

A Road Map to MCAT® Content in Sociology and Psychology Textbooks

2020 Update



Contents

Introduction.....	1
Textbooks Included in This Road Map.....	2
Foundational Concept 6: Biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors influence the ways that individuals perceive, think about, and react to the world.	3
Content Category 6A: Sensing the environment	4
Content Category 6B: Making sense of the environment	6
Content Category 6C: Responding to the world	9
Foundational Concept 7: Biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors influence behavior and behavior change.	11
Content Category 7A: Individual influences on behavior	12
Content Category 7B: Social processes that influence human behavior	16
Content Category 7C: Attitude and behavior change	18
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.....	20
Content Category 8A: Self Identity	21
Content Category 8B: Social thinking	22
Content Category 8C: Social interactions	23
Foundational Concept 9: Cultural and social differences influence well-being	25
Content Category 9A: Understanding social structure.....	26
Content Category 9B: Demographic characteristics and processes	28
Foundational Concept 10: Social stratification and access to resources influence well-being.....	30
Content Category 10A: Social inequality.....	31

Introduction

Prepare for the MCAT exam with this official Road Map to MCAT Content in Sociology and Psychology Textbooks. We reached out to publishers of sociology and psychology textbooks and asked them to identify where the foundational concepts and content categories tested on the MCAT exam can be found within their textbooks.

Four textbooks are included in this resource, and two others will be added soon. We will update it as we hear from publishers of other textbooks.

Disclaimer

All references to the textbook and corresponding content information were self-reported by the publishers. The AAMC has not verified the information for accuracy or relevance. This information is not intended to prescribe a program of study for the MCAT exam, promote a textbook, or guarantee success on the exam.

Invitation to Textbook Publishers

If you are a publisher of an introductory textbook on sociology or psychology and would like to add your publication and information to this reference document, please email mcatsprep@aamc.org.

Textbooks Included in This Road Map

Textbook	Link
Mapping included in this road map	
Ballantine JH, Roberts KA, Korgen KO. <i>Our Social World</i>. 7th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.; 2020.	https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/our-social-world/book259286
Cragun RT, Cragun DL, Konieczny P. <i>Introduction to Sociology</i> . Wikibooks; 2012.	Free and open access: http://en.wikibooks.org/wiki/Introduction_to_Sociology
Myers DG, DeWall CN. <i>Exploring Psychology</i>. 11th ed. New York, NY: Worth Publishers; 2019.	https://www.macmillanlearning.com/college/us/product/Exploring-Psychology/p/1319104193
Newman DM. <i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>. 13th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.; 2021.	https://edge.sagepub.com/newman13e
Mapping coming soon	
Spielman RM, et al. <i>Psychology</i> . Open Stax. Rice University; 2014.	Free and open access: https://openstax.org/details/books/psychology
Griffiths H, et al. <i>Introduction to Sociology 2e</i> . Open Stax. Rice University; 2020.	Free and open access: https://openstax.org/details/books/introduction-sociology-2e

Foundational Concept 6: Biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors influence the ways that individuals perceive, think about, and react to the world.

The ways we sense, perceive, think about, and react to stimuli affect our experiences. Foundational concept 6 focuses on these components of experience, starting with the initial detection and perception of stimuli through cognition and continuing to emotion and stress.

Content Categories:

- *Category 6A* focuses on the detection and perception of sensory information.
- *Category 6B* focuses on cognition, including our ability to attend to the environment, think about and remember what we experience, and use language to communicate with others.
- *Category 6C* focuses on how we process and experience emotion and stress.

With these building blocks, medical students will be able to learn about the ways cognitive and perceptual processes influence their understanding of health and illness.

Content Category 6A: Sensing the environment

Psychological, sociocultural, and biological factors affect our sensation and perception of the world. All sensory processing begins with first detecting a stimulus in the environment through sensory cells, receptors, and biological pathways.

After collecting sensory information, we then interpret and make sense of it. Although sensation and perception are distinct functions, they are both influenced by psychological, social, and biological factors and therefore become almost indistinguishable in practice. This complexity is illuminated by examining human sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell.

