SOCIOLOGY, B.S. (LIBERAL ARTS)

Begin Campus: Any Penn State Campus
End Campus: University Park

Program Description

Students may choose either a Bachelor of Arts or a Bachelor of Science degree program. The B.A. degree program provides a basic orientation to the field as a whole, study of its development and principles, training in methodology and study in depth of a major area of the discipline. It provides knowledge that is useful in a career in varied work settings as well as providing the foundation needed for graduate study in sociology of related fields.

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 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.

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have third-semester classification (http://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology, a minimum of 123 credits is required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electives</td>
<td>21-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>61-63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes 6 credits of General Education GQ courses.

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Recommended Academic Plan for your intended program.

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)

• Quantification (GQ): 6 credits
• Writing and Speaking (GWS): 9 credits

Knowledge Domains

• Arts (GA): 6 credits
• Health and Wellness (GHW): 3 credits
• