Dr. Brush's advice for studying (or, How to Ace Sociological Theory by Working Smarter, Not Harder)

(1) When possible, study at the same time and place each day. Get your brain and body in the groove for thinking/reading seriously about each class at a certain time.

(2) Study in 1/2 hour blocks with 5-minute breaks. This will improve your concentration and your comprehension.

(3) Review frequently. Take a minute at the end of your study session to mentally review what you've studied so far. And start off each session with a review of what you studied in the previous session.

(4) Don't mix study subjects. Study Sociological Theory separately from your other courses so you don't get confused or feel overwhelmed.

(5) Reward yourself for good study habits. Do something you like after your study session. I don't recommend rewarding yourself with food. However, a walk in the fresh air, a chat with a buddy, or something else you enjoy will provide positive reinforcement for your good study habits.

(6) Think before you study! Make choices about how to spend your time by thinking about the emphasis in class and the relative time spent on different concepts, topics, and ideas. Review the learning goals and use them to help you focus.

(7) Read materials when they are assigned. Begin studying for tests a week early. This will give you time to look for answers in case you encounter things you don't know or understand.

(8) Put notes and readings together for study. Integrate the materials as much as possible, perhaps by writing out a summary of each unit in a single, comprehensive format.

(9) When it comes to taking the test itself, don't make yourself anxious by coming early and don't lose time by coming late. Be sure you understand all the directions before you start answering. Read through the whole test, understand your choices and the expectations, and write your answers. If you finish before the end of the allotted time, stay to check your answers. Don't be distracted by other test takers, especially people who leave very early.

(10) Finally, learn from your performance. What kinds of questions seem to give you the most trouble? If you "knew" questions you got wrong, what happened? If you were stressing and therefore misread, misunderstood, or misanswered questions, try to follow some of these steps. Never give up!

Good luck!