The content in this category covers sensation and perception across all human senses.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Sensory Processing (PSY, BIO) - Sensation - Threshold - Weber's Law (PSY) - Signal detection theory (PSY) - Sensory adaptation - Psychophysics - Sensory receptors - Sensory pathways - Types of sensory receptors				Ch. 6, pp. 189-232
Vision (PSY, BIO) - Structure and function of the eye - Visual processing - Visual pathways in the brain - Parallel processing (PSY) - Feature detection (PSY)				Ch. 6, pp. 199-215
Hearing (PSY, BIO) - Structure and function of the ear - Auditory processing (e.g., auditory pathways in the brain) - Sensory reception by hair cells				Ch. 6, pp. 216-220

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Other Senses (PSY, BIO) - Somatosensation (e.g., pain perception) - Taste (e.g., taste buds (chemoreceptors) that detect specific chemicals) - Smell - Olfactory cells (chemoreceptors) that detect specific chemicals - Pheromones (BIO) - Olfactory pathways in the brain (BIO) - Kinesthetic sense (PSY) - Vestibular sense				Ch. 6, pp. 220-228
Perception (PSY) - Bottom-up/top-down processing - Perceptual organization (e.g., depth, form, motion, constancy) - Gestalt principles				Ch. 6, pp. 189-232

Content Category 6B: Making sense of the environment

The way we think about the world depends on our awareness, thoughts, knowledge, and memories. It is also influenced by our ability to solve problems, make decisions, form judgments, and communicate. Psychological, sociocultural, and biological influences determine the development and use of these different yet convergent processes.

Biological factors underlie the mental processes that create our reality, shape our perception of the world, and influence the way we perceive and react to every aspect of our lives.

The content in this category covers critical aspects of cognition — including consciousness, cognitive development, problem-solving and decision-making, intelligence, memory, and language.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Attention (PSY) - Selective attention - Divided attention				Ch. 3, pp. 81-83
Cognition (PSY) - Information-processing model - Cognitive development - Piaget's stages of cognitive development - Cognitive changes in late adulthood - Role of culture in cognitive development - Influence of heredity and environment on cognitive development - Biological factors that affect cognition (PSY, BIO) - Problem-solving and decision-making - Types of problem-solving - Barriers to effective problem-solving - Approaches to problem-solving - Heuristics and biases (e.g., overconfidence, belief perseverance) - Intellectual functioning - Theories of intelligence - Influence of heredity and environment on intelligence - Variations in intellectual ability				Ch. 1, pp. 16-17 Ch. 2, pp. 70-75 Ch. 4, pp. 119-162 Ch. 5, pp. 168-172 Ch. 8, pp. 268-269 Ch. 9, pp. 315-332, 336-346 Ch. 10, pp. 378-380 Ch. 13, pp. 489-491

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Consciousness (PSY) - States of consciousness - Alertness (PSY, BIO) - Sleep - Stages of sleep - Sleep cycles and changes to sleep cycles - Sleep and circadian rhythms (PSY, BIO) - Dreaming - Sleep-wake disorders - Hypnosis and meditation - Consciousness-altering drugs - Types of consciousness-altering drugs and their effects on the nervous system and behavior - Drug addiction and the reward pathway in the brain			Ch. 1, Taking a New Look at a Familiar World, pp. 5-7 ("A sociology of sleep")	Ch. 3, pp. 79-114
Memory (PSY) - Encoding - Process of encoding information - Processes that aid in encoding memories - Storage - Types of memory storage (e.g., sensory, working, long-term) - Semantic networks and spreading activation - Retrieval - Recall, recognition, and relearning - Retrieval cues - The role of emotion in retrieving memories (PSY, BIO) - Processes that aid retrieval - Forgetting - Aging and memory - Memory dysfunctions (e.g., Alzheimer's disease, Korsakoff's syndrome) - Decay - Interference - Memory construction and source monitoring - Changes in synaptic connections underlie memory and learning (PSY, BIO) - Neural plasticity - Memory and learning - Long-term potentiation				Ch. 2, pp. 39, 44, 64 Ch. 4, pp. 152-154 Ch. 6, pp. 193, 227 Ch. 8, pp. 265-296 Ch. 11, p. 401

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Language (PSY) - Theories of language development (e.g., learning, Nativist, Interactionist) - Influence of language on cognition - Brain areas that control language and speech (PSY, BIO)			Ch. 3, Building Reality: The Social Construction of Knowledge, pp. 50-53 ("Culture and language") Ch. 5, Building Identity: Socialization, pp. 113-118 ("The acquisition of self")	Ch. 9, pp. 311-318

Content Category 6C: Responding to the world

We experience a barrage of environmental stimuli throughout the course of our lives. In many cases, environmental stimuli trigger physiological responses, such as an elevated heart rate, increased perspiration, or heightened feelings of anxiety. How we perceive and interpret these physiological responses is complex and influenced by psychological, sociocultural, and biological factors.

Emotional responses, such as feelings of happiness, sadness, anger, or stress, are often born out of our interpretation of this interplay of physiological responses. Our experience with emotions and stress not only affects our behavior, but also shapes our interactions with others.

