social)   + Influence of social factors on identity formation     - Influence of individuals (imitation, looking glass self, role taking)   Influence of culture and socialization on identity formation  [**Content Category 8C**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8c/)**: Social Interactions**   * Elements of Social Interaction * Role * Role conflict and role strain * Self-presentation and interacting with others * Presentation of the self * Impression management * Front stage versus back stage (dramaturgical approach) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Charles Cooley Looking Glass Self**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/individuals-and-society/self-identity/v/charles-cooley-looking-glass-self>  This three-minute clip explains and applies Cooley’s Looking Glass Self. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **George Herbert Mead I and Me**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/george-herbert-mead-the-i-and-the-me>  This five-minute clip provides a brief discussion of preparatory, play, and game stages and the I and the Me. Produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Impression Management**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/impression-management>  This four-minute clip provides a brief discussion of the dramaturgical approach, front stage, back stage, and impression management. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Role Strain and Role Conflict**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/role-strain-and-role-conflict>  This two-minute clip provides a brief discussion of role strain, role conflict, and primary and secondary groups. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 6: Identifying Deviant Behavior

Chapter 6 explores deviance including how it is defined, sociological theories of deviance and crime, social processes that create social norms, the importance of social location, and socially constructed notions of deviance and stigmatization. It also looks at how individuals manage deviance. Chapter 6 also examines norms, labels, judgments, and social control. As such, it introduces a concepts tied to MCAT [Foundational Concept 7](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-7/), [Content Category 7B](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-7b/), and MCAT Foundational Concept [8,](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-7/) Content Category 8B.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 7B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-7b/)**: Social Processes that influence human behavior**   * **How the Presence of Others Affects Individual Behavior**   + Social control   + Peer pressure   + Conformity   + Obedience * **Normative and Non-normative behavior**   + Social norms     - Sanctions     - Folkways, mores, taboos     - Anomie   + Deviance     - Perspectives on deviance (e.g. differential association, labeling theory, strain theory)   [**Content Category 8B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8b/)**: Social Thinking**   * Prejudice and bias   + Stigma |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Race and the Criminalization of Opium, Marijuana, and More**   <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2015/06/26/vintage-ads-for-cocaine-and-opium-as-medicines/>  This *Sociological Images* piece graphically shows the social construction of deviance and criminal behavior around chemical substances such as opium, marijuana, and others that have been banned, either made illegal, or sold as cures for illness. Also featured is racialization of deviance.   * **Normative and Non-Normative Behavior: Perspectives on Deviance**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/behavior/normative-and-non-normative-behavior/v/perspectives-on-deviance>  This basic six-minute video collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University provides a refresher on deviance, symbolic interaction, differential association, labeling theory, and strain theory.   * **The Public Stigma of Mental Illness**   Pescosolido, B. (2013). The Public Stigma of Mental Illness: What Do We Think; What Do We Know; What Can We Prove? *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *54*(1), 1–21. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0022146512471197>  This article explores the general population’s attitudes and beliefs around the stigma of mental health. Using data from the General Social Survey it addresses attitudes, discrimination, stigma, and the sociology of mental health, all useful areas for students studying for the MCAT.   * **Illness of Deviance? Drug Courts, Drug Treatment, and the Ambiguity of Addiction.**   Murphy, J. 2015. Illness or deviance? Drug courts, drug treatment, and the ambiguity of addiction. Philadelphia PA: Temple University Press.  This book examines the social construction of illness and deviance around drug treatment and drug addiction and its consequences. |

