**Criminology Comprehensive Exam THEORY**

**Doctoral Program in Criminology**

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

**University of Texas at Dallas**

**April 29, 2023**

**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](mailto:scotch@utdallas.edu) before 4:00pm today (4/29/2023). Please do not incorporate any identifying information on what you submit.

We wish you success!

**THEORY QUESTIONS**

Answer **ONE** of the following:

Question 1

Choosing one micro-level and one macro-level theory, discuss the role of agency (i.e., free will, choice) in offending. Drawing from the available research evidence, address the extent to which each theory you choose supports the idea that offending is volitional or, instead, a product of forces beyond the individual’s control. When discussing the research evidence, please be sure to discuss how the methods used in the studies you cite influence the relative contribution of agency and structure to offending.

Question 2

Agnew has recently argued that criminological theories are built on several underlying assumptions that are too restrictive and unduly limit the types of crimes that are explored. You have been asked to participate in a plenary that will discuss theoretical integration. Which two existing theories would you propose to be integrated to help create a unified theoretical approach to offending? Be sure to explain the underlying assumptions with both of the theories you have selected, the methods used, and how those assumptions and methods can (or cannot) be overcome to integrate your selected theories. Also, address what types of behaviors could (and could not) be explained by your newly integrated theory.  