The content in this category covers the basic components and theories of emotion and their underlying psychological, sociocultural, and biological factors. It also addresses stress, stress outcomes, and stress management.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Emotion (PSY) • Three components of emotion (i.e., cognitive, physiological, behavioral) • Universal emotions (i.e., fear, anger, happiness, surprise, joy, disgust, sadness) • Adaptive role of emotion • Theories of emotion › James-Lange theory › Cannon-Bard theory › Schachter-Singer theory • The role of biological processes in perceiving emotion (PSY, BIO) › Brain regions involved in the generation and experience of emotions › The role of the limbic system in emotion › Emotion and the autonomic nervous system › Physiological markers of emotion (signatures of emotion)			Ch. 4, Building Order: Culture and History, pp. 95-96 ("Can Culture tell you what to feel?")	Ch. 2, pp. 55-56 Ch. 4, p. 142 Ch. 8, pp. 277-278 Ch. 10, pp. 367-395

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Stress (PSY) - The nature of stress - Appraisal - Different types of stressors (e.g., cataclysmic events, personal) - Effects of stress on psychological functions - Stress outcomes, response to stressors - Physiological (PSY, BIO) - Emotional - Behavioral - Managing stress (e.g., exercise, relaxation, spirituality)				Ch. 11, pp. 384-406 Ch. 14, pp. 509-510

Foundational Concept 7: Biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors influence behavior and behavior change.

Human behavior is complex and often surprising, differing across individuals in the same situation and within an individual across different situations. A full understanding of human behavior requires knowledge of the interplay between psychological, sociocultural, and biological factors related to behavior. This interplay has important implications for the way we behave and the likelihood of behavior change.

Foundational Concept 7 focuses on individual and social determinants of behavior and behavior change.

Content Categories:

- *Category 7A* focuses on the individual psychological and biological factors that affect behavior.
- *Category 7B* focuses on how social factors, such as groups and social norms, affect behavior.
- *Category 7C* focuses on how learning affects behavior, as well as the role of attitude theories in behavior and behavior change.

With these building blocks, medical students will be able to learn how behavior can either support health or increase risk for disease.

Content Category 7A: Individual influences on behavior

A complex interplay of psychological and biological factors shapes behavior. Biological structures and processes serve as the pathways by which bodies carry out activities. They also affect predispositions to behave in certain ways, shape personalities, and influence the likelihood of developing psychological disorders. Psychological factors also affect behavior and, consequently, health and well-being.

The content in this category covers biological bases of behavior, including the effect of genetics and how the nervous and endocrine systems affect behavior. It also addresses how personality, psychological disorders, motivation, and attitudes affect behavior. Some of these topics are learned in the context of nonhuman animal species.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Biological Bases of Behavior (PSY, BIO) • The nervous system › Neurons (e.g., the reflex arc) › Neurotransmitters › Structure and function of the peripheral nervous system › Structure and function of the central nervous system • The brain › Forebrain › Midbrain › Hindbrain › Lateralization of cortical functions › Methods used in studying the brain • The spinal cord • Neuronal communication and its influence on behavior (PSY) • Influence of neurotransmitters on behavior (PSY) • The endocrine system › Components of the endocrine system › Effects of the endocrine system on behavior • Behavioral genetics › Genes, temperament, and heredity › Adaptive value of traits and behaviors › Interaction between heredity and environmental influences • Influence of genetic and environmental factors on the development of behaviors › Experience and behavior (PSY) › Regulatory genes and behavior (BIO) › Genetically based behavioral variation in natural populations • Human physiological development (PSY) › Prenatal development › Motor development › Developmental changes in adolescence			Ch. 5, pp. 111-113	Ch. 1, pp. 8-9 Ch. 2, pp. 37-78 Ch. 4, pp. 115-160 Ch. 9, pp. 336-337, 41-343 Ch. 14, pp. 483, 495-496

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Personality (PSY) - Theories of personality › Psychoanalytic perspective › Humanistic perspective › Trait perspective › Social cognitive perspective › Biological perspective › Behaviorist perspective - Situational approach to explaining behavior				Ch. 13, pp. 461-492
Psychological Disorders (PSY) - Understanding psychological disorders › Biomedical vs. biopsychosocial approaches › Classifying psychological disorders › Rates of psychological disorders - Types of psychological disorders › Anxiety disorders › Obsessive-compulsive disorder › Trauma- and stressor-related disorders › Somatic symptom and related disorders › Bipolar and related disorders › Depressive disorders › Schizophrenia › Dissociative disorders › Personality disorders - Biological bases of nervous system disorders (PSY, BIO) › Schizophrenia › Depression › Alzheimer's disease › Parkinson's disease › Stem cell-based therapy to regenerate neurons in the central nervous system (BIO)			Ch. 8, Constructing Difference: Social Deviance, pp. 236-241 ("The medicalization of deviance")	Ch. 2, pp. 44, 64 Ch. 8, p. 279 Ch. 14, pp. 493-534