# Chapter 7: Confronting Economic Inequality

Chapter 7 is a crucial chapter for understanding key concepts covered on the MCAT. It explores economic inequality, social stratification, social class, and social mobility. It covers major theoretical approaches including functionalism, conflict, symbolic interactionist, and feminist approaches, connecting it to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A. It provides an in-depth examination of social class, poverty and links to disparities that will help students understand impact on health. As such, it is directly connected to many concepts found in MCAT Concept 10, Content Category 10A.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * Theoretical Approaches * Functionalism * Conflict * Social Institutions * Education * Educational segregation and stratification   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**   * Demographic Structure of Society * Gender   + - Gender segregation   [**Content Category 10A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/)**: Social Inequality**   * Social Class * Aspects of social stratification * Social class and socioeconomic status * Power, privilege, and prestige * Cultural Capital and Social Capital * Intersectionality (race, gender, age) * Global inequalities * Patterns of social mobility * Inter and intragenerational mobility * Vertical and horizontal mobility * Meritocracy   + Poverty * Relative and absolute poverty * Social exclusion (segregation and isolation)   + Health Disparities (e.g. class, gender, and race inequalities in health)   + Healthcare Disparities (e.g. class, gender, and race inequalities in health care) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015**   <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256.pdf>  This U.S. Census Bureau report presents data on U.S. income, earnings, income inequality, and poverty. Students can explore graphs on median household income by race and ethnicity, female to male earnings ratios, families in poverty by type of family and much more.   * **Social Stratification Flash Cards**   <https://quizlet.com/83214052/mcat-sociology-12-social-stratification-flash-cards>  This series of flash cards allows students to review MCAT concepts associated with social stratification.   * **Relative and Absolute Poverty**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/absolute-and-relative-poverty>  This basic seven-minute video compares and contrasts relative and absolute poverty. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Upward And Downward Mobility, Meritocracy**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/social-inequality/social-class/v/upward-and-downward-mobility-meritocracy>  This basic six-minute video collaboration provides a brief discussion of types of social mobility, caste systems, and meritocracy. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 8: Constructing Gender, Sex, Sexuality

Chapter 8 links with many aspects of the MCAT foundational standards. It defines gender terms and concepts and shows how gender connects to identity, behavior, culture and interaction, and wellbeing. It explores key concepts of sex, gender, intersex, transgender, sexuality, and examines the social construction of gender. As such, it is directly tied to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category B. It also explores gender socialization and agents of gender socialization, linking to MCAT Foundational Concept 7, Content Category B. Chapter 8 also examines issues of social structure covered on the MCAT including theoretical approaches, and the intersection between gender and several social institutions, linking to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category A. It also explores gender at both education and work, further linking to social institutions covered in Content Category 9A.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 7B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-7b/)**: Social Processes that influence human behavior**   * Socialization * Agents of socialization (family, mass media, peers, workplace)   [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * Theoretical Approaches * Functionalism * Conflict * Symbolic interactionism * Social constructionism * Feminist theory * **Social Institutions** * Family * Violence in the family (e.g. child abuse, elder abuse, spousal abuse)   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**   * **Demographic Structure of Society** * Gender * Sex versus gender * The social construction of gender * Gender segregation * Sexual orientation |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **GLAAD Transgender FAQ**   <https://www.glaad.org/transgender/transfaq>  Definitions and resources around transgender, gender identity, and sexual orientation.   * **Institute for Women’s Policy Research**   <http://www.iwpr.org/>  How do women’s wages compare to men’s wages? Has welfare reform been successful? What governmental policy is necessary to create positive social change for women and children? This website answers these and other questions related to wages, welfare, social security, and other policy-related issues.   * **Demographic structure of society—sex, gender, and sexual orientation**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/demographic-structure-of-society-sex-gender-and-sexual-orientation>  This seven-minute video collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University provides a refresher on sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender roles, discrimination.   * **Regulating Latina Youth Sexualities through Community Health Centers: Discourses and Practices of Sexual Citizenship.**   [Mann, E. S. (2013). Regulating Latina Youth Sexualities through Community Health Centers: Discourses and Practices of Sexual Citizenship. Gender & Society, 27(5), 681-703. doi:10.1177/0891243213493961](Mann,%20E.%20S.%20(2013).%20Regulating%20Latina%20Youth%20Sexualities%20through%20Community%20Health%20Centers:%20Discourses%20and%20Practices%20of%20Sexual%20Citizenship.%20Gender%20&%20Society,%2027(5),%20681-703.%20doi:10.1177/0891243213493961)  Thisqualitative research explores the regulation of Latina youth sexualities in the context of sexual and reproductive health care provision. It enlists in-depth interviews with health care providers in two Latino-serving community health centers. Students might use this article to understand more about social control, sexuality, racial and ethnic inequality, discrimination.   * **The Social Construction of Sperm**   <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2008/08/26/the-frightened-sperm/>  This *Sociological Images* piece graphically shows how a biological substance (sperm) is gendered and socially constructed in texts.   * **Feminizing The Masculine**   <https://www.pinterest.com/socimages/feminizing-the-masculine/>  This collection of images is a great visual of the social construction of gender. |

