**SC1101E**

**Semester 1 AY 2014-15**

**Tutorial 1 (ODD WK Aug25-29; EVEN WK Sep1-5)**

**Welcome Aboard**

Please note that the tutorial is an important part of the learning process. It is not intended to be a summary of the lecture or readings, but a forum for discussion, debate, and sharing. Do come prepared and be ready to contribute to an intellectually fruitful, lively and fun session.

Note also that this set of questions serves only as a guide; therefore, your DG is free to venture out as long as it keeps in mind the key learning objectives.

**General Discussion (Some tutors may use a different set of questions and/or activities here.)**

1. How would you study this module? What would be a good strategy?
2. How would you apply the “sociological imagination (Mills)” to understand your own family?
3. How would you describe society? What does it look like? How is social order possible, given what you know of society? What brings about social change? (You may make reference to a society you are familiar with.)

**Group Discussion**

**Your tutor may divide the DG into 4 or 5 groups. Each group may be assigned one or two of the following questions:**

1. How are private troubles and public issues (Mills) related? Illustrate with examples.

Private troubles can manifest into public issues when they become prevalent in the society and threaten the social solidarity of the society which requires intervention often by the government. Examples can be the private trouble of students not being able to score well in examinations independently and thus turn to tuition to help themselves create an edge over other students which turn into a public issue as the majority of the students in the society becomes obsessed with the idea on relying on tuition to excel academically. This becomes a public issue as intervention by the state is required before it manifests into a serious problem that is deep-rooted into the society.

1. What are manifest and latent functions (Merton)? Discuss some of the manifest and latent functions of two social institutions in a country you are familiar with. Do you find these concepts useful?

Manifest refers to the official objectives while latent refers to the underlying and often unaware aspects of institutions. Example Universities’ manifest function provides higher education while latent function is to enforce social class.

1. Do you think Sociology is subversive or supportive of the social order (Berger)? How so? Can a sociologist be an activist, and still maintain objectivity in his or her research?
2. Is it possible and sensible to study social phenomena as “social facts” (Durkheim)? Are the phenomena or processes dealt with in Sociology very different from those of the natural sciences? How would they be similar?
3. If you were tasked to study the family in a society of your choice, what research methods would you use? Would participant observation be a better method than a sample survey? How do the methods compare in terms of effectiveness and cost?

TES/ Eddie Aug 20, 2014