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Motivation (PSY) - Factors that influence motivation › Instinct › Arousal › Drives (e.g., negative-feedback systems) (PSY, BIO) › Needs - Theories that explain how motivation affects human behavior › Drive reduction theory › Incentive theory › Other theories (e.g., cognitive, need-based) - Biological and sociocultural motivators that regulate behavior (e.g., hunger, sex drive, substance addiction)				Ch. 3, pp. 101-102 Ch. 5, pp. 165-187 Ch. 10, pp. 348-367
Attitudes (PSY) - Components of attitudes (i.e., cognitive, affective, behavioral) - The link between attitudes and behavior › Processes by which behavior influences attitudes (e.g., foot-in-the door phenomenon, role-playing effects) › Processes by which attitudes influence behavior › Cognitive dissonance theory				Ch. 12, pp. 415-460

Content Category 7B: Social processes that influence human behavior

Many social processes influence human behavior; in fact, the mere presence of other individuals can influence our behavior. Groups and social norms also exert influence over our behavior. Oftentimes, social processes influence our behavior through unwritten rules that define acceptable and unacceptable behavior in society.

Our understanding of groups and social norms is learned through the process of socialization. What we learn about the groups and society to which we belong affects our behavior and influences our perceptions and interactions with others.

The content in this category covers how the presence of others, group decision-making processes, social norms, and socialization shape our behavior.

Topic	Our Social World	Introduction to Sociology	Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life	Exploring Psychology
How the Presence of Others Affects Individual Behavior (PSY) • Social facilitation • Deindividuation • Bystander effect • Social loafing • Social control (SOC) • Peer pressure (PSY, SOC) • Conformity (PSY, SOC) • Obedience (PSY, SOC)		Groups	Ch. 2, Seeing and Thinking Sociologically, pp. 22-25 ("Social influence: the impact of other people on our everyday lives")	Ch. 3, p. 112 Ch. 4, pp. 146-148 Ch. 12, pp. 421-434, 453-455
Group Decision-Making Processes (PSY, SOC) • Group polarization (PSY) • Groupthink		Groups		Ch. 12, pp. 429-434
Normative and Nonnormative Behavior (SOC) • Social norms (PSY, SOC) › Sanctions (SOC) › Folkways, mores, and taboos (SOC) › Anomie (SOC) • Deviance › Perspectives on deviance (e.g., differential association, labeling theory, strain theory) • Aspects of collective behavior (e.g., fads, mass hysteria, riots)	Ch. 3: Society and Culture Ch. 6: Deviance and Social Control Ch. 9: Gender Stratification	Deviance	Ch. 4, Building Order: Culture and History Ch. 8, Constructing Difference: Social Deviance	Ch. 5, p. 170, 175 Ch. 12, pp. 421, 423-425, 430-431, 455 Ch. 13, pp. 489-491 Ch. 14, pp. 494, 496-499

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Socialization (PSY, SOC) Agents of socialization (e.g., the family, mass media, peers, workplace)	Ch. 4: Socialization Ch. 9: Gender Stratification	Socialization	Ch. 5, Building Identity: Socialization	Ch. 4, pp. 132-140, 145-150 Ch. 5, pp. 168-171, 177-178 Ch. 10, pp. 352-357 Ch. 12, pp. 443-445, 455

Content Category 7C: Attitude and behavior change

Learning is a relatively permanent change in behavior brought about by experience. There are a number of different types of learning, which include habituation as well as associative, observational, and social learning.

Although people can learn new behaviors and change their attitudes, psychological, environmental, and biological factors influence whether those changes will be short-term or long-term. Understanding how people learn new behaviors and change their attitudes and which conditions affect learning helps us understand behavior and our interactions with others.

The content in this category covers learning and theories of attitude and behavior change. This includes the elaboration likelihood model and social cognitive theory.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Habituation and Dishabituation (PSY)				Ch. 5, pp. 540-543
Associative Learning (PSY) • Classical conditioning (PSY, BIO) › Neutral, conditioned, and unconditioned stimuli › Conditioned and unconditioned response › Processes: acquisition, extinction, spontaneous recovery, generalization, discrimination • Operant conditioning (PSY, BIO) › Processes of shaping and extinction › Types of reinforcement: positive, negative, primary, conditional › Reinforcement schedules: fixed-ratio, variable-ratio, fixed-interval, variable-interval › Punishment › Escape and avoidance learning • The role of cognitive processes in associative learning • Biological processes that affect associative learning (e.g., biological predispositions, instinctive drift) (PSY, BIO)				Ch. 7, pp. 236-257 Ch. 11, pp. 396-397 Ch. 15, pp. 540-543

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Observational Learning (PSY) - Modeling - Biological processes that affect observational learning - Mirror neurons - Role of the brain in experiencing vicarious emotions - Applications of observational learning to explain individual behavior				Ch. 6, p. 223 Ch. 7, pp. 258-264 Ch. 12, pp. 443-445
Theories of Attitude and Behavioral Change (PSY) - Elaboration likelihood model - Social cognitive theory - Factors that affect attitude change (e.g., changing behavior, characteristics of the message and target, social factors)				Ch. 12, p. 418 Ch. 13, pp. 482-485 Ch. 15, pp. 537-548

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.

The connection between how people think about themselves and others is complex and affects social interactions. The interplay between thoughts about ourselves, thoughts about others, and our biology has important implications for our sense of self and interpersonal relationships.

Foundational Concept 8 focuses on the physical, cognitive, and social components of our identity, as well as how these components influence the way we think about and interact with others.

Content Categories:

- *Category 8A* focuses on the notion of self and identity formation.
- *Category 8B* focuses on the attitudes and beliefs that affect social interaction.
- *Category 8C* focuses on the actions and processes underlying social interactions.

With these building blocks, medical students will be able to learn how to communicate and collaborate with patients and other members of the health care team.

Content Category 8A: Self Identity

The self refers to the thoughts and beliefs we have about ourselves. Our notion of self is complex and multifaceted. It includes gender, racial, and ethnic identities, as well as beliefs about our ability to accomplish tasks and exert control over different situations.

Our notion of self develops over time and is shaped by a variety of factors, including society, culture, individuals and groups, and our unique experiences. How we view ourselves influences our perceptions of others and, by extension, our interactions with them.

The content in this category covers the notions of self-concept and identity, along with the role of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and locus of control in the development of self-concept. Identity formation, including developmental stages and the social factors that affect identity formation, is also covered here. Theories are included to provide historical context for the field of identity formation.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Self Concept, Self-identity, and Social Identity (PSY, SOC) - The role of self-esteem, self-efficacy, and locus of control in self-concept and self-identity (PSY) - Different types of identities (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, class)	Ch. 9: Gender Stratification	Groups	Ch. 5, Building Identity: Socialization	Ch. 4, pp. 117, 133-159 Ch. 5, pp. 162-183 Ch. 10, pp. 350-353 Ch. 11, pp. 396-398, 411-413 Ch. 13, pp. 471-472, 486-491 Ch. 14, pp. 504, 513-515, 566 Ch. 15, p. 566
Formation of Identity (PSY, SOC) - Theories of identity development (e.g., gender, moral, psychosexual, social) - Influence of social factors on identity formation - Influence of individuals (e.g., imitation, looking-glass self, role-taking) - Influence of groups (e.g., reference group) - Influence of culture and socialization on identity formation	Ch. 4: Socialization	Groups	Ch. 5, Building Identity: Socialization	Ch. 4, pp.129-150 Ch. 5, pp. 162-171 Ch. 7, pp. 258-262 Ch. 12, pp. 419-432, 438-439 Ch. 13, pp. 464, 482, 489-491

Content Category 8B: Social thinking

Social thinking refers to the ways we view others and our environment, as well as how we interpret others' behaviors. A variety of factors — personality, environment, and culture — factor into the beliefs and attitudes we develop.

Our beliefs and attitudes about others and the environment also shape the way we interact with each other. To interact with others, we need to interpret different aspects of a situation, including our perception of ourselves, the behavior of others, and the environment.