# Chapter 9: Recognizing the Importance of Race

Chapter 9 addresses three MCAT Foundational Categories, providing sociological definitions of race and ethnicity in the historical and recent context, examining majority and minority relations and exploring social movements around race and racism and institutional racism. Further, this chapter examines ethnicity, racism, and minority group status, prejudice, discrimination, ethnocentrism, and stereotyping. It also introduces the importance of social movements such as the Civil Rights Movement (developed in Chapter 16). Overall, this chapter directly connects to MCAT Foundational Concept 8, Content Categories 8B and 8C and Foundational Concept 9, Content Category B. Chapter 10 also touches on educational inequality linking it to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category A. Chapter 9 also addresses how institutional racism shapes people’s educational, political, economic, housing, social status, and well-being. As such, it is linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category A.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 8B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8b/)**: Social Thinking**   * Prejudice and bias * Processes that contribute to prejudice * Power, prestige, class * Stereotypes * Ethnocentrism   [**Content Category 8C**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8c/)**: Social Interactions**   * Discrimination * Individual vs. institutional discrimination * The relationship between prejudice and discrimination * How power, prestige, and class facilitate discrimination   [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * Social Institutions * Education * Educational segregation and stratification   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**   * Demographic Structure of Society * Race and ethnicity * The social construction of race * Social movements * Globalization * Social changes in globalization (civil unrest, terrorism)   [**Content Category 10A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/)**: Social Inequality**   * Spatial Inequality * Residential segregation * Social Class * Aspects of social stratification * Intersectionality (race, gender, age) * Poverty * Social exclusion (segregation and isolation) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Prejudice and Discrimination Based on Race, Ethnicity, Power, Social Class, and Prestige**   <https://youtu.be/bH9JXHFlEnk?list=PLXFjmPE_eYmFAmB9vnar5VPRuwmNrpOGK>  This three-minute video collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University provides a refresher on prejudice and discrimination.   * **How We Are Priming Some Kids for College and Others for Prison**   <https://www.ted.com/talks/alice_goffman_college_or_prison_two_destinies_one_blatant_injustice?language=en>  Urban Sociologist Alice Goffman discusses her research racial inequality and youth in Philadelphia. This Ted Talk illustrates how racial social stratification influences access to resources, justice, and well-being.   * **Stereotypes, Stereotype Threat, and Self-Fulfilling Prophecy**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/stereotypes-stereotype-threat-and-self-fulfilling-prophecy>  This six-minute video introduces stereotype, stereotype threat, and self-fulfilling prophecy. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Racial Residential Segregation and Disparities in Obesity among Women**   [Bower, K.M., Thorpe, R.J., Yenokyan, G. et al. 2015. Racial Residential Segregation and Disparities in Obesity among Women. Journal of Urban Health (2015) 92: 843. doi:10.1007/s11524-015-9974-z](Bower,%20K.M.,%20Thorpe,%20R.J.,%20Yenokyan,%20G.%20et%20al.%202015.%20Racial%20Residential%20Segregation%20and%20Disparities%20in%20Obesity%20among%20Women.%20Journal%20of%20Urban%20Health%20(2015)%2092:%20843.%20doi:10.1007/s11524-015-9974-z)  This 2015 article in the journal of *Urban Health* examines the relationship between racial residential segregation and obesity among Black and White women. |

# Chapter 10: Politics and the Economy

Chapter 10 explores theoretical perspectives on power and authority, including the structural functionalist and conflict perspectives. It addresses Weber’s typologies of authority, and pluralist and elite models of power. It examines economic institutions and their functions as well as types of economic systems. It also explores types of governments. As such, it is primarily linked to [Foundational Concept 9](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-9/), [Content Categories 9A](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/) and B.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [Content Category 9A](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/): Understanding social structure   * Theoretical Approaches * Functionalism * Conflict theory * **Social Institutions** * Government and economy * Power and authority * Comparative economic and political systems * Division of labor   [Content Category 9B](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/): Demographic characteristics and processes   * Demographic Shifts and Social Change * Globalization * Factors contributing to globalization (communication technology, economic interdependence) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Social Institutions: Government, Economy, and Health and Medicine**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-and-culture/social-structures/v/institutions-government-economy-and-health-and-medicine>  This five-minute video provides a brief overview of government and economy as a social institution. It also briefly addresses term division of labor. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 11: Understanding Institutions: Family

Chapter 11 introduces key terms and concepts used in the sociological study of families. It explores diversity in family forms, trends in marriage and divorce, and violence and the family. It applies the functionalist, conflict, feminist, and constructionist perspectives. Primarily linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A, Chapter 11 also takes an intersectional approach, linking it to MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category 10A.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * **Theoretical Approaches**   + Functionalism   + Conflict   + Social constructionism   + Feminist theory * **Social Institutions** * Family   + Forms of kinship   + Diversity in family forms   + Marriage and divorce   + Violence in the family (e.g. child abuse, elder abuse, spousal abuse)   **Content Category 10A: Social Inequality**   * Social Class   + Aspects of social stratification     - Intersectionality (race, gender, age) |

