SOCIOLOGY

sociology.northwestern.edu

The Department of Sociology offers preparation for careers in a wide range of fields requiring strong research and analytical skills and knowledge of social institutions and diverse cultures. It provides an excellent background for careers in business, advertising, nonprofits, the arts, public administration, law, medicine and health, journalism and communications, and planning, among others. The department also emphasizes the sociological perspective as a fundamental part of a liberal education and a complex understanding of the world.

The department is particularly strong in the areas of organizations and economic sociology; the sociology of law, health, science, and education; urban studies; international, comparative and historical sociology; the sociology of art and culture; and criminology. It offers a wide variety of approaches to social inequality and its origins and consequences, including class, race, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality.

To benefit from the department's strengths, sociology majors may concentrate in a specific area of study:

- economic sociology and global development
- environment and society
- law and society
- social data research
- social inequality: class, gender, and race
- sociology of health, medicine, and science

Concentrations guide the selection of both sociology and related courses. The department website lists approved courses by concentration. Majors may instead concentrate in general sociology, for which all sociology and related courses fulfill the concentration requirement, or design a concentration area. All concentrations require an adviser's approval.

Unusually good opportunities are available for independent study, field internships, and the use of quantitative and qualitative methods of research. In addition to the courses listed below, the department offers quarterly seminars on special topics of interest.

Minor Concentrations in Sociology

The Department of Sociology offers minor concentrations in sociological research and in sociological studies. Students seeking a minor in sociology must consult with the director of undergraduate studies or an undergraduate sociology advisor.

Programs of Study

- Sociology Major (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/sociology/sociology-major/)
- Sociological Research Minor (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/sociology/sociological-research-minor/)
- Sociological Studies Minor (https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/sociology/sociological-studies-minor/)

Sociology Learning Objectives

Sociology is the systematic study of social groups. The basic premise of sociology is an intuition about human life: Human beings are not islands unto themselves but social creatures. Sociologists are interested in why different social groups form, change, and fade away, how people make sense of their belonging to different social groups, and how different social groups shape the world that we live in.

Sociology students develop the following skills and competencies:

- **Discover** how the experiences of individuals and social groups are shaped by gender, race, ethnicity, sexuality, nationality, religion, and other identities; **investigate** how such identities intersect in unique and complex ways.
- **Understand** how cultural norms, values, and practices emerge, evolve, and shape the day-to-day lives of individuals, groups, and entire societies.
- **Learn** how social institutions and organizations affect individuals' everyday lives and how individuals contribute to these social structures.
- **Interrogate** how inequality impacts individuals and social groups, how inequalities are perpetuated through bias and discrimination at both the individual and institutional levels, and how inequality can be challenged.
- **Examine** the theoretical underpinnings of sociology, including the history of sociology and contemporary debates.
- **Understand** the goals of sociological research, **practice** sociological research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, and **assess** the strengths and weaknesses of specific research methods.
- **Explore** how sociological research can influence social change and justice through public sociology and social policy.

Sociology Courses

SOCIOL 101-7 College Seminar (1 Unit) Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and introducing skills necessary to thriving at Northwestern. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated. *SOC Additional Distro*

SOCIOL 101-8 First-Year Writing Seminar (1 Unit) Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and focused on the fundamentals of effective, college-level written communication. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated. *SOC Additional Distro*

SOCIOL 110-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 201-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 202-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 206-0 Law and Society (1 Unit) Introduction to the role of law in American society and the influence of society on law. Courts, the legal profession, law enforcement, inequality, and social change. Taught with LEGAL_ST 206-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual*