The content in this category covers our attitudes about others and how those attitudes develop, including how perceptions of culture and environment affect attributions of behavior. It also covers how our attitudes about different groups — prejudice, stereotypes, stigma, and ethnocentrism — may influence our interactions with group members.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Attributing Behavior to Persons or Situations (PSY) - Attributional processes (e.g., fundamental attribution error, role of culture in attributions) - How self-perceptions shape our perceptions of others - How perceptions of the environment shape our perceptions of others				Ch. 6, pp. 195-198 Ch. 11, pp. 398-399 Ch. 12, pp. 416-421 Ch. 13, pp. 470, 487-491 Ch. 14, pp. 519-522
Prejudice and Bias (PSY, SOC) - Processes that contribute to prejudice - Power, prestige, and class (SOC) - The role of emotion in prejudice (PSY) - The role of cognition in prejudice (PSY) - Stereotypes - Stigma (SOC) - Ethnocentrism (SOC) - Ethnocentrism vs. cultural relativism	Ch. 3: Society and Culture Ch. 4: Socialization Ch. 6: Deviance and Social Control Ch. 8: Race and Ethnic Group Stratification Ch. 12: Religion	Race and Ethnicity	Ch. 4, Building Order: Culture and History, pp 96-99 ("Cultural relativism and ethnocentrism") Ch. 6, Supporting Identity: The Presentation of Self, pp 166-168 ("Stigma") Ch. 10, The Architecture of Stratification: Social Class and Inequality Ch. 11, The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity	Ch. 9, pp. 301, 339-345 Ch. 12, pp. 435-441 Ch. 13, p. 476 Ch. 14, pp.496-499
Processes Related to Stereotypes (PSY) - Self-fulfilling prophecy - Stereotype threat	Ch. 6: Deviance and Social Control		Ch. 3, Building Reality: The Social Construction of Knowledge, pp. 55-56 ("Self-fulfilling prophecies")	Ch. 9, pp. 343-345, 361-362 Ch. 12, pp. 456-457

Content Category 8C: Social interactions

Humans are social beings by nature. Though the sentiment is simple, the actions and processes underlying and shaping our social interactions are not.

The changing nature of social interaction is important for understanding the mechanisms and processes through which people interact with each other, both individually and within groups. A variety of factors — environment, culture, and biology — affect how we present ourselves to others and how we treat them. For example, perceptions of prejudice and stereotypes can lead to acts of discrimination, whereas positive attitudes about others can lead to the provision of help and social support.

The content in this category covers the mechanisms of self-presentation and social interaction including expressing and detecting emotion, impression management, communication, the biological underpinning of social behavior, and discrimination.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Elements of Social Interaction (PSY, SOC) • Status (SOC) › Types of status (e.g., achieved, ascribed) • Role › Role conflict and role strain (SOC) › Role exit (SOC) • Groups › Primary and secondary groups (SOC) › In-group vs. out-group › Group size (e.g., dyads, triads) (SOC) • Networks (SOC) • Organizations (SOC) › Formal organization › Bureaucracy • Characteristics of an ideal bureaucracy • Perspectives on bureaucracy (e.g., iron law of oligarchy, McDonaldization)	Ch. 1: Sociology Ch. 5: Interaction, Groups, and Organizations Ch. 7: Stratification Ch. 12: Religion	Groups	Ch. 2, Seeing and Thinking Sociologically Ch. 9, The Structure of Society: Organizations, Social Institutions, and Globalization	Ch. 4, pp. 146, 149-150 Ch. 5, p. 164 Ch. 10, pp. 350-351, 355-357, 376 Ch. 11, pp. 396-397 Ch. 12, pp. 415-460, 465-466 Ch. 13, pp. 487-491 Ch. 14, p. 504, 517-518

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Self-Presentation and Interacting with Others (PSY, SOC) - Expressing and detecting emotion - The role of gender in the expression and detection of emotion - The role of culture in the expression and detection of emotion - Presentation of self - Impression management - Front-stage vs. back-stage self (dramaturgical approach) (SOC) - Verbal and nonverbal communication - Animal signals and communication (PSY, BIO)		Groups	Ch. 6, Supporting Identity: The Presentation of Self	Ch. 10, pp. 352-353, 375-382 Ch. 12, pp. 448-450, 458-459 Ch. 13, pp. 486-491
Social Behavior (PSY) - Attraction - Aggression - Attachment - Altruism - Social support (PSY, SOC) - Biological explanations of social behavior in animals (PSY, BIO) - Foraging behavior (BIO) - Mating behavior and mate choice - Applying game theory (BIO) - Altruism - Inclusive fitness (BIO)		Groups		Ch. 3, p. 92 Ch. 4, pp. 132-138, 147-157 Ch. 5, pp. 165-166, 183-185 Ch. 7, pp. 259-261 Ch. 9, pp. 309-310, 317-318 Ch. 10, pp. 348-357 Ch. 11, pp. 399-401, 404-406, 411-413 Ch. 12, pp. 441-456 Ch. 13, pp. 489-491 Ch. 14, p. 504 Ch. 15, pp. 548, 555-556
Discrimination (PSY, SOC) - Individual vs. institutional discrimination (SOC) - The relationship between prejudice and discrimination - How power, prestige, and class facilitate discrimination (SOC)	Ch. 8: Race and Ethnic Group Stratification Ch. 9: Gender Stratification Ch. 12: Religion	Race and Ethnicity	Ch. 11, The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity	Ch. 5, pp. 164, 170 Ch. 9, pp. 298, 343-345 Ch. 10, p. 365 Ch. 11, p. 386 Ch. 12, pp. 435-439

Foundational Concept 9: Cultural and social differences influence well-being

Social structure and demographic factors influence people's health and well-being. Knowledge about basic sociological theories, social institutions, culture, and demographic characteristics of societies is important to understand how these factors shape people's lives and their daily interactions.