## For Further Research and Exploration:

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| * **National Coalition Against Domestic Violence**   <http://www.ncadv.org/>  This national resource offers a wide variety of applicable insights, research, and other links around domestic (family) violence.   * **The Most Detailed Map of Gay Marriage in America**   <http://www.nytimes.com/2016/09/13/upshot/the-most-detailed-map-of-gay-marriage-in-america.html?hp=>  *New York Times* September 2016 map helps student visualize gay marriage in the United States by revealing state by state patterns.   * **MCAT Social Institutions Flash Cards**   [<https://quizlet.com/139758352/mcat-sociology-social-institutions-flash-cards/>](https://quizlet.com/139758352/mcat-sociology-social-institutions-flash-cards/)  This series of flash cards allows students to review MCAT information around social institutions such as education, family, and religion.   * **Social Institutions: Education, Family, and Religion**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/institutions-education-family-religion>  This six-minute video provides a brief overview of education as a social institution, briefly addressing hidden curriculum, teacher expectancy, and educational segregation. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 12: Understanding Institutions: Education

Chapter 12 focuses on education as a social institution in the United States and globally. It applies the functionalist, conflict, and symbolic interactionist perspectives. It explores the role of education and the reproduction of social inequality. These topics correspond with MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Category 9A. Exploring the relationship between social class and inequality, it touches on the role of race, class, and gender, and includes the selected concepts below related to MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category 10.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| **Content Category 9A: Understanding social structure**   * Theoretical Approaches * Functionalism * Conflict * Symbolic interactionism * Social Institutions * Education * Hidden curriculum * Teacher expectancy * Educational segregation and stratification   **Content Category 9B: Demographic characteristics and processes**   * Globalization   **Content Category 10A: Social Inequality**   * Social Class   + Aspects of social stratification   + Cultural capital and social capital   + Social reproduction   + Intersectionality (race, gender, age)   + Meritocracy |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Social Institutions: Education, Family, and Religion**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/institutions-education-family-religion>  This six-minute video provides a brief overview of education as a social institution, briefly addressing hidden curriculum, teacher expectancy, and educational segregation. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Pushed Out: The Injustice Black Girls Face in School**   <http://neatoday.org/2016/09/09/criminalization-of-black-girls/>  “Black girls make up 16 percent of girls in U.S. public schools, but 42 percent of girls’ expulsions and more than a third of girls’ school-based arrests”(NEA today, 2016). This National Education Association article explores educational stratification around race, gender, and social class for young black women in the educational system.   * **MCAT Social Institutions Flash Cards**   <https://quizlet.com/139758352/mcat-sociology-social-institutions-flash-cards/>  These flash cards allow students to review MCAT information around social institutions such as education, family, and religion.   * **Social Reproduction**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/social-reproduction>  This basic five-minute video collaboration provides a brief discussion of social capital, social reproduction, and cultural capital. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 13: Experiencing Health, Illness, and Medical Care

Chapter 13 explores health as a social issue and social institution. It introduces key concepts and terms associated with the study of health and health care. It distinguishes health from medicine, looks at social construction of health and illness introducing the concept of the sick role. As such, it is connected to foundational MCAT Concept 9 Content Categories 9A and 9B.

Chapter 13 also highlights social factors and attitudes toward health and illness, and addresses problems in the U.S. Healthcare system. It also addresses differences in the U.S. health care system and systems found in other Global North countries. As such, it connected to MCAT Foundational Concept 10 Category 10A

