

# SOCIOLOGY (SOC)

Sociology is the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behavior. Sociologists investigate the structure of groups, organizations and societies, and how people interact within these contexts.

Since human behavior is shaped by social factors, the subject matter of sociology ranges from the intimate family to the hostile mob; from organized crime to religious cults; from the divisions of race, gender and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture.

<https://cola.unh.edu/sociology>

## Programs

- [Sociology Major \(B.A.\)](#)
- [Sociology Minor](#)
- [Medical Sociology Cognate](#)

## Courses

### Sociology (SOC)

#### SOC 400 - Introductory Sociology

**Credits:** 4

Overview of sociology as the scientific study of human social and cultural relationships. Social theory, methods and techniques of research, and current research findings on a wide range of social issues.

**Attributes:** Social Science (Discovery)

**Equivalent(s):** SOC 400H, SOC 400W

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 402 - Statistics

**Credits:** 4

Elementary applied statistical techniques; tables, graphs, cross-clarifications; central tendency and dispersion; correlation and linear regression; confidence intervals and hypothesis testing. Other statistical classes including ADM 430, BIOL 528, ADMN 420, EREC 525, HHS #540, MATH 439, MATH 539, PHIL 412, MATH 644, PSYC 402 cannot be used to satisfy the major requirement. This is, all majors must take SOC 402 even if they have taken an introductory statistics course in another department. A student can, however, petition to receive eight credits for two introductory statistics courses, if and only if, SOC 402 is taken after the student became a sociology major and took their first statistics course prior to declaring SOC as their major. Majors cannot receive credit for statistics courses taken after they have declared SOC.

**Attributes:** Quantitative Reasoning(Disc)

**Equivalent(s):** SOC 402H, SOC 502, SOC 502H

**Mutual Exclusion:** No credit for students who have taken ADM 430, ADMN 420, ADMN 510, BIOL 528, EREC 525, HHS 540, HMP 540, MATH 439, MATH 539, MATH 644, MTH 504, MTH 701, PSYC 402, PSYC 402H.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 444A - Honors/Society in the Arctic

**Credits:** 4

Introduction to societies of the far North today, from Alaska and Canada through Greenland, Iceland, northern Scandinavia and Russia. Reviews interconnected issues of social change, environment, sustainable development, local control, and modernization vs. traditions. Arctic dilemmas highlight some basic questions facing all societies in the 21st century.

**Attributes:** Environment,TechSociety(Disc); Honors course; Inquiry (Discovery); Writing Intensive Course

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 450 - Contemporary Social Problems

**Credits:** 4

This course introduces students to the study of major social problems in contemporary society, including poverty, discrimination, inequality, crime, violence, and environmental degradation. Explores how and why people come to view certain social conditions as problematic. Also explores the consequences of and possible solutions to contemporary social problems.

**Attributes:** Social Science (Discovery)

**Equivalent(s):** SOC 540

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 515 - Introductory Criminology

**Credits:** 4

Introduces the scientific study of crime. Reviews the different forms of criminal behavior, theories of crime, and strategies of crime control.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 520 - Family

**Credits:** 4

Sociological study of marriage and the family in American society. Following a life-cycle approach, topics include gender roles, communication and conflict, dating and mate selection, work and family economics, the transition to parenthood, middle- and late-life family, divorce, and remarriage.

**Equivalent(s):** SOC 520H

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 525 - Juvenile Crime and Delinquency

**Credits:** 4

Crime, violence, and the criminal justice system as it affects children and youth in the role of both perpetrators and victims.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 530 - Sociology of Race and Ethnicity

**Credits:** 4

This course examines how social scientists study racial and ethnic groups. Students first gain knowledge of important sociological concepts, and then read from a diverse array of social theorists. Towards the end of the course, students engage with cutting-edge applied research on race and ethnicity across many dimensions including wealth, health, crime, love, and technology. By the end of the course, students should be able to identify, explain, and apply various sociological concepts and theories pertaining to race and ethnicity; and be able to conceptualize, hypothesize, and design a line of scientific inquiry on race.

**Attributes:** Social Science (Discovery)

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

#### SOC 535 - Homicide

**Credits:** 4

An introduction to theory and research in homicide studies, including a review of the origins of and social responses to homicide.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

**SOC 555 - Death and Dying in America****Credits:** 4

This course will explore a cultural and structural overview of death and dying in American society. Topics include the historical contexts of the care and treatment of the dying and the dead; attitudes toward death; bereavement over the life course; socialization to death; anticipatory grief and terminal illness; funeral rituals and their social functions; burial, mourning and grief practices; and suicide and assisted suicide. Cannot earn credit if previously taken SOC 597 "Special Topics: Death and Dying in America".

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 565 - Environment and Society****Credits:** 4

Environment and Society focuses on the complex interactions between human communities and the natural world. The course considers the interconnected ways that social systems, the built environment, and related technologies produce environmental changes, and in turn how shifts in resources, air, water quality, climate, biodiversity, and ecosystems force societies to adapt. This course fulfills in the Environment, Technology, and Society category of UNH's Discovery Program.

**Attributes:** Environment,TechSociety(Disc)**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 570 - Sexual Behavior****Credits:** 4

This course approaches sexuality as a social phenomenon. We examine variability in sexual practices, sexual identities, and sexual behaviors throughout history, across cultures, and throughout the life course of individuals. Particularly, we focus on the social control of sexuality and the extent to which sexualities are socially constructed. We consider the media and other cultural influences on a diverse range of sexual experiences and take a straightforward, non-stigmatizing approach to tackling controversial issues.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 595 - Independent Reading and Research****Credits:** 2-8

Independent study of advanced or specialized topics in sociology requiring extensive reading and writing. Before registering, students must develop a project in consultation with a faculty supervisor and submit a proposal to the undergraduate committee. Students are required to complete 12 sociology credits prior to taking this course.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 598 - Sociological Theory****Credits:** 4

Analysis of the origins and development of sociological theory. Includes the classical works of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim and their connections to the major strands of present day research.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Equivalent(s):** SOC 611**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 599 - Sociological Analysis****Credits:** 4

Basic skills essential to sociological study, including: development of critical reading skills; evaluation of theory construction and evidence; analysis of classic and contemporary works, research, writing, and use of library resources. To be taken by sociology majors no later than the junior year.

**Attributes:** Inquiry (Discovery); Writing Intensive Course**Equivalent(s):** SOC 599W**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 601 - Methods of Social Research****Credits:** 4

Overview of major research methods: survey analysis, personal interview, participant observation, content analysis, and experimental design. Each student designs and completes a research project.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Prerequisite(s):** SOC 599 with a minimum grade of D-**Equivalent(s):** PSYC 502, SW 601, SW 601W**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 620 - Drugs and Society****Credits:** 4

Provides students with an overview of drug using behavior as viewed from a sociological perspective. Highlights historical and current drug use trends, examines the social correlates of drug use, considers societal responses to drug use including treatment, prevention, and policy, and engages students in key controversial debates confronting U.S. citizens and policymakers. Provides a foundation for understanding of drugs and society.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 625 - Mental Health and Society****Credits:** 4

This course introduces students to sociological approaches for studying and understanding mental health and illness in society. With an emphasis on the importance of social stress, we examine the distribution of mental illness in the United States and identify the factors that help to explain mental health differences across social roles and statuses.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 627 - Sociology of Fashion****Credits:** 4

This course explores how clothing, accessories, and bodily adornment are socially constructed processes. We apply a sociological lens to uncover how fashion intersects with: social identities and aspirations; fads and trends; historical forces; how we modify our bodies; production and consumption of clothing and shoes; race, class, and gender; labor and human rights; globalization and trade; technology, and environmental issues in clothing production. Cannot earn credit if previously earned credit for SOC 697 "Special Topics Sociology of Fashion".

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 635W - Medical Sociology****Credits:** 4

Health and Illness are considered as a sociocultural phenomenon. Meanings are attached to health and illness as they are influenced by our social values and our cultural beliefs, which to a large degree are influenced by available medical technologies. People's experiences of health and illness are shaped by a range of social factors (e.g., race, class, gender) and follow clear patterns of social inequality. A critical approach is taken to examine topics such as the social determinants of health, illness and healthcare; the social construction of illness; the medicalization of society; and the social organization of health care.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Equivalent(s):** SOC 635**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

**SOC 636 - Sociology of Justice****Credits:** 4

In this course, students will begin to understand how individuals, groups, and societies perceive justice, how to research those perceptions, and how those perceptions shape our lives. By the end of this course, students should have an advanced understanding of justice research and be able to apply sociological research principles to examining wide variety of real-world issues.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 645 - Class, Status and Power****Credits:** 4

Focuses on the major dimensions of inequality, including class, gender, and race, by exploring the distribution of economic, political, and social resources within contemporary societies.

**Equivalent(s):** SOC 645W**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 647 - Sociology of Work and Well-Being****Credits:** 4

What constitutes a 'good job' or a 'bad job'? What characteristics of jobs are harmful, and which job conditions protect worker health and wellbeing? In this course, we focus heavily on the nature of job stress, where it comes from, and why some people experience more of it than others. Topics will include socioeconomic disparities in stress exposure, gender and racial discrimination in the workplace, gig work and online platforms, social protection policies, and COVID-19. Cannot earn credit if already taken SOC 697 under the special topic "Work and Well-Being".

