

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Social sciences majors examine humankind—its basic nature and evolution around the world and over time, its social structures and issues, and its politics and political institutions. Through interdisciplinary study that employs a full range of the research methods and comparative perspectives in the social sciences, students gain essential skills in critical reasoning and analysis, creative problem solving, writing, and social awareness.

In the social sciences major, students will explore related disciplines—anthropology, political science, psychology, and sociology—to develop analytical, interpretive, communication, and research skills that can be applied to complex problems and issues.

Degrees Offered

- Social Sciences, BPhil (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/undergraduate/social-sciences/social-sciences-bphil/>)
- Social Sciences, BSGS (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/sps/undergraduate/social-sciences/social-sciences-bsgs/>)

Social Sciences Courses

ANTHRO 105-CN The Evolution of Social Behavior (1 Unit)

Introduction to anthropology; the biological evolution of humankind; the evolution of culture; the comparative study of existing or historically recorded societies. Carries science or social science credit.

ANTHRO 211-CN Culture and Society (1 Unit)

Introduction to the comparative study of culture, exploring different types of social organization and their economic and political correlates in the context of contemporary globalization. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 213-CN Human Origins (1 Unit)

Emergence of the human species through the process of organic evolution, emphasizing genetics, the fossil record, and comparison with our nearest living relatives. Carries science credit.

ANTHRO 214-CN Archaeology: Unearthing History (1 Unit)

The evolution of culture from its earliest beginnings through the development of urbanism and the state. Principles of archaeological research. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 215-CN The Study of Culture Through Language (1 Unit)

The scope of linguistic anthropology, from the study of language as an end in itself to the investigation of cultures through the medium of human languages. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 232-CN Myth and Symbolism (1 Unit)

Introduction to different approaches to the interpretation of myth and symbolism, e.g., Freudian, functionalist, and structuralist. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 311-CN The Indians of North America (1 Unit)

Aboriginal cultures of northern Mexico, continental United States, Alaska, and Canada. Languages, art, and social, economic, and religious life.

ANTHRO 312-CN Human Population Biology (1 Unit)

Current theory and research in human biological diversity, focusing on the impact of ecological and social factors on human biology; how adaptation to environmental stressors promotes human biological variation.

Prerequisite: ANTHRO 213-CN.

ANTHRO 314-CN Human Growth & Development (1 Unit)

Integrated biological and cultural perspective on human growth and development from infancy through adolescence; cross-cultural variation in developmental processes and outcomes. Carries science credit.

ANTHRO 315-CN Medical Anthropology (1 Unit)

Theories of interactions between culture and biology that affect human health. Beliefs and practices for curing illness and maintaining wellbeing. Cross-cultural study of infectious and chronic diseases, mental illness, infant/maternal mortality, poverty, and gender.

ANTHRO 316-CN Forensic Anthropology (1 Unit)

The application of traditional skeletal biology to problems of medicolegal significance, primarily in determining identity and analyzing trauma from human remains. Carries science credit.

ANTHRO 320-CN Peoples of Africa (1 Unit)

A survey of the cultures of Africa and the significant similarities and differences among the indigenous societies of the continent.

ANTHRO 330-CN People of the World (1 Unit)

Comparative ethnography of a regionally or historically associated group of cultures or a type of community defined in ecological, ideological, or other terms. May be repeated for credit. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 341-CN Economic Anthropology (1 Unit)

Economic organization in small-scale non-industrialized communities. Traditional structures of primitive and peasant economies. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 350-CN Anthropology of Religion (1 Unit)

The human relationship with the supernatural. Action patterns accompanying beliefs. Comparison of nonliterate religions and historical religions. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 360-CN Language and Culture (1 Unit)

Relationship between language and culture; language as the vehicle of culture and as the manifestation of thought.

ANTHRO 383-CN Environmental Anthropology (1 Unit)

How humans have changed and are changing the environment and what can be done to halt environmental deterioration. Topics include population trends, food supplies, consumerism, environmental regulation, and ecological consciousness. Carries social science credit.

ANTHRO 386-CN Methods in Human Biology Research (1 Unit)

Laboratory-based introduction to international research in human biology and health; methods for assessing nutritional status, physical activity, growth, cardiovascular health, endocrine and immune function. Carries science credit.

