

Sociology

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Sociology is the study of social life and the social origins and consequences of human behavior. Sociology's subject matter ranges from the intimate family to the hostile mob, from crime to religion, from the divisions of race and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture, from the sociology of work to the sociology of sport. Sociology is a liberal arts major with particular emphasis on developing students' abilities to think critically about complex issues, to analyze social phenomena, to design and carry out research, and to write with clarity and economy. An undergraduate major in sociology offers valuable preparation for careers in social work, social research, politics, public administration, law, business, and education.

The major also provides an excellent basis for graduate study in sociology, law, criminology, social work, and education.

Alpha Kappa Delta

Juniors and seniors who have demonstrated an interest and involvement in sociology, who have completed at least four sociology courses at USM, and who have accumulated at least a 3.0 grade point average in sociology courses at the University are eligible for nomination to Alpha Kappa Delta, the national sociology scholarship and honor society.

Internships

The Department of Sociology offers a strong and on-going internship program. The program helps place students in community agencies and organizations to bring together student academic work and community involvement. Students interested in an internship placement are encouraged to meet with the internship coordinator.

Programs and Requirements

Requirements for the Baccalaureate Degree

All students are reminded that, in addition to meeting Departmental requirements for a major leading to a baccalaureate degree, they must also meet the requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences, and the University's Core curriculum.

Major Credit and Grade Policy

The prerequisites for all 300-level sociology courses are SOC 100J and SOC210E/W with grades of C or better. Courses to be taken for major credit at other institutions must be approved in advance. Grades of C or better must be achieved in all courses for major or minor credit. Courses taken pass/fail are not acceptable.

Sociology courses used to satisfy the requirements of other majors or minors (e.g., criminology, social work, women's studies, etc.) cannot be used to also satisfy the requirements of the sociology major or minor.

Bachelor of Arts in Sociology

The minimum number of credits (exclusive of the University's Core curriculum) required for the major: 38.

Required Prerequisites for all advanced sociology courses (6 hours)

SOC 100J Introduction to Sociology

SOC 210E/W Critical Thinking About Social Issues

Required Courses (11 hours)

SOC 300 Sociological Theory

SOC 301 Qualitative Research Methods

SOC 307D Quantitative Research Methods

Required Courses in Class Processes—choose one course from the following (3 hours):

SOC 312 Inequality and Power

SOC 348 Sociology of Work

SOC 358 Sociology of Women's Work

SOC 359 Leisure and Consumption under Global Capitalism

SOC 393 Women, Welfare, and the State

Elective courses—choose from among the following (18 hours)

SOC 289	Modern British Society
SOC 315	Self and Society
SOC 316	Sociology of Gender
SOC 318	Childhood and Society
SOC 327	Social Movements
SOC 330	Sociology of the Family
SOC 331	School and Society
SOC 333	Medical Sociology
SOC 334	Sociology of Religion
SOC 343	Social Psychology
SOC 345	Hate Violence in the Contemporary United States
SOC 348	Sociology of Work
SOC 352	Demography
SOC 355	Politics and Society
SOC 357	Organization: Individual and Society
SOC 358	Sociology of Women's Work
SOC 359	Leisure and Consumption under Global Capitalism
SOC 360	Sociology of Age
SOC 365	Sociology of the Body
SOC 371	Sociology of Race and Ethnicity
SOC 374	Mental Health and Mental Illness
SOC 380	Topics in Sociology
SOC 390	Individualized Instruction I
SOC 391	Individualized Instruction II
SOC 393	Women, Welfare, and the State
SOC 395	Internship
SOC 400	Punishment and Social Control
SOC 450	Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship

Minor in Sociology

The minimum number of credits (exclusive of the University's Core curriculum) required for the minor: 19.

The minor is intended for those students with a major other than sociology but who wish to broaden their educational experience in a formally designated program of study. The minor program may be of particular interest to students in the College of Nursing and Health Professions, the School of Business, the College of Education and Human Development, and non-social science disciplines in the College of Arts and Sciences.

