MCAT Standards Mapping Guide

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

*In 2015, the Medical College Admission Test (MCAT) began to include the social and behavioral sciences (Section 3 Psychological, Social, and Biological Foundations of Behavior). Sociological content constitutes 30% 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 3 is crucial for developing students proficiency’s in this skill based area.*

# Chapter 1: An Introduction to Sociology in the Global Age

## Chapter 1 opens with a vignette of revolutions and counterrevolutions to introduce students to the importance of sociological understanding in this global age. It identifies and explores three major topics of concern for 21st century sociology: consumption, the digital world, and globalization. It also introduces the discipline of sociology; the sociological imagination, micro/macro; structure/agency; social construction; and social structure. Thus, Chapter 1 briefly introduces a *number* of concepts tied to understanding basics of sociology and MCAT foundational Standards/Subtopics. It is a good primer for developing beginning knowledge of sociology and links to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Categories 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   + Micro versus macro   + Social constructionism   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**   * + Globalization     - Factors contributing to globalization (communication technology, economic interdependence)   Perspectives on globalization |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **What Is McDonaldization?**   [http://www.McDonaldization.com/whatisit.shtml](http://www.mcdonaldization.com/whatisit.shtml)  This site covers the basics of McDonaldization (calculability, predictability, efficiency, control) including separate pages for each with examples.   * **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.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 10-min 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 2: Thinking Sociologically

## Chapter 2 begins with the 2016 U.S. presidential election to illustrate how sociological theories can help us understand politics and other social institutions. It 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. It also introduces “anomie,” linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 7, Content Category 7B, and concepts of social inequality such as “class consciousness” and “intersectionality” linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category 10A.

## 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**   * + - * Anomie   [**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   + Exchange-rational choice   + Feminist theory   [**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     - Class consciousness and false consciousness     - Intersectionality (race, gender, age) |

## 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 7-min clip explains and critiques rational choice theory. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Correlation and Causality**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/correlation-and-causality>  This 10-min video explores the difference between correlations and causality. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan Universe |

# Chapter 3: Researching the Social World

## Chapter 3 begins with climate change, pointing out that this physical phenomenon also has a social dimension that requires the qualitative and quantitative research methods of sociology. Chapter 3 introduces these methods, while also exploring reliability and validity and the ethics of doing research on 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).

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

## (See Appendix B)

## 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 10-min 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: Culture

Chapter 4 begins with an example of U.S. millennial culture as evidenced in the HBO show *girls* as an introduction to the sociological study of culture. It defines and explores values, norms, and material culture such as language. It also 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/). Chapter 4 further addresses cultural relativism and ethnocentrism. As such, it links to MCAT Foundational Concept 8, Content Category 8B. (\*Note: Chapter 4 does not cover evolution and human culture—topics that are on the MCAT. The “Evolution and Human Culture” video link below provides a brief overview of that topic area).

## 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 versus symbolic culture     - Cultural lag     - Culture shock     - Assimilation     - Multiculturalism     - Subcultures and countercultures     - Mass media and popular culture     - Evolution and human culture\*   Transmission and diffusion |
| [**Content Category 8B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8b/)**: Social thinking**   * Prejudice and bias   + Ethnocentrism     - Ethnocentrism versus cultural relativism |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Evolution and Human Culture**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-and>culture/culture /v/evolution-and-human-culture  This basic 5-min 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 8-min 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 2-min 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: Socialization and Interaction