ANTHRO 390-CN Topics in Anthropology (1 Unit)

Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

POLI_SCI 201-A Introduction to Political Theory (1 Unit)

Examination of texts in political theory. Topics vary but often include justice, the Greek polis, the modern state, individualism, representative democracy.

POLI_SCI 220-CN American Government and Politics (1 Unit)

The structure and process of American politics from competing perspectives. Analysis of representation, voting, interest groups, parties, leadership, and policymaking institutions.

POLI_SCI 222-CN Amer Government and Politics (1 Unit)

NPEP course.

POLI_SCI 230-CN Law in the Political Arena (1 Unit)

Roles of law in society and politics. Police and prisons, law and social change, courts and politics, legal reasoning, Supreme Court decision making, judicial discretion, legal strategies for making change.

POLI_SCI 240-CN Introduction to International Relations (1 Unit)

Introduction to the major theories, concepts, and problems of contemporary international relations. Security, political economy, and cooperation.

POLI_SCI 250-CN Introduction to Comparative Politics (1 Unit)

Emphasis may be on industrialized and/or developing states. Major issues include regime-society relations, political change and conflict, and policy making.

POLI_SCI 301-CN Classical Political Theory (1 Unit)

Political thought of Greece and Rome in historical context and with attention to contemporary theoretical interest.

POLI_SCI 320-CN The Presidency (1 Unit)

Structural foundations and historical development of the American presidency; predominant scholarly theories of presidential power and leadership; contemporary issues and debates.

POLI_SCI 324-CN Political Parties and Elections (1 Unit)

Role of political parties in a democratic society. Topics include nomination, national conventions, political funding, campaigns, party organization, and national, state, and local parties.

POLI_SCI 328-CN Public Policy (1 Unit)

The role of government in regulating economic and social behavior; theories of public policy making; sources and effects of public policy.

POLI_SCI 332-CN Constitutional Law (1 Unit)

Introduction to interpretation of the US Constitution by the Supreme Court. Judicial review, federalism, congressional and executive authority, separation of powers.

POLI_SCI 333-CN Constitutional Law II (1 Unit)

Consideration of US Supreme Court decisions dealing with civil and political rights, including equality, freedom of speech and religion, and criminal procedures.

POLI_SCI 341-CN International Political Economy (1 Unit)

Introduction to the politics of international economic relations. Roots and evolution of the international political economy. Fundamental controversies about international trade, finance, and development.

POLI_SCI 342-CN International Organizations (1 Unit)

Institutions that govern the interactions of states, including the WTO, UN, ICJ, and ICC; informal norms, such as international intervention, international criminal law, and sovereignty.

POLI_SCI 345-CN National Security (1 Unit)

Basic issues in national security, focusing primarily on the United States. Topics include the nature of "national interest," major actors in national security policy making and military strategy, and the influence and role of the defense establishment.

POLI_SCI 348-CN Globalization (1 Unit)

Analysis of changes in the world economy and their implications for politics, economics, and society. Politics of multinational production, finance, and trade in the context of governance problems in a globalizing world.

POLI_SCI 353-CN Politics of Latin America (1 Unit)

Patterns of socioeconomic development and regime forms in Latin America. Interaction of internal and international economic and political structures and processes.

POLI_SCI 355-CN Chinese Politics (1 Unit)

Chinese politics since 1949, focusing on social issues and state-society relations since 1989.

POLI_SCI 359-CN Politics in Africa (1 Unit)

Political structures and relation of cultural factors to political stability and change; development of modern political systems.

POLI_SCI 361-CN Democratic Transitions (1 Unit)

Theories of the emergence and breakdown of democracy with a focus on cases from Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

POLI_SCI 378-CN America and the World (1 Unit)

Key debates and developments in the history and politics of American foreign relations. Domestic politics and foreign policy, political culture, interventionism, legal globalization, international institutions.

POLI_SCI 390-CN Special Topics (1 Unit)

Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

POLI_SCI 395-CN Political Research Seminar (1 Unit)

Students research and complete a term paper on a topic of choice. Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

PSYCH 110-CN Introduction to Psychology (1 Unit)

A survey course reviewing primary psychological research and theories of human behavior. Carries social science credit.

PSYCH 111-CN Introduction to Psychology (1 Unit)

NPEP course.