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [Content Category 9A](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/): Understanding social structure   * **Social** **Institutions** * Health and medicine * Medicalization * The sick role * Delivery of health care * Illness experience * Social epidemiology   [Content Category 9B](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/): Demographic characteristics and processes (brief link)   * **Demographic Shifts and Social Change** * Fertility, migration, mortality * Fertility and mortality rates (total, crude, age-specific) * Patterns in fertility and mortality   [Content Category 10A](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/): Social Inequality   * **Spatial Inequality** * Environmental justice (location and exposure to health risks; Flint example) * **Social Class** * Aspects of social stratification * Intersectionality (race, gender, age) * Socioeconomic gradient of health * Global inequalities * **Health Disparities** (e.g., class, gender, and race inequalities in health) * **Health-Care Disparities** (e.g., class, gender, and race inequalities in health care) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Relating Social Theories to Medicine**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/relating-social-theories-to-medicine>  A collaboration by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University, this 9-minute clip applies the social theories of functionalism, conflict, feminist, and symbolic interactionism to medicine.   * **Social Institutions: Government, Economy, and Health and Medicine**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/institutions-government-economy-and-health-and-medicine>  A collaboration between the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University, this 5-minute video provides a brief overview of health as a social institution. It also briefly addresses the Affordable Care Act.   * **Health Disparities Fact Sheet: The National Institutes of Health**   <https://report.nih.gov/nihfactsheets/viewfactsheet.aspx?csid=124>  The *National Institutes of Health* provides a number of resources on the social aspects of health. This fact sheet provides a very brief overview of U.S. health disparities.   * **Cut It Out: The C-Section Epidemic in America**   <https://youtu.be/iKKVRaPAFrc?list=PLFAxd35lefBRTWFjxmlB6LHON7DioZKoe>  Sociologist Theresa Morris discusses themes from her book, *Cut it out: The C-section epidemic in America* (NYU Press, October 2013) including why the C-section rate is so high in the United States.   * **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Obesity Prevalence Map**   <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/prevalence-maps.html>  This 2017 set of graphics shows state-by-state obesity prevalence in the United States by race and ethnicity. |

# Chapter 14: Understanding Institutions: Religion

Chapter 14 explores how sociologists study religion and define religiosity and spirituality. It also explores pluralism, fundamentalism, and secularization. It examines theoretical approaches on stratification including functionalism, conflict, and symbolic interactionism. It also addresses globalization, cultural diffusion, and rituals. Thus, Chapter 14 is clearly linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A, theoretical approaches and social institutions. It also provides additional information relevant to the students’ understanding of the context for MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9B “globalization.”

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * **Theoretical Approaches**   + Functionalism   + Conflict   + Symbolic Interactionism * **Social Institutions** * Religion   + Religiosity   + Types of religious organizations (churches, sects, cults)   + Religion and social change (secularization, fundamentalism) * **Culture**   + Elements of culture (rituals)   + Cultural diffusion   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**   * Globalization |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Social Institutions: Education, Family, and Religion**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/institutions-education-family-religion>  This six-minute video provides a brief overview of religion as a social institution addressing churches, sects, and cults, and secularization. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **The Factors Driving The Growth of Religious ‘Nones’ In The U.S.**   <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/09/14/the-factors-driving-the-growth-of-religious-nones-in-the-u-s/>  This Pew Research article examines the social change of religious identification (the growth of “nones”) in the United States.   * **MCAT Social Institutions Flash Cards**   <https://quizlet.com/139758352/mcat-sociology-social-institutions-flash-cards/>  This series of flash cards allows students to review MCAT information around social institutions such as education, family, and religion. |

# Chapter 15: Saving the Environment

Chapter 15 provides an examination of the sociology of the environment. It addresses environmental problems as social problems and explores how sociologists study such problems. It discusses environmental justice and looks at the case of Flint, Michigan. Here it links to Concept 10, Content Category 10 A. It also addresses the population and the environment, specifically covering Malthusian and demographic transition theories. As such, it links to Concept 9, Content Category 9B.

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| [Content Category 9B](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/): Demographic characteristics and processes   * **Demographic Shifts and Social Change** * Theories of demographic change (Malthusian and demographic transition)   [Content Category 10A](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/): Social Inequality   * **Spatial Inequality** * Environmental justice (location and exposure to health risks) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Greening the Ghetto**   <https://www.ted.com/talks/majora_carter_s_tale_of_urban_renewal/transcript>  This eighteen-minute Ted Talk brings together topics of environmental justice and intersectional issues of race and social class.   * **Demographic Transition**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/demographic-transition>  This seven-minute clip explores the concept of demographic transition. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Population Dynamics**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/population-dynamics>  This nine-minute clip explores fertility, mortality, migration, and population pyramids. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Urbanization**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-and-culture/demographics/v/urbanization>  This eight-minute clip explores urbanization. It is produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Fact: Urban Settings As A Social Determinant of Health: World Health Organization (WHO)**   <http://www.who.int/social_determinants/publications/urbanization/factfile/en/>  This WHO site provides a good global overview of the intersection between urban settings and global health. Offers ten important facts on urban settings and health as well as links to learn more. |

# Chapter 16: Changing Society through Social Movements

Chapter 16 provides an overview of social movements, their organization, and their practices. It introduces types of social movements and sociological theories on them such as collective behavior theory, resource mobilization theory, and relative deprivation through the lens of the main theoretical approaches contained below. As such, Chapter 16 is most linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Categories 9 A and B. Additionally, Chapter 16 highlights feminism as a social movement, providing a useful discussion to help students understand feminist theory as linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A. Further, Chapter 16 also explores the Civil Rights and Black Lives Matter Movements, which allows students to reapply concepts learned in Korgen Chapter 9 regarding race and racial discrimination.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * **Theoretical Approaches**   + Conflict   + Symbolic interactionism   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**  Social movements   * Relative deprivation * Organization of social movements * Movement strategies and tactics |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Social Movements**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/social-movements>  This seven-minute clip explores relative deprivation, resource mobilization, and rational choice theories of social movements. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Protesting Racism**   <http://videoarchive.asanet.org/presentation/?fw__param=protesting_police_brutality_and_racism>  This hour-long panel at the 2016 American Sociological Association discusses the black lives matter social movement and explores its organization and tactics. Also provided is access to a transcript of the discussion for an at-a-glance overview.   * **The 21st Century U.S. Labor Movement**   <http://videoarchive.asanet.org/presentation/?fw__param=the_21st_century_us_labor_movement>  This hour-long panel at the 2016 American Sociological Association discusses the U.S. labor movement. Also provided is access to a transcript of the discussion for an at-a-glance overview. |

# Appendix A

## MCAT Scientific Inquiry and Reasoning Skills[[1]](#footnote-1)

### Skill one: Knowledge of Scientific Concepts and Principles

Demonstrating understanding of scientific concepts and principles

Identifying the relationships between closely-related concepts

Questions that test this skill will ask you to show that you understand scientific concepts and principles by, for example:

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| * Recognizing correct scientific principles * Identifying the relationships among closely-related concepts * Identifying the relationships between different representations of concepts (e.g., verbal, symbolic, graphic) * Identifying examples of observations that illustrate scientific principles * Using mathematical equations to solve problems |

### Skill Two: Scientific Reasoning and Problem Solving

Reasoning about scientific principles, theories, and models

Analyzing and evaluating scientific explanations and predictions

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| You will be asked to show that you can use scientific principles to solve problems by, for example,   * Reasoning about scientific principles, theories, and models * Analyzing and evaluating scientific explanations and predictions * Evaluating arguments about causes and consequences * Bringing together theory, observations, and evidence to draw conclusions * Recognizing scientific findings that challenge or invalidate a scientific theory or model * Determining and using scientific formulas to solve problems |

### Skill Three: Reasoning about the Design and Execution of Research

Demonstrating understanding of important components of scientific research

Reasoning about ethical issues in research

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| Questions that test this skill will ask you to use your knowledge of important components of scientific methodology by, for example,   * Identifying the role of theory, past findings, and observations in scientific questioning * Identifying testable research questions and hypotheses * Distinguishing between samples and populations and between results that do and do not support generalizations about populations * Identifying the relationships among the variables in a study (e.g., independent versus dependent variables; control and confounding variables) * Reasoning about the appropriateness, precision, and accuracy of tools used to conduct research in the natural sciences * Reasoning about the appropriateness, reliability, and validity of tools used to conduct research in the behavioral and social sciences * Reasoning about the features of research studies that suggest associations between variables or causal relationships between them (e.g., temporality, random assignment) * Reasoning about ethical issues in scientific research |

### Skill Four Data-Based and Statistical Reasoning

Interpreting patterns in data presented in tables, figures, and graphs

Reasoning about data and drawing conclusions from them

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| Questions that test this skill will ask you to use your knowledge of data-based and statistical reasoning by, for example,   * Using, analyzing, and interpreting data in figures, graphs, and tables * Evaluating whether representations make sense for particular scientific observations and data * Using measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) and measures of dispersion (range, inter-quartile range, and standard deviation) to describe data * Reasoning about random and systematic error * Reasoning about statistical significance and uncertainty (e.g., interpreting statistical significance levels, interpreting a confidence interval) * Using data to explain relationships between variables or make predictions * Using data to answer research questions and draw conclusions * Identifying conclusions that are supported by research results * Determining the implications of results for real-world situations |

1. More details on these skills and their linkages to Sociology can be found on pages 101-113 of the booklet *What’s on The MCAT Exam?* Accessed 9/17/2106 ( https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/whats-mcat-exam/ [↑](#footnote-ref-1)