Foundational Concept 9 focuses on social variables and processes that influence our lives.

Content Categories:

- *Category 9A* focuses on the link between social structures and human interactions.
- *Category 9B* focuses on the demographic characteristics and processes that define a society.

With these building blocks, medical students will be able to learn about the ways patients' social and demographic backgrounds influence their perception of health and disease, the health care team, and therapeutic interventions.

Content Category 9A: Understanding social structure

Social structure organizes all human societies. Elements of social structure include social institutions and culture. These elements are linked in a variety of ways and shape our experiences and interactions with others — a process that is reciprocal.

The content in this category provides a foundation for understanding social structure and the various forms of interactions within and among societies. It includes theoretical approaches to studying society and social groups, specific social institutions relevant to student preparation for medical school, and the construct of culture.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Theoretical Approaches (SOC) • Microsociology vs. macrosociology • Functionalism • Conflict theory • Symbolic interactionism • Social constructionism • Exchange-rational choice • Feminist theory	Ch. 1: Sociology Ch. 2: Examining the Social World Ch. 4: Socialization Ch. 6: Deviance and Social Control Ch. 7: Stratification Ch. 10: Family Ch. 11: Education Ch. 12: Religion	Sociological Theory	Ch. 2, Seeing and Thinking Sociologically, pp. 38-41 ("Three perspectives on social order") Ch. 3, Building Reality: The Social Construction of Knowledge	Ch. 1, p. 5 Ch. 12, pp. 456-457

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Social Institutions (SOC) • Education › Hidden curriculum › Teacher expectancy › Educational segregation and stratification • Family (PSY, SOC) › Forms of kinship (SOC) › Diversity in family forms › Marriage and divorce › Violence in the family (e.g., child abuse, elder abuse, spousal abuse) (SOC) • Religion › Religiosity › Types of religious organizations (e.g., churches, sects, cults) › Religion and social change (e.g., modernization, secularization, fundamentalism) • Government and economy › Power and authority › Comparative economic and political systems › Division of labor • Health and medicine › Medicalization › The sick role › Delivery of health care › Illness experience › Social epidemiology	Ch. 1: Social Institutions Ch. 10: Family Ch. 11: Education Ch. 12: Religion Ch. 13: Politics and Economics Ch. 14: Health Care Ch. 16: Process of Change	Economy	Chapters 4, 8, 9, 10, 11 Ch. 10, The Architecture of Stratification: Social Class and Inequality; Ch. 11, The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity Ch. 7, Building Social Relationships: Intimacy and Families.	Ch. 4, pp. 118, 136-138, 155-157 Ch. 7, pp. 240, 262 Ch. 8, pp. 292-294 Ch. 10, p. 376 Ch. 11, pp. 384-406 Ch. 12, pp. 422-429, 443, 451-452 Ch. 14, pp. 504, 512
Culture (PSY, SOC) • Elements of culture (e.g., beliefs, language, rituals, symbols, values) • Material vs. symbolic culture (SOC) • Culture lag (SOC) • Culture shock (SOC) • Assimilation (SOC) • Multiculturalism (SOC) • Subcultures and countercultures (SOC) • Mass media and popular culture (SOC) • Evolution and human culture (PSY, BIO) • Transmission and diffusion (SOC)	Ch. 3: Society and Culture Ch. 8: Race and Ethnic Group Stratification	Culture	Ch. 4, Building Order: Culture and History	Ch. 2, pp. 76-77 Ch. 3, pp. 111-113 Ch. 5, pp. 177-178, 184-185 Ch. 7, pp. 262-263 Ch. 9, pp. 319-321 Ch. 10, p. 353 Ch. 12, pp. 420- 430, 443-450 Ch. 13, pp. 489-491

Content Category 9B: Demographic characteristics and processes

To understand the structure of a society, it is important to understand the demographic characteristics and processes that define it. Knowledge of the demographic structure of societies and an understanding of how societies change help us comprehend the distinct processes and mechanisms through which social interaction occurs.

