



What can I do with a Major in...

Sociology

What is Sociology at U of L?

Sociology is the study of social life, including all forms of social interaction and relationships. Our Department focuses its research and teaching around the theme of *diversity and inequality* -- the significant ways in which people and groups differ from one another, particularly in terms of social characteristics/categories. By focusing on diversity and inequality, we help to advance a deeper understanding of differences among peoples, which is essential to the implementation of fair social policy and democratic society.

Degrees in Sociology at U of L:

Bachelor of Arts degrees in sociology

Bachelor of Science degrees in sociology

Minor in sociology

Master of Arts degree in sociology:

with the *option* of pursuing a formal concentration in the areas of communication, Pan African studies, urban geography, or women's studies

Occupational Overview

Sociologists study human behavior as it occurs in and is influenced by social groups, institutions, organizations, and societies, as well as by social conditions. For example, they examine ways in which social characteristics/categories (such as age, class, gender, race and ethnicity, sexuality) and social institutions (such as economics, education, family, media, politics, religion, sport) affect human attitudes, actions, and opportunities. Sociology is practiced in many careers, such as research, academia, business, law, social services, medicine, and government. (Psychology, on the other hand, is the study of individual behavior and mental processes. Psychologists focus on the behavior of individuals (alone or in groups) rather than the groups or aggregates themselves.)

Employment Requirements

A bachelor's degree is the minimum formal education required, and is typically sufficient for many entry-level positions in business, industry, and government. However, some employers and industries also require a graduate degree, which may also aid employability in competitive areas. Due to its broad nature, an undergraduate degree in sociology is great preparation for graduate or professional education in sociology, law, counseling, psychology, social work, medicine, education, college student personnel, higher education administration, and other related fields. Additionally, many "transferable skills" such as analytical, or-



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ganizational, research, interpersonal, computer, leadership, teamwork, and oral/written communication are associated with the sociology degree. Students can increase their chances of gaining related post-graduation employment by engaging in internships, part-time jobs, and volunteer experiences that are related to their occupation or field of interest.

Career Opportunities in Sociology:

Career opportunities in sociology are unlimited. A degree in sociology (bachelor's and/or a master's) can lead to a variety of careers, especially given the skills inherent in liberal arts training. As our world continuously evolves, sociology majors are well prepared to offer insight into these changes and how best to accommodate them. Therefore, sociology students can pursue careers in: business, child welfare, computer industry, criminal justice, education (teaching, evaluation research, consultation, or research), entrepreneurship, gerontology, health care, international relations, law, law enforcement, the military, military intelligence, state or federal government, social service agencies, social work, and urban planning or management.

Employers/Industries and Success Strategies:

Human Services: Counseling – Case management – Advocacy – Mental health services – Programming - Administration

Suggested Strategy: Gain experience and helping skills through volunteer or intern experience, such as a peer mentor, resident assistant, or other student leader. Gain exposure to social service agencies (e.g., YMCA). Gain experience working with diverse populations, and learning a second language (Spanish is particularly marketable). Most states require certification or a master's degree in counseling, social work, or a related field in order to provide therapeutic services to clients.

Criminal Justice: Corrections – Rehabilitation – Law enforcement – Judiciary – Correctional institutions – Court systems

Suggested Strategy: Gain related experience. Volunteer to work with troubled youth. Consider obtaining experience in law enforcement or military. Obtain a graduate or law degree for advancement. Be familiar with governmental hiring practices.

Education: Teaching – Research – Public and private schools – Colleges and universities – Adult education providers

Suggested Strategy: Obtain certification/licensure to teaching grades K-12 (consult College of Education). Assist a professor with research and take courses in research or statistics for research positions. Volunteer as a tutor. Earn a graduate degree for post-secondary teaching opportunities.

Government: Social statistics – Demography – Public administration – Policy analysis – Research – Program development – Human services – City planning – Law enforcement

Suggested Strategy: Supplement curriculum with coursework in statistics and social research. Gain experience via government internships or part-time work. Learn the federal job application process (see www.usajobs.gov for listings). Develop strong computer, communication, and research skills. Obtain a graduate degree for advanced positions.



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Social Science Research: Research – Data analysis – Demography – Market research – Information sourcing

Suggested Strategy: Learn to use statistical software (e.g., SPSS) as well as databases, spreadsheets, and desktop publishing. Volunteer to help a professor with a research project. Develop exceptional quantitative, statistical, and writing skills. Earn certification in applied social research by the American Sociological Association. Obtain an advanced degree in sociology for research administration positions.

Related Links in the Sociology Discipline:

Professional Association Links

American Sociological Association: www.asanet.org

International Sociological Association: www.ucm.es/info/isa/

Society for Applied and Clinical Sociology: www.appliedsoc.org

American Counseling Association: www.counseling.org

National Association of Social Workers: www.socialworkers.org

American School Counselors Association: www.schoolcounselor.org

Council for Accreditation of Counseling & Related Educational Programs: www.cacrep.org

National Board for Certified Counselors: www.nbcc.org

Council on Social Work Education: www.cswe.org

Association of Social Work Boards: www.aswb.org

<http://louisville.edu/a-s/soc/hotlinks.html>

Career Planning Links

Careers in Clinical Sociology, http://www.asanet.org/galleries/default-file/clinsoc_45575v2.pdf

The Sociology Major: As Preparation for Careers in Business and Organizations, <http://www.asanet.org/page.wv?section=Careers+and+Jobs&name=Sociology+Major++Preparation+for+Careers>

Sociology Virtual Library, <http://socserv2.mcmaster.ca/w3virtsoclib>

Careers in Sociology, <http://www.saludos.com/fields/soc.html>

Ideas for Volunteer/Internship

The Department of Sociology offers both a voluntarism course (SOC 550) and internship course (SOC 401), both of which are excellent means by which students can apply their formal education in sociology and gain "real world" experience before they graduate. (Both courses may be used to fulfill a 400+ sociology elective requirement, and students may count both courses toward their sociology degree.)

EMPLOYERS OF SOCIOLOGY GRADUATES

Here is a brief list of some different types of employers of sociology graduates:



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Adoption and child care agencies
Adult education providers
Advertising and marketing firms
Advocacy groups
Banks
Child, Youth, and Families Department (CYFD)
Community service agencies and organizations
Consulting organizations
Correctional institutions
Court systems
Department of Health and Human Services
Department of Housing and Urban Development
Departments of Agriculture, Education, Interior, Commerce, Defense
Drug Enforcement Administration
Educational information services
Environmental Protection Agency
Halfway houses
Health agencies
Healthcare organizations
Hospitals and wellness centers
Insurance companies
Law enforcement agencies
Local branches of national nonprofits (Red Cross)
Local planning agencies
Manufacturing companies
National Institute of Aging
National Institute of Education
National Institute of Health
Newspaper, magazines, news agencies
Nonprofit organizations and agencies
Nursing homes, retire communities, senior centers
Parks and recreation departments
Peace Corps
Private foundations
Public and private schools
Public opinion research polls
Religiously-affiliated service organizations
Research institutes
Retail stores
Service industries
Staffing agencies
Teach for America/Americorps
United Way agencies
Universities and colleges



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Veteran's Administration
Vocational services
Waste management firms
YMCA's



<http://online.onetcenter.org>



<http://www.bls.gov/oco/>