SOCIOLOGY, B.A.

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus

End Campus: University Park

Program Description

The major provides graduates with a sociological perspective on human behavior informed by exposure to different substantive areas of the field; an understanding of the structure of American society, its internal diversity, and its international context; an understanding of basic principles of the scientific method, statistics, research design, computer use, logic and critical thinking, and how these apply to the study of human behavior; and experience in posing sociological questions and collecting and analyzing data to bear on those questions. Graduates have the background to seek employment in a variety of public and private sector jobs, to pursue graduate study in sociology or related areas, or to enter professional schools in social work, law, business, or health fields.

Students may choose either a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree program. The B.A. degree in Sociology is a classic liberal arts degree. The B.S. degree is intended for students with a strong interest in quantitative skills. Students completing the B.S. degree have additional training in mathematics and other social science disciplines.

Opportunities to work as departmental teaching and research assistants are available. Students are encouraged to participate in study abroad and/or internship experiences while enrolled in either the B.A. or B.S. sociology majors.

Graduates of this program have found positions in social research, social service agencies, government and business research and planning offices, other business positions (especially sales and marketing), or have entered graduate school in sociology, social work, policy analysis or law school.

What is Sociology?

Sociology is the scientific study of social behavior and human social groups from individual families to nations. Sociology focuses on the ways that social environments, such as family, neighborhood, school, and society influence individuals’ life options, advantages and disadvantages. Sociology also helps us understand how societies operate and change, and the impact of large scale events such as hurricanes, economic recessions, and social movements on individuals, groups, and societies. The workings of societies and the social world are often invisible to us as individuals - sociology helps to make these processes visible to us.

You Might Like This Program If...

• You are interested in understanding the social and environmental factors that influence our lives.
• You would like to learn the skills needed to conduct social research on important topics.
• You want to understand American society, how and why it changes, and our relation to the global community.
• You enjoy learning about all kinds of social groups and how individuals interact.
• You hope to pursue a career in research, education, social/human services, counseling, business, non-profit work, public policy, or the health professions.