**Criminology Comprehensive Exam THEORY**

**Doctoral Program in Criminology**

**School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences**

**University of Texas at Dallas**

**November 7, 2020**

**Instructions**

You have six (6) hours to complete the Theory portion of the comprehensive exam.

Your answer will be evaluated on its organization, coherence, clarity, intellectual rigor, substantive validity, conceptual development, and application of relevant literature to the question at hand.

Answers must be emailed to scotch@utdallas.edu before 4:00pm today (11/7/2020). Please do not incorporate any identifying information on what you submit.

We wish you success!

**THEORY QUESTIONS**

**Answer ONE of the following:**

Question 1

Race/ethnicity is strongly correlated with criminal offending. Discuss whether the relationship is causal or spurious and how, if at all, it is affected by measurement issues. To the extent a race/ethnicity-offending relationship exists, what theory best explains it? How exactly would you test your explanation?

Question 2

Criminology has been said to suffer from an "embarrassment of riches" in terms of the number of theories that have been proffered.  Based on this assessment, some have argued that certain theories should be combined, or integrated, in order to create a more holistic and powerful understanding of criminal behavior.  Choose two theories that you believe are worthy of being integrated and discuss how this might be carried out.  In answering this question you will want to do the following: (1) provide an overview of the theoretical statements of both theories (including their background assumptions about human nature/behavior); (2) identify areas where each theory is weak or is lacking in support; (3) discuss how integration of the two theories will fill in some of the gaps highlighted in point 2; and (4) identify at least two unique hypotheses that are drawn out of your new integrated theory.