Chapter 5 is a significant chapter for MCAT preparation. It opens with a vignette about a transgender boy, Mack Beggs who, because of traditional notions of gender, was the Texas State Wrestling champion in the *girl’s* league. This chapter describes the development of self and examines the process of socialization and the array of agents of socialization that shape social selves and behavioral choices. It examines the ways in which socialization may differ in total institutions and across the life course. Specifically covered are theoretical perspectives on formation of self identity through socialization, socialization of children and adults, primary, secondary, and reference groups, and social networks. Chapter 5 also addresses social interaction, presentation of self, and group interactions. As such, it is most linked to MCAT [Foundational Concept 7, Content Category B and MCAT Fooundational 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**   * How the presence of others affects individual behavior   + - * Social control       * Conformity       * Obedience   + Normative and non-normative behavior   [**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 groups (reference groups)   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     - Status       * Types of statuses (ascribed/achieved)     - Role       * Role conflict and role strain       * Role exit     - Groups       * Primary and secondary groups       * In-group versus out-group       * Group size (dyads, triads)     - Networks     - Self-presentation and interacting with others       * Presentation of the self         + Impression management         + Front stage versus back stage (dramaturgical approach)       * Verbal and nonverbal communication |

## 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 3-min 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 5-min 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.   * **Families’ Journeys to Accepting Transgender Children, Mothers Play Key Advocacy Role**   <http://www.asanet.org/press-center/press-releases/study-examines-families-journeys-accepting-transgender-children-mothers-play-key-advocacy-role>  Families are key agents of socialization. This brief press release shows the results of a study indicating the impact of gender on family acceptance of transgender children.   * **Impression Management**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/impression-management>  This 4-min 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 2-min 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.   * **What Are Social Groups and Social Networks?**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-and-culture/social-structures/a/what-are-social-groups-and-social-networks>  This is a brief text and graphic overview of primary and secondary groups, in-groups, out-groups, networks, and homophily. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 6: Organizations, Societies, and Global Relationships

## Chapter 6 highlights the interplay between individuals and institutions, beginning with a sociological vignette of the impact of Edward Snowden’s governmental document leaks. Chapter 6 focuses on bureaucracies (authority structures, rationality and irrationality and informal organizations). It explores formal organizations and introduces Max Weber’s ideal type bureaucracy and the concept of the iron law of oligarchy. While Chapter 6 is most linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 8, Category 8C, it also introduces Weber’s ideal types of authority, linking it to Foundational Concept 9, Category A. Finally, Chapter 6 also provides solid background on globalization and global relationships. As such, it provides background for MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Category B “globalization.”

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**Content Category 8C**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-8c/)**: Social interactions**   * + Elements of social interaction   + Networks   + Organizations     - Formal organization     - Bureaucracy       * Characteristics of an ideal bureaucracy       * Perspectives on bureaucracy (e.g., iron law of oligarchy, McDonaldization)   [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * Government and economy   + Power and authority   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**  Social movements   * + Globalization   Factors contributing to globalization (communication technology, economic interdependence) |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| The Sociology of Max Weber<http://academic.udayton.edu/RichardGhere/POL%20307/weber.htm> This article provides an overview of Max Weber’s Sociology including ideal types and bureaucracy.   * **Organizations and Bureaucratization**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/organizations-and-bureaucratization>  This 5-min clip provides a brief discussion of utilitarian, coercive, and normative organizations. It addresses bureaucracy, bureaucratization, and the iron rule of oligarchy and McDonaldization. It provides a brief discussion of conflict and power. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.  **Type of Authority**  <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uavAMqvIkzA>  This brief You Tube clip uses Disney films to show Weber’s three types of authority: rational legal, charismatic, and traditional. |

# Chapter 7: Deviance and Crime

Chapter 7 opening vignette of Donald Trump’s labeling of immigrants as criminals introduces many of the concepts covered in Chapter 7, including power, and socially constructed notions of deviance and stigmatization. Chapter 7 also examines norms, labels, judgements, and social control. It examines theories of deviance including differential association, labeling theory, strain theory, and broken windows theory. 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   Normative and non-normative behavior   * + - Social norms     - Sanctions     - 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 Deviancehttps://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/behavior/normative-and-non-normative-behavior/v/perspectives-on-deviance This basic 6-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 8: Social Stratification in the United States

Chapter 8 uses the example of educational stratification to begin this chapter on social stratification in the United States. Its focus is social inequality. It introduces the dimensions of social stratification and explores economic inequality by wealth and income. It highlights quantitative and qualitative dimensions of inequality and both household and neighborhood poverty in the United States. As such, its main MCAT link is Foundational Category 10A. Chapter 8 also examines theoretical approaches on stratification including functionalism, conflict, symbolic interactionist, and feminist approaches, connecting it to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A. It also examines gender segregation in the labor market. As such, it is connected to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9B.