Thirteen credit hours are required courses; the remainder are electives. Required courses: SOC 100J; SOC 210E; SOC 300; SOC 301; sociology electives**.

**Each student minoring in sociology elects a minimum of two upper-division courses from those offered by the Department. These courses, chosen in consultation with the student's minor advisor, reflect the preprofessional or other interests of the student.

Supplementary information is published each semester by the Sociology Office to assist students in planning their course schedules. The information includes a summary of major courses, listings and descriptions of special courses, and general information for majors.

To obtain these publications, or for other information, write to: Chair, Sociology Department, University of Southern Maine, P.O. Box 9300, Portland, Maine 04104 or telephone: (207) 780-4100.

SOC 100J Introduction to Sociology

The fundamental concepts, principles, and methods of sociology; analyzes the influence of social and cultural factors upon human behavior; evaluates effect of group processes, social classes, stratification, and basic institutions on contemporary society. Offered each semester.

Cr 3.

SOC 210E/W Critical Thinking about Social Issues

Designed to follow Introduction to Sociology, this course further develops students' skills of critical analysis through the application of sociological principles to current social issues. The course uses popular media as well as sociological materials. Examples of issues which may be examined are:

poverty, health care, homelessness, aging, drugs, violence, bureaucracy, white collar crime, and changing gender roles. Prerequisite: Successful completion of SOC 100J with a grade of C or better or permission of the instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 289 Modern British Society

This course forms the cornerstone of USM's summer program at Sheffield, England. The course provides an opportunity to study, experience, and live in British society and culture. The course combines seminars about modern Britain with visits to various sites in England and Scotland. Seminar topics include but are not limited to: cultural diversity and pluralism, village life and city life, the Parliament and government, the British class structure, the British welfare state, the industrial revolution, and the problem with ethnocentrism. Cr 3.

SOC 300 Sociological Theory

Critical evaluation of selected classical models of the social world. Includes consideration of the foundations of sociological thought, the content of major classical theories and theory groups, and the socio-cultural settings within which they developed. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 301 Qualitative Research Methods

This course provides an overview of the process of social research utilizing qualitative methods. Topics include the logic and principles of the research process, as well as specific techniques in qualitative research (e.g., writing field notes, conducting interviews, analyzing qualitative data). A fieldwork/lab component allows students to apply research skills in settings outside the classroom. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with a grade of C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 4.

SOC 307D Quantitative Research Methods

This course provides an overview of the social scientific research process, utilizing quantitative methods. Students generate research questions and testable hypotheses and analyze a variety of secondary data sources. Specific statistical topics include: measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion, t-testing, analysis of variance, cross-tabulation, measures of association, linear regression, and multiple regression. The course includes a computer lab component. Prerequisites: SOC 210E/W with a grade of C or better and completion of mathematics proficiency, or permission of instructor. Cr 4.

SOC 312 Inequality and Power

A systematic assessment of structured social inequalities in wealth, power, and status in industrialized societies. Emphasis is placed on assessing social policies employed to reduce, ameliorate, or sustain such inequalities. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 315 Self and Society

This course explores the social construction of self

as the result of both face-to-face and societal-level social processes such as language acquisition, identity development, and the effects of culture and social structure on individual and collective conceptions of self-hood. Readings and discussions focus on the relative contributions of individual self-determination and societal constraints on self-hood. Specific topics include childhood identity development, social stigma and societal definitions of normality, social structure and self-esteem, and cross-cultural differences in the concept of self-hood. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 316 Sociology of Gender

This course examines gender as a social, cultural, and historical construction which occurs within and reinforces sex/gender stratification. With particular attention paid to education, the family, and work, we will explore sex/gender stratification—its sources and dynamics; historical and contemporary forms; and implications for human lives, history, and society. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 318 Childhood and Society

This advanced course examines the social construction of childhood. Topics include but are not limited to socio-historical study of the evolution of childhood, the child in art and literature, socialization and gender as process, structured inequality and children's life chances, cross-cultural comparisons of childhood, and U.S. family policies for the welfare of children. An applied component allows students to integrate theory and observations of the day to day life of children. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 327 Social Movements