The content in this category covers the important demographic variables at the core of understanding societies and includes concepts related to demographic shifts and social change.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Demographic Structure of Society (PSY, SOC) - Age › Aging and the life course › Age cohorts (SOC) › Social significance of aging - Gender › Sex vs. gender › The social construction of gender (SOC) › Gender segregation (SOC) - Race and ethnicity (SOC) › The social construction of race › Racialization › Racial formation - Immigration status (SOC) › Patterns of immigration › Intersections with race and ethnicity - Sexual orientation	Ch. 7: Stratification Ch. 9: Gender Stratification Ch. 11: Education	Demography	Ch. 4, Building Order: Culture and History, pages 103-107 ("The sexes") Ch. 5, Building Identity: Socialization pages 123-129 ("Gender") Ch. 11, The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity Ch. 12, The Architecture of Inequality: Sex and Gender Ch. 13, Demographic Dynamics: Population Trends	Ch. 12, pp. 410-411

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Demographic Shifts and Social Change (SOC) - Theories of demographic change (i.e., Malthusian theory and demographic transition) - Population growth and decline (e.g., population projections, population pyramids) - Fertility, migration, and mortality - Fertility and mortality rates (e.g., total, crude, age-specific) - Patterns in fertility and mortality - Push and pull factors in migration - Social movements - Relative deprivation - Organization of social movements - Movement strategies and tactics - Globalization - Factors contributing to globalization (e.g., communication technology, economic interdependence) - Perspectives on globalization - Social changes in globalization (e.g., civil unrest, terrorism) - Urbanization - Industrialization and urban growth - Suburbanization and urban decline - Gentrification and urban renewal	Ch. 6: Deviance and Social Control Ch. 7: Stratification Ch. 13: Politics and Economics Ch. 15: Population and Urbanization Ch. 16: Process of Change	Demography	Ch. 13, Demographic Dynamics: Population Trends Ch. 14, Architects of Change, pp. 445-456 ("Social movements")	

Foundational Concept 10: Social stratification and access to resources influence well-being.

Social stratification and inequality affect all human societies and shape the lives of all individuals by affording privileges to some and positioning others at a disadvantage.

Foundational Concept 10 focuses on the aspects of social inequality that influence how we interact with one another, as well as how we approach our health and the health care system.

Content Categories:

- *Category 10A* focuses on a broad understanding of social class, including theories of stratification, social mobility, and poverty.

With these building blocks, medical students will be able to learn about the ways social and economic factors can affect access to care and the probability of maintaining health and recovering from disease.

Content Category 10A: Social inequality

Barriers to access to institutional resources exist for the segment of the population that is disenfranchised or lacks power within a given society. Barriers to access might include language, geographic location, socioeconomic status, immigration status, and racial/ethnic identity. Institutionalized racism and discrimination are also factors that prevent some groups from obtaining equal access to resources. An understanding of the barriers to access to institutional resources, informed by perspectives such as social justice, is essential to address health and health care disparities.

The content in this category covers spatial inequality, the structure and patterns of social class, and health disparities in relation to class, race/ethnicity, and gender.

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Spatial Inequality (SOC) - Residential segregation - Neighborhood safety and violence - Environmental justice (location and exposure to health risks)	Ch. 7: Stratification Ch. 8: Race and Ethnic Group Stratification	Human Ecology and Environment	Ch. 11, The Architecture of Inequality: Race and Ethnicity	Ch. 1, p.28
Social Class (SOC) - Aspects of social stratification - Social class and socioeconomic status - Class consciousness and false consciousness - Cultural capital and social capital - Social reproduction - Power, privilege, and prestige - Intersectionality (e.g., race, gender, age) - Socioeconomic gradient in health - Global inequalities - Patterns of social mobility - Intergenerational and intragenerational mobility - Vertical and horizontal mobility - Meritocracy - Poverty - Relative and absolute poverty - Social exclusion (segregation and isolation)	Ch. 4: Socialization Ch. 5: Interaction, Groups, and Organizations Ch. 8: Race and Ethnic Group Stratification Ch. 9: Gender Stratification Ch. 11: Education Ch. 12: Religion Ch. 14: Health Care	Stratification	Ch. 10, The Architecture of Stratification: Social Class and Inequality	

Topic	<i>Our Social World</i>	<i>Introduction to Sociology</i>	<i>Sociology: Exploring the Architecture of Everyday Life</i>	<i>Exploring Psychology</i>
Health Disparities (SOC) (e.g., class, gender, race inequalities in health)	Ch. 7: Stratification Ch. 8: Race and Ethnic Group Stratification Ch. 14: Health Care	Health and Medicine	Chs. 10, 11, and 12	
Health Care Disparities (SOC) (e.g., class, gender, race inequalities in health care)	Ch. 8: Race and Ethnic Group Stratification Ch. 14: Health Care	Health and Medicine	Chs. 10, 11, and 12	



**Association of
American Medical Colleges**

655 K Street, NW, Suite 100, Washington, DC 20001-2399

T 202 828 0400

aamc.org