## 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 constructionism   + Exchange-rational choice   + Feminist theory * 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\* (\*referred to as “status” in Ritzer)     - Intersectionality (race, gender, age)     - Global inequalities   + Patterns of social mobility     - Inter and intragenerational mobility     - Vertical and horizontal mobility   + Poverty     - Relative and absolute poverty |

## 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 7-min 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/video/upward-and-downward-mobity-meritocracy>  This basic 6-min 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 9: Global Stratification

Chapter 9 begins with the example of a Burger King worker in Denmark who makes US$20 per hour to highlight the impact of global location on service wages. It then examines the “positions” of global stratification in terms of location in the global hemisphere. From there, it examines global health and environmental economic inequalities. Taken together, these terms connect with MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category 10A. Chapter 9 also introduces and applies theoretical perspectives of why deep global disparities exist and persist such as world systems and dependency theories. As such, it is tied to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9B. Because of its overall focus on global issues, it also provides student with rich material to understand MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9B “globalization” topics.

## 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   [**Content Category 9B**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/)**: Demographic characteristics and processes**   * Globalization   + - Factors contributing to globalization (communication technology, economic interdependence)     - Perspectives on globalization     - Social changes in globalization   [**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) * Social class   + Aspects of social stratification     - Social class and socioeconomic status     - Power, privilege, and prestige     - Intersectionality (race, gender, age)     - Socioeconomic gradient of health     - Global inequalities   + Poverty     - Absolute poverty * 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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| World Health Organization (WHO): Global Social Determinates of Health <http://www.who.int/topics/social_determinants/en/>  This page contains a number of links to relevant global social determinates of health which the WHO describes as “the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices. The social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities—the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries.” The World Health Organization has offices in over 150 countries. It coordinates and directs global health within the United Nations system.   * **Global Inequality**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/global-inequality>  This basic 6-min video provides a refresher on quantitative and qualitative dimensions of global inequality as it relates to health such as life expectancy and maternal mortality. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Illustrating Global Wealth Inequality - Sociological Images**   <https://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2016/04/21/illustrating-global-wealth-inequality/>  Global wealth inequality macro dimensions and statistics are very effectively illustrated in this four minute video and summary on *Soc Images*.   * **Globalization Theories**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/globalization-theories>  This basic 6-min video addresses globalization, world systems theory and dependency theory. It was produced in collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 10: Race and Ethnicity

Chapter 10 begins with a vignette about Evo Morales, Bolivia’s first indigenous president whose victory highlights international struggles around race, ethnicity, prejudice, and institutional racism. This chapter touches on three MCAT Foundational Categories, providing sociological definitions of race and ethnicity in 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, and stereotypes and various manifestations and consequences of these social phenomena in a global context. It also introduces the importance of social movements such as hate groups, the Civil Rights Movement, and Collective Identity and Power Movements. As such, it is most connected to MCAT [Foundational Concept 8](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-foundational-concept-8/), [Content Categories 8B](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-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 versus 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 3-min 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 6-min 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, 92*, 843. doi: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 11: Gender and Sexuality

Like Chapter 10, Chapter 11 links with many aspects of the MCAT foundational standards. It defines gender terms and concepts and shows how gender is related to identity, behavior, culture and interaction, and well-being. It explores key concepts of sex and gender and examines the social construction of gender, transgender, and nonbinary genders. As such, it is directly linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category B. It also explores gendered inequalities in a domestic and global context. It explores gender at both education and work. As such, it is linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category A.

