

**Theory Comprehensive Exam
Fall 2016**

Day Two

Instructions: For this section of the exam answer any two (2) of the following four questions. If more than two answers are submitted the committee will read only the first two and the third will not be counted in any way. All responses are to be turned in no later than 12:45.

Once a student takes possession of the examination, this will be regarded as an attempt to take the exam, regardless of whether the student completes the exam, hands in any answers or remains for the full exam period.

1. (a) Select a criminal justice area (e.g. law-making, crime prevention, policing, courts, probation, prisons). Then describe a particular outcome in this area (e.g. if the area is prisons, you might select gang involvement or prison riots). (b) Discuss theory and research that explains this outcome. (c) Identify limitations in theory and research on the outcome. (d) Discuss the kinds of research needed to overcome these limitations.

2. Biosocial research has underscored the role of nonshared environmental influences on crime and delinquency. Discuss what is meant by the nonshared environment and how it differs from the shared environment. Then discuss the literature bearing on the influence of the nonshared environment versus the shared environment. Finally, discuss the various ways that the nonshared environment could be integrated into criminological theory and research.

3. Prior offending tends to be the strongest predictor of future offending. Discuss persistent heterogeneity and state dependence approaches to explaining this pattern, along with the relevant empirical evidence.

4. Discuss the major substantive (i.e. empirical) works that have contributed to our understanding of the race/crime relationship. In your discussion (1) trace historical development of this literature; (2) describe the efforts to explain this relationship, including those which challenge the assumption that any relationship exists; (3) identify voids in the literature and (4) identify the theoretical and empirical steps that can be taken to better understand the race/crime relationship.