This course is divided into two sections: social movement theory and social movement cases. First, students will explore the three dominant theoretical approaches covering the micro, meso, and macro context of social movements. These include framing and interpretive processes, mobilizing structures, and political opportunities. The "classic" U.S. social movement of the 1960s (civil rights, women's liberation, anti-war, and free speech) and 1970s-80s (environmental and peace) will be utilized as historical cases to comprehend social movement theory. The second section of the course will address contemporary movements including (but not limited to) labor, anti-globalization, local alternatives, and the new peace movements. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 330 Sociology of the Family

A sociological approach to the study of the family, including the structure of social relationships, the modern American family as a social institution, the cultural background of the family, and the impact of social change. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 331 School and Society

This course examines the social organization of schooling and its social and political context in contemporary American society. Topics include the emergence of public education, role of state and community in shaping its nature, problems of access and equality, the organizational nature of schools, teaching as a profession, and alternatives to public education. Attention is given to public debates concerning the conditions, limits, and possibilities of schooling. Comparisons with educational systems of other countries are included when appropriate. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 333 Medical Sociology

Analysis of socio-cultural influences on health and illness, with an emphasis on health, illness, and sickness as social identities. Particular attention is given to the organization of health-related occupations and health services in cross-cultural perspective, and to the ethical and policy-related issues raised by different models of organization. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 334 Sociology of Religion

Review and critique of classical and contemporary sociological interpretations of religion, with emphasis on the changing character of religious expression in the twentieth century. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 343 Social Psychology

This course provides an overview of sociological theory and research in social psychology on the central topics of social perception, social communication, and social interaction. The course focuses on the impact of sociological factors such as gender, race, and class on face-to-face behavior and on how face-to-face interaction contributes to the creation and maintenance of social structure. Specific topics include social psychological methods; causes and consequences of stereotyping; gender, power, and conversation; status structures in small groups; distributive justice; and social dilemmas. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 345 Hate Violence in the Contemporary United States

This course offers an interdisciplinary look at hate violence beginning with a brief examination of some of the historical roots of contemporary hate violence in the United States. Students will then focus on major issues presented by hate violence from the mid-1980s to the present. In particular, students will examine the causes and impacts of hate violence and the legal and policy implications of how hate crimes have been addressed within the United States. Prerequisite: SOC 210 E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 348 Sociology of Work

This course surveys three strands of the literature:

the nature of work under capitalism, the consequences emerging from such labor, and alternatives to capitalist relations in production. Specific topics include work in the global economy, Fordism and flexible capitalism, the division of labor, labor markets, control in the workplace, corporate dominance, jobs and the class structure, alienation, and workplace democracy. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 352 Demography

Fertility, mortality, and migration as they affect every aspect of life whether political, economic, or social and the reciprocal impact of these on the population variables. Specific applications include: the relationship of population growth and aging; population growth and the status of women; population growth and urbanization; food and population policy; population growth and economic development; population characteristics and life changes; population characteristics in marketing; crime and the age structure; fertility changes and the labor market and the impact of immigration. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 355 Politics and Society

This course will focus on power relationships in U.S. society, with some cross-national comparisons. Specific topics to be covered include the nature and distribution of power among social groups and organizations, theories of the state, social class and political participation, policy formation, and the interactions between democracy as a political system and capitalism as an economic system. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 357 Organization: Individual and Society

This course examines the nature of modern organizations and their impact on individuals and society. Several theoretical perspectives on organization will be examined to gain an understanding of organizational life and organizations' role in modern society. In addition, we will consider dilemmas faced by individuals interacting with organizations as functionaries (for example, workers, government employees, teachers, police) and as clients. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 358 Sociology of Women's Work