Chapter 11 addresses the social category of gender and its continuing significance in modern society, examining its effects on individuals, groups, and societies. It also addresses the role of consumer culture and advertising in gender stereotyping. As such, it is linked to Foundational Concept 8, Content Category A. Chapter 11 also provides detailed coverage on the sociology of sexuality. It explores sexuality and how social forces constrain sexuality. It explains the effects of globalization on gender and sexualities. As such, it adds some new information for students to consider around MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category A, and Content Category B. Finally, this chapter also touches on global issues of maternal mortality, rape in war, sex trafficking, and the steps being taken to empower them to change their own lives and communities. As such, it is tied to MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category A.

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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| [**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   + Influence of social factors on identity formation     - Influence of culture and socialization on identity formation   [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**  Social institutions   * Education   + Hidden curriculum   [**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   * + Globalization   [**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     - Intersectionality (race, gender, age) |

## 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 womens’ wages compare to mens’? 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 7-min video collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University provides a refresher on sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender roles, and 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:10.1177/0891243213493961Thisqualitative 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, and 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. |

# Chapter 12: Families

Chapter 12 opens with a vignette on family portrayals on television and their sociological limitations. It 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. To those ends, it is primarily linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A. A section on gender inequalities also helps students further understand gender dynamics as introduced in MCAT Foundational Concept 9B.

Chapter 12 also discusses poverty and the family and gender inequalities that contribute to family conflict. As such, it links 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   + Symbolic interactionism   + Exchange-rational choice   + Feminist theory * Social Institutions   + Family     - Diversity in family forms     - Marriage and divorce     - 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   [**Content Category 10A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/)**: Social Inequality**   * Social Class   + Poverty |

# Chapter 13: Education

Chapter 13 focuses on education as a social institution, examining it in the United States and globally. It also applies the functionalist, conflict, and symbolic interactionist perspectives. These topics correspond with MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Category 9A. This chapter further explores the relationship between social class and inequality sections including the concept of meritocracy, related to MCAT Foundational Concept 10, Content Category 10.

## 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 * Education   + Hidden curriculum   + Teacher expectancy   + 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**   * Globalization   [**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 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 6-min 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/>  This series of flash cards allows 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 5-min 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 14: Religion

Chapter 14 begins with a vignette about the infrastructural changes in Mecca-to introduce the relationship between religion and society and the study of religion as a social institution. This chapter also explores religiosity and religion and social change (including fundamentalism and secularization). It introduces types of religious organizations and examines theoretical approaches on stratification including functionalism and conflict. It includes a focus on globalization and religion. Thus, Chapter 14 is clearly linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A, theoretical approaches, and social institutions. Given its global focus, 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 * Social institutions * Religion   + Religiosity   + Types of religious organizations (churches, sects, cults)   + Religion and social change (secularization, fundamentalism)   [**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 |

## 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 6-min 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 United States**   <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: Politics and the Economy

Chapter 15 opens with a vignette about the interconnections between economy and politics. It then explores key issues of political and economic sociology. It enlists power and authority through conflict and structural functional theories. It examines the industrial revolution, capitalism, socialism, and communism. In these ways, Chapter 15 connects to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9A. Chapter 15 also addresses the social structure of economy, exploring employment, underemployment, and unemployment. It also addresses consumption and leisure. Chapter 15 also addresses the impact of globalization on the world economy. As such, it provides additional information for the student to learn more about topics contained in MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9B.

## 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 * Government and economy   + Power and authority   + Comparative economic and political systems   [**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 (economic interdependence)     - Social changes in globalization (terrorism)   + Urbanization   Industrialization |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Social Institutions: Government, Economy, and Health and Medicine**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/institutions-government-economy-and-health-and-medicine>  This 5-min video provides a brief overview of health as a social institution. It also briefly addresses the Affordable Care Act. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Globalization: Trade and Transnational Corporations**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep/mcat/society-and-culture/demographics/v/globalization-trade-and-transnational-corporations>  This 6-min video provides an overview of global trade and transnational corporations. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# **Chapter 16: The Body, Medicine, Health, and Health Care**