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 665 - Environmental Sociology****Credits:** 4

Interactions between society and the physical environment, including environmental constraints, population and economic growth, social impacts of resource development, large-scale environmental change, and the social bases of environmental attitudes, behavior, and politics.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 693 - Global Change and Social Sustainability****Credits:** 4

Achieving "social sustainability" has become a goal for societies around the world, but what does it mean and how can they achieve it? Sociology provides scientific tools to help answer these questions. In this course, students will learn sociological approaches for investigating and analyzing global social challenges ranging from climate change and food insecurity to drug trafficking and health pandemics and consider applications of these insights to inform on-the-ground efforts to advance social sustainability.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 697 - Special Topics****Credits:** 4

Occasional or experimental offerings. May be repeated for different topics.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Repeat Rule:** May be repeated up to 2 times.**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 720 - Sociology of Drug Use****Credits:** 4

Examines licit and illicit drug use from a sociological perspective. Draws primarily from the sociology of mental health and criminology to explore a variety of drug-related topics including historical and current U.S. drug trends, dominant theoretical approaches about the initiation into, and continued use of drugs, drug-related crime, therapeutic use of drugs, prevention and treatment of drug problems, and drug-related policies.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 725 - Social Demography****Credits:** 4

Social demography examines the linkages between changes in the size, composition and distribution of the population and changes in social, environmental, economic and political factors. The course examines demographic methods and the materials and the analytical techniques used by demographers to analyze population redistribution, fertility, work, marriage, migration and mortality. The policy implications of demographic change will be examined with attention to the U.S. as well as the developed and developing world.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 730 - Communities and the Environment****Credits:** 4

People and the natural environments in which they live fundamentally structure communities around the globe. Economic change, expanding development, and human migration are transforming social and environmental conditions in both rural and urban settings, altering the identities of many communities as well as their relationships with the natural world. The importance of these emerging social and environmental issues has made them a focus for social science inquiry. This course exposes students to a range of sociological concepts, theories, and research approaches related to the study of communities and environmental issues. Some of the substantive themes that are covered include: population dynamics and environmental change; social capital and social networks; political economy and community development; collective action and social movements; science, technology, and environmental risks; and environmental racism and justice. The principal assignment for the course will be a research project where students investigate a community or environmental issue of their own interest.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 740 - Sociology of Mental Health****Credits:** 4

Introduces students to different sociological approaches for studying and understanding mental health and illness. Students examine the social distribution of mental illness in the United States and the social-structural factors that help to explain mental health variations. Also addresses issues surrounding mental health treatment, systems, and policies for the mentally ill.

**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 773 - Childhood and Social Policy****Credits:** 4

Exposes students to a variety of sociological perspectives about childhood in American society. Stimulates analysis about how social institutions, like the modern family, school, economic system, justice system and communications media affect children. Assumes prior understanding of important sociological concepts, critical thinking skills and social science writing ability.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

**SOC 788 - Advanced Medical Sociology****Credits:** 4

This course is intended to provide an in-depth introduction to the major theoretical frameworks of medical sociology and empirical research examining social factors that influence individual's health and illness. We will take a critical approach in our examination of: the distribution of health and illness (by socioeconomic status, sex/gender, and race/ethnicity); medicalization and social control; and the social construction of health and illness. Most of the learning in this course will take place through shared facilitation of class discussions based on the reading.

**Attributes:** Writing Intensive Course**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 792 - Internship Independent Study****Credits:** 2-8

Provides upper level sociology majors with an opportunity to apply what they have learned in the classroom to the real world. This will provide the opportunity for students to work individually with a faculty member on an Internship with the option of variable credit. There is no formal class time required. Students will arrange meetings with supervising faculty to plan assigned readings, update internship progress and complete semester projects. Project ideas are developed with faculty and internship site supervisor.

**Repeat Rule:** May be repeated for a maximum of 8 credits.**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 799 - Senior Thesis****Credits:** 4 or 8

Independent work in the library or field culminating in a written senior thesis. Recommended for, but not confined to, majors intending to pursue graduate studies. Students must arrange for supervision from two faculty members and submit a proposal to the Undergraduate Committee before registering. May be completed in one or two successive semesters during the senior year.

**Repeat Rule:** May be repeated for a maximum of 8 credits. May be repeated up to 2 times.**Equivalent(s):** SOC 699**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading**SOC 799H - Senior Honors Thesis****Credits:** 4 or 8

Independent work in the library or field culminating in a written senior honors thesis and a formal research presentation. Recommended for, but not confined to, majors intending to pursue graduate studies. Required for students participating in the departmental honors program as part of their 16 honors credits. Students must arrange for supervision from two faculty members and submit a proposal to the Undergraduate Committee before registering. May be completed in one or two successive semesters during the senior year.

**Attributes:** Honors course**Repeat Rule:** May be repeated for a maximum of 8 credits.**Equivalent(s):** SOC 699H**Grade Mode:** Letter Grading

## Faculty

[Sociology Department Faculty](#)