PSYCH 201-CN Statistical Methods in Psychology (1 Unit)

Measurement; descriptive statistics; probability and sampling; T-test, ANOVA, correlation, and regression. May not be audited. Carries social science or science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN and high school algebra.

PSYCH 202-CN Statistical Methods in Psych (1 Unit)

NPEP course.

PSYCH 205-CN Research Methods in Psychology (1 Unit)

Methods of psychological research; experimental design; reliability and validity; review and application of statistics; execution and reporting of psychological research. May not be audited. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 201-CN.

PSYCH 212-CN Introduction to Neuroscience (1 Unit)

Designed for students with no prior coursework in neuroscience or biology. Neurophysiology and neuroanatomy; neuroscience of perception, emotion, morality, memory, mental illness, and consciousness. Carries science credit.

PSYCH 213-CN Social Psychology (1 Unit)

Psychological processes underlying social behavior; topics include social cognition, attraction, aggression, prejudice, and behavior in groups.

Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 215-CN Psychology of Personality (1 Unit)

Nature of personality and its development. Modern theoretical interpretations. Biological and social bases of individual differences. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 228-CN Cognitive Psychology (1 Unit)

Introduction to research into mental processes such as memory, reasoning, problem solving, and decision making. Carries science or social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 244-CN Developmental Psychology (1 Unit)

Development of cognitive, social, and other psychological functions. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 303-CN Psychopathology (1 Unit)

Understanding the nature of psychological, emotional, and behavioral disorders. Emphasis on current evidence regarding causes and characteristics of these disorders. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 306-CN Introduction to Clinical Psychology (1 Unit)

Definition and history of clinical psychology, personality theory in clinical psychology, diagnosis and classification of disorders, assessment, psychotherapy, and ethical issues. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN. Completion of PSYCH 303-CN is recommended.

PSYCH 309-CN Topics in Social/Clinical/Personality Identity Development (1 Unit)

NPEP course.

PSYCH 310-CN Special Topics in Social/Clinical/Personality (1 Unit)

Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

PSYCH 313-CN Relationship Science (1 Unit)

Social-psychological analysis of close relationships, with an emphasis on romantic relationships. Interpersonal processes associated with relationship formation, development, and dissolution. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 317-CN The Holocaust: Psychological Themes & Perspectives (1 Unit)

Explores how particular psychological theories and concepts inform understanding of the events of the Holocaust. Includes material from fields of social and clinical psychology.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 324-CN Perception (1 Unit)

Human perception, particularly vision but also hearing, taste, smell, and touch. Biological foundations, development, and disorders of perception. The senses in everyday life. Carries science or social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 330-CN Special Topics in Cognition/Neuroscience (1 Unit)

Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

PSYCH 340-CN Psychology and Law (1 Unit)

Examines the application of psychology to law, including topics such as the insanity defense, criminal profiling, eyewitness testimony, and interrogation. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 342-CN Evolutionary Psychology (1 Unit)

Theory, methodology, and empirical data related to how evolution has influenced human psychology and behavior. Emphasis on mating. Carries science or social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 343-CN Psychology of Beauty (1 Unit)

Theory, methodology, and empirical data related to the psychological impact of human beauty. Emphasis on both cultural and evolutionary perspectives. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 344-CN Cultural Psychology (1 Unit)

Introduction to concepts and empirical methods used to study how culture shapes mind, brain, and behavior over multiple time scales, including over generations and the lifespan and across situational contexts. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 350-CN Topics in Psychology (1 Unit)

Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

PSYCH 354-CN Deception: Processes and Detection (1 Unit)

Multiple perspectives on truth and deception. Exposure to clinical and psycho physiological work on lying, malingering, and styles of deceit. Theories and methods in lie detection.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 366-CN Stereotyping & Prejudice (1 Unit)

Analysis of the causes and consequences of stereotyping and prejudice, as well as methods used to study these issues. Students conduct original research. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 205-CN.

PSYCH 369-CN Psychological Tests & Measures (1 Unit)

Explores the science of psychological assessment, including its history, test construction and evaluation, and common measures of personality, psychopathology, and ability. Students create and evaluate their own psychological measures. Carries social science credit.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-CN.

PSYCH 373-CN Decision Making (1 Unit)

Human decision making from both descriptive and prescriptive perspectives. Theories and models of decision making applied to a variety of contexts.

Prerequisite: PSYCH 205-CN, PSYCH 228-CN.

PSYCH 374-CN Human Memory (1 Unit)

Scientific study of human memory, including memory systems of the brain, amnesia, remembering, forgetting, encoding, consolidation, memory suppression, and memory distortion. Emphasizes original research reports in cognitive neuroscience. PSYCH 205-CN; or consent of instructor.

PSYCH 399-CN Independent Study (1 Unit)

SOCIOL 110-CN Introduction to Sociology (1 Unit)

Broad overview of a wide range of social issues and ways of sociological thinking. Characteristics of group life. Interrelations of society, culture, and personality; major social institutions and processes.

SOCIOL 201-CN Social Inequality: Race, Class, and Power (1 Unit)

Origins and functions of stratification. Class, prestige, and esteem. Interaction of racial and cultural groups. Inequality in workplaces, neighborhoods, schools, families, media, and other settings.

SOCIOL 202-CN Social Problems (1 Unit)

Emergence of social problems. How the media, politicians, lawmakers, and others define social issues. How lives and self-images are shaped when people are connected to a social problem.

SOCIOL 207-CN Cities in Society (1 Unit)

Introduction to issues of cities and metropolitan areas, including spatial, economic, and political trends; private and public decision making; class, race, and gender; and possible solutions to inequalities and planning challenges.

SOCIOL 208-CN Race and Society (1 Unit)

Critical analysis of the biological myth and social reality of race; factors responsible for persistent racial inequality in the United States; social and political implications of race.

SOCIOL 216-CN Gender and Society (1 Unit)

How our society creates ideas of what gender and gender-appropriate behaviors are. How these ideas are linked to sexuality and relationships, and how they become part of political conflict.

SOCIOL 220-CN Health, Biomedicine, Culture (1 Unit)

Provides a broad introduction to controversies surrounding health and biomedicine by analyzing culture, politics, values, and social institutions.

SOCIOL 226-CN Sociological Analysis (1 Unit)

Logic and methods of social research, qualitative and quantitative analysis of social data, and ethical, political, and policy issues in social research. Foundation for further work in social research.

SOCIOL 302-CN Sociology of Organizations (1 Unit)

Structure and function of formal organizations, especially in business and government. Stratification, social control, and conflict. Discretion, rules, and information in achieving goals. Modes of participation. Development of informal norms.

SOCIOL 302-DL Sociology of Organizations (1 Unit)

Structure and function of formal organizations, especially in business and government. Stratification, social control, and conflict. Discretion, rules, and information in achieving goals. Modes of participation. Development of informal norms.

SOCIOL 306-CN Sociological Theory (1 Unit)

Sociological perspectives developed by classic theorists. Elucidation and testing of sociological principles in contemporary research.

SOCIOL 308-CN Crime, Politics, and Society (1 Unit)

Politics of defining, counting, explaining, and responding to crime, with emphasis on the social organization of crimes of the streets and crimes of the suites; also, domestic and international war crimes.

SOCIOL 309-CN Political Sociology (1 Unit)

Selected topics in political economy and sociology: revolutions, the development of the modern state, third world development, international conflict, politics of memory and civil society.

SOCIOL 316-CN Economic Sociology (1 Unit)

Sociological approach to production, distribution, consumption, and markets. Classic and contemporary approaches to the economy compared across social science disciplines.

SOCIOL 322-CN Sociology of Immigration (1 Unit)

Sociological approach to immigration addressing such issues as assimilation, race/ethnicity, gender, transnationalism.

SOCIOL 345-CN Class and Culture (1 Unit)

The role that culture plays in the formation and reproduction of social classes. Class socialization, culture and class boundaries, class identities and class consciousness, culture and class action.

SOCIOL 350-CN Sociology of the Arts (1 Unit)

Art as collective activity. Conventions in art and aesthetics. Professionals and audiences and other aspects of culture.

SOCIOL 355-CN Medical Sociology (1 Unit)

Social construction of health and illness; inequalities in distribution of illness and health care; organization of health care work and occupations.

SOCIOL 376-CN Topics in Sociological Analysis: (1 Unit)

Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with different topic.

SOCIOL 399-CN Independent Study (1 Unit)