Chapter16 begins with the example of the legalization of marijuana to illustrate that the intersection of body, medicine, and health care takes place in a social and political environmental as well as a medical one. It introduces key concepts and terms associated with the study of health and health care including mortality and morbidity. As such, it is connected to foundational MCAT Concept 9 Content Categories 9 A and B. Chapter 16 also highlights growing global inequalities and global improvements around health. It explores HIV and the impact of war on health. 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     - Delivery of health care     - Illness experience   [**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, mortality   [**Content Category 10A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-10a/)**: Social inequality**   * Social class   + - Global inequalities * 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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| * **Relating Social Theories to Medicine**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/relating-social-theories-to-medicine>  This 9-min clip applies the social theories of functionalism, conflict, feminist, and symbolic interactionism to medicine. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Social Institutions: Government, Economy, and Health and Medicine**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/institutions-government-economy-and-health-and-medicine>  This 5-min video provides a brief overview of health as a social institution. It also briefly addresses the Affordable Care Act. It is collaboration between The Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University.   * **Health Disparities Fact Sheet: The National Institutes of Health**   <https://report.nih.gov/nihfactsheets/viewfactsheet.aspx?csid=124>  The *National Institutes of Health* provides many resources (including fact sheets) on the social aspects of health. The *Yesterday, Today, and Tomorrow* page provides fact sheets on a variety of issues. For instance, the fact sheet: “Better Living through Social and Behavioral Sciences” (<https://report.nih.gov/nihfactsheets/ViewFactSheet.aspx?csid=32&key=B#B>) explains many health-related advances over time resulting from the intersection of behavioral and social science.   * **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 U.S.   * **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Obesity Prevalence Map**   <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/data/prevalence-maps.html>  This 2015 set of graphics shows state-by-state obesity prevalence in the United States by race and ethnicity. Source: *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, the primary public health care agency in the United States |

# Chapter 17: Population, Urbanization, and the Environment

Chapter 17 explores population, urbanization, and the environment. It looks at population growth and decline, processes of population change (fertility, mortality, migration, and demographic transition). It explores growing urbanization, suburbanization, gentrification, and global cities. As such, it is most clearly linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, [Content Category 9B](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9b/).

## MCAT Foundational Standards/Subtopics

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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 (demographic transition)     - Population growth and decline (population projections, population pyramids)     - Fertility, migration, mortality       * Fertility and mortality rates (total, crude, age-specific)       * Patterns in fertility and mortality       * Push and pull factors in migration   + Social movements     - Globalization     - Urbanization     - Industrialization and urban growth     - Suburbanization and urban decline       * Gentrification and urban renewal |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| 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 10 important facts on urban settings and health as well as links to learn more.   * **Demographic Transition**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/demographic-transition>  This 7-min 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 9-min 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 8-min clip explores urbanization. Produced collaboratively by the Association of American Medical Colleges and Khan University. |

# Chapter 18: Social Change, Social Movements, and Collective Action

Chapter 18 highlights the importance of understanding collective action—opening with the example of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers (CIW), who in 2001 launched a boycott against Taco Bell. It highlights several social movements in the United States and explains how social movements emerge. Chapter 18 also provides an overview of social movements, their organization, and their practices. It introduces sociological theories on them such as relative deprivation. As such, it is linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 9, Content Category 9B. Additionally, Chapter 18 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. Finally, Chapter 18 explores aspects of collective behavior such as crowds, riots, and disasters. As such, it is linked to MCAT Foundational Concept 7, Content Category 7B.

## 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     - Aspects of collective behavior (e.g., fads, mass hysteria, riots)   [**Content Category 9A**](https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/mcat-2015-content-category-9a/)**: Understanding social structure**   * Theoretical approaches   + Feminist theory   [**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   + Globalization |

## For Further Research and Exploration

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| * **Social Movements**   <https://www.khanacademy.org/video/social-movements>  This 7-min 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

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

### Skill 1: 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 2: 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 3: 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)