and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity

SOCIOL 207-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 208-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 210-0 Families and Societies (1 Unit) Changes, continuities, and variations in family life in industrialized countries over the past century. Key concepts in sociology and the study of families. Explanations for changes and implications for inequality. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 211-0 Food and Society: An Introduction (1 Unit) Overview of past and present food systems from a sociological perspective, examining the roles of culture, government policy, and social movements in shaping such systems and future alternatives. ENVR_POL 211-0 and SOCIOL 211-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 212-0 Environment and Society (1 Unit) Key environmental problems, such as climate change and oil spills; how they are shaped by the market, government regulations, and social movements; possible solutions. SOCIOL 212-0 and ENVR_POL 212-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 215-0 Economy and Society (1 Unit) Introduction to sociological approaches to economic life. Topics include property rights, illegal markets, money, economic inequalities, direct sales, and boycotts. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 216-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 218-0 Education and Inequality: Focus on Chicago (1 Unit) Causes and consequences of educational inequality. History, educational outcomes, and recent reform efforts of Chicago Public Schools. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 220-0 Health, Biomedicine, Culture, and Society (1 Unit) Provides a broad introduction to controversies surrounding health and biomedicine by analyzing culture, politics, values, and social institutions. Taught with HUM 220-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 223-0 Masculinities and Society (1 Unit) Introduction to the foundational theory and research in the field of masculinities studies. How is masculinity constructed through interactions with institutions, individuals, and social structure? GSS 223-0 and SOCIOL 223-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 226-0 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. *Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 227-0 Legal Studies Research Methods (1 Unit) Introduction to research methodologies used in interdisciplinary legal studies, including jurisprudence and legal reasoning, qualitative and quantitative social science methods, and historical and textual analysis. LEGAL_ST 207-0 and SOCIOL 227-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: LEGAL_ST 206-0 or SOCIOL 206-0. *Advanced Expression SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 232-0 Sexuality and Society (1 Unit) Examination of the role of sexuality in the cultural, economic, political, and social organization of the United States. Sex work, sex tourism, sexual migration, LGBT social movements, and moral panics. SOCIOL 232-0 is taught with GSS 232-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 235-0 Critical Thought on Race and Ethnicity (1 Unit) This course examines historical and contemporary manifestations racism, ethnocentrism, nationalism, ancestry, difference, and privilege. Lectures and readings focus on practices of racialization (how individuals/groups are sorted into races), and the development of global and local racial paradigms (the rules of race-making and racial assignment), and finally centers on why these denigrating mechanisms are so difficult to eradicate. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 245-0 Undocumented America (1 Unit) How does legal status shape the lives of the 11 million Americans who are undocumented? This course develops the necessary historical context, as well as the conceptual tools to make sense of why people migrate, what shapes their incorporation, how does legal status intersect with other social differences, and how does legal status shape people?s lived experiences with social institutions. LEGAL_ST 245-0 and SOCIOL 245-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 276-0 Introductory Topics in Sociology (1 Unit) Introduction to different key issues in the field. Topics vary. May be repeated for credit with a different topic. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 277-0 Native Society: Past and Present (1 Unit) Provides an overview of the culture and history of Native groups and how these histories influence modern Native America. Explores the current economic and social experiences of Indians and tribes. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 288-0 Institutions and Society (1 Unit) Institutions in a broad societal context. How institutional frameworks apply to government, family, education, and the environment; implications of institutions. POLI_SCI 388-0 and SOCIOL 288-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 301-0 The City: Urbanization and Urbanism (1 Unit) Theories of urbanization, housing, jobs, race and class, segregation, community and social networks politics, reform policies and planning. Research projects. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 302-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 303-0 Analysis and Interpretation of Social Data (1 Unit) Introduction to quantitative methods: the interpretation of descriptive statistics, relationships between variables, multiple regression, and the logic of inferential statistics. *Empirical and Deductive Reasoning Foundational Dis SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 304-0 Politics of Racial Knowledge (1 Unit) Major developments in the history of racial knowledge, from Enlightenment philosophy to contemporary genomics. The intersection of politics and science in creating notions of race. Students are encouraged to take SOCIOL 208-0 prior to enrolling. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 305-0 Population Dynamics (1 Unit) Social causes and consequences of population dynamics (fertility, mortality, marriage, divorce, migration) and population structures (age, sex, size, density). Relationship between population changes and health, environmental, and economic outcomes. *Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 306-0 Sociological Theory (1 Unit) Sociological perspectives developed by classic theorists. Elucidation and testing of sociological principles in contemporary research. Primarily for sociology majors. Open to others with consent of instructor. *Advanced Expression SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 307-0 School and Society (1 Unit) Reciprocal influences between formal institutions of education and the broader society from different theoretical perspectives. Internal organization of schools, inequality in educational settings and outcomes by gender, class, and race/ethnicity. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 309-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 310-0 Sociology of the Family (1 Unit) Influence of socioeconomic and other structural and cultural resources and constraints on family structure and dynamics. Historical and comparative perspectives on the modern family. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 311-0 Food, Politics and Society (1 Unit) Social groups, institutions, and policies shaping food production, distribution, and consumption around the world; their social and environmental consequences. Alternatives to existing food systems. SOCIOL 311-0 and ENVR_POL 311-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 313-0 Technology and Society (1 Unit) Sociological approaches to understanding the dynamics of technology, culture, and inequality. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 314-0 Sociology of Religion (1 Unit) Sociological approach to the study of American religion. Communities, practices, race, gender, and politics in the shaping of religion. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 316-0 Economic Sociology (1 Unit) Sociological approach to production, distribution, consumption, and markets. Classic and contemporary approaches to the economy compared across social science disciplines. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 317-0 Global Development (1 Unit) Exploration of the economic and social changes constituting development, focusing on comparison between the historical experience in Europe and more recent processes in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. SOCIOL 317-0 and POLI_SCI 352-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 318-0 Sociology of Law (1 Unit) Sociological analysis of legal institutions such as courts, the police, and lawyers. Law, inequality, and social change. SOCIOL 318-0 is taught with LEGAL_ST 308-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Advanced Expression Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 319-0 Sociology of Science (1 Unit) Science as social system. Personality, class, and cultural factors in scientific development, creativity, choice of role, simultaneous invention, and priority disputes. Social effects on objectivity and bias. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 320-0 Gender, Health, and Medicine (1 Unit) Examination of the way gender organizes health and medicine, as well as how the medical system and health practices create and organize gender. *Advanced Expression SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 321-0 Numbers, Identity & Modernity: How Calculation Shapes Who We Are & What We Know (1 Unit) Investigation of how we make and use numbers, how we know ourselves through numbers, the kinds of authority we grant to numbers, and how numbers inform our ethics. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 322-0 Sociology of Immigration (1 Unit) Sociological approach to immigration addressing such issues as assimilation, race/ethnicity, gender, transnationalism. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 323-0 American Subcultures and Ethnic Groups (1 Unit) Differentiation, organization, and stratification by ethnicity, race, lifestyle, and other traits. Maintenance of subgroup boundaries and distinctiveness. Consequences of difference: identity, political and economic participation, group solidarity. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 324-0 Global Capitalism (1 Unit) Sociological aspects of the rise of industrial capitalism. Rise of industrial capitalism in Europe, different forms of capitalism across the world, and consequences for poverty and inequality. Development and underdevelopment. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 325-0 Global & Local Inequalities (1 Unit) Inequalities in economic and social status, including in income, health, politics, social policy, the family, gender, and race. Contemporary US focus but also historical and global trends. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 327-0 Youth and Society (1 Unit) How modern definitions of childhood and adolescence have evolved. Diversity across the lives of young people today and the development of social networks and transitions to adulthood. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 328-0 Inequality & American Society (1 Unit) Introduction to research on social stratification and inequality, focusing on American society. Theories of distributive justice, trends, intergenerational mobility, gender and race inequality, causes and consequences of inequalities. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 329-0 Field Research and Methods of Data Collection (1 Unit) Practicum in firsthand data collection using observation and structured and unstructured interviewing. Issues of reliability and validity and qualitative analysis. *Advanced Expression SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 330-0 Law, Markets, and Globalization (1 Unit) The role of national and international law in recent economic globalization trends, global convergence in law, legal transplants, globalization and the environment. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 331-0 Markets, Hierarchies & Democracies (1 Unit) The forms and social structures for making economic and political decisions in modern societies. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 332-0 Capitalism, Labor, and Gender (1 Unit) Sociological perspectives on labor in the context of capitalism. Labor, gender, class, race, status, and power. Production, reproduction, technology, and occupational structure; organization of workplace. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 334-0 Social Protest and Social Change Around the World (1 Unit) How and why social protests can initiate major social change within societies and social groups around the world. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 335-0 Sociology of Rational Decision Making (1 Unit) Analysis of the role played by numerical and quantitative information in organizational decision making in the private and public sectors. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 336-0 The Climate Crisis, Policies, and Society (1 Unit) Examination of main impacts of climate change and of different perspectives toward mitigation and adaptation: market-based, institutionalist, bio-environmentalist, social movement, and climate justice. SOCIOL 336-0 and ENVR_POL 336-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 343-0 Social Networks (1 Unit) Introduction to the basic concepts of network analysis. Insights about social networks impacts on families, careers, health, politics, and economic life. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 345-0 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. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 348-0 Race, Politics, and the Law (1 Unit) Current role of race and racism from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Application to contemporary legal and political issues. How law deals with racial inequality. LEGAL_ST 348-0 and SOCIOL 348-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: LEGAL_ST 206-0, SOCIOL 206-0, SOCIOL 208-0, LEGAL_ST 308-0, or SOCIOL 318-0. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 356-0 Sociology of Gender (1 Unit) Gender and issues of social reproduction and social change with sexuality and reproduction emphasized. *Advanced Expression SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

SOCIOL 376-0 Topics in Sociological Analysis (1 Unit) Advanced work on special topics in sociological study. May be repeated for credit with different topic. *SOC Additional Distro Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 379-0 Understanding Genocide (1 Unit) Key debates in the comparative study of genocide. Why genocide occurs, why people become killers, how these processes relate to each other. POLI_SCI 389-0 and SOCIOL 379-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 392-0 Seminars (1 Unit) Close focus on key issues in sociology. In-depth analyses of a range of current social issues from a sociological perspective with a focus on advanced work. May be repeated for credit with different topic. *Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

SOCIOL 398-1 Senior Research Seminar (1 Unit) Independent research projects carried out under faculty supervision.? *Advanced Expression SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 398-2 Senior Research Seminar (1 Unit) Independent research projects carried out under faculty supervision. Prerequisite: B- or better in SOCIOL 398-1. *Advanced Expression SoC Individual and Social Behavior Distro*

SOCIOL 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit) Consent of department required. May reenroll for consecutive quarters. *SOC Additional Distro*