This course will introduce students to theoretical and empirical literature on women's work in the paid labor force, on their unpaid labor in the home, and on the relationship between these two kinds of "women's work." The course emphasizes the diversity of women's work and the interconnections among race-ethnicity, class, and gender through a detailed examination of professional women, blue-collar women, and "pink-collar" employees. Additional topics include occupational segregation, earnings differentials, poverty, law and public policy, and labor militancy. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 359 Leisure and Consumption under Global Capitalism

This course will use sociological concepts, paradigms, and research methods to engage students in a critical examination of leisure and consumption preferences and practices among the working, middle, and upper classes in the developed nations, especially the United States. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 360 Sociology of Age

This course will introduce students to the “graying of America” and to the processes and problems associated with growing old in America. Using a dual focus on aging of the individual and on age as a structural feature of any society, the course will provide an analytical framework for understanding the interplay between human lives and social structure. The increased importance of the aged as a social, political, and economic force in society will also be discussed. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 365 Sociology of the Body

This course examines the body as a text marked by, and rendered meaningful through, social categories of race, gender, class, sexuality, disability, and disease. This writing- and reading-intensive course discusses both social constructionist and biological determinist perspectives on embodied difference. Prerequisites: SOC 210E/W with C or better and one or more of SOC 300, SOC 316, WST 380, WST 390. Cr 3.

SOC 371 Sociology of Race and Ethnicity

Considers the factors that produce and maintain structured social inequality based on minority status, and the social consequences of such inequality. Includes analysis of selected minorities both in the U.S. and cross-culturally. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 374 Mental Health and Mental Illness

An examination of theories of the “causes” of “madness” and the treatment of the mentally ill. Particular attention on the influence of culture on the definition of illnesses, the relationship between social factors and illness, and the social context of treatment. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 380 Topics in Sociology

Specially developed occasional courses exploring a variety of theoretical and substantive areas within the field. Offered as resources permit. These courses may be counted as electives toward completion of the major. Prerequisite: SOC 210E/W with C or better or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 390 Individualized Instruction I

Independent reading and/or research for juniors and seniors. Apply to Department chair. Prerequisite: 15 hours in sociology. Cr var.

SOC 391 Individualized Instruction II

Continuation of independent reading and/or research for juniors and seniors. Apply to Department chair. Prerequisite: SOC 390. Cr var.

SOC 393 Women, Welfare, and the State

The course explores the gender bias of social welfare policy in the U.S., revealing a welfare state whose adherence to central elements such as the Protestant work ethic, “family values,” and a *laissez-faire* economy excludes over half the population. From both historical and theoretical perspectives, the course examines the development of the American welfare state, compares it to Western and Eastern European states, and assesses its impact on women’s lives. Prerequisites: SOC 210E/W with a grade of C or better and junior/senior standing, or permission of instructor. Cr 3.

SOC 395 Internship

The course is designed to provide work/action experience and insight into professional roles in a variety of community agencies and organizations. The primary objective of the internship is the application of the perspectives, substantive knowledge, and methods of social science to a particular organizational setting. Thus, the internship can be understood as a participant observation experience within the context of social science research. It is primarily designed as a field experience/reflection opportunity for upper-level social science majors with substantive background/coursework in the area of internship placement. In addition to field placement, students are expected to meet for a series of internship seminars, for which readings and reports will be required. Contact Departmental internship coordinator for details. Cr 4 to 6.

SOC 450 Undergraduate Teaching Assistantship

In working closely with faculty, undergraduate teaching assistants will gain insight into course materials and into all aspects of college teaching. This experience will be especially valuable for students who plan to do graduate work in sociology and for students exploring a career in teaching. Teaching assistants also provide an additional resource for assistance, advice, and modeling. Undergraduate teaching assistants generally assist faculty in course preparation and delivery including locating and reviewing materials for course use; assisting with the design of course schedule, exercises, assignments, and class presentations; lecturing and supervision of student groups; and providing feedback to students on their work. In addition, teaching assistants hold regular office hours. Enrollment in SOC 450 will depend on Departmental needs and course offerings. Selection is made by the faculty. Students should contact the Department chair for details. Prerequisite: SOC majors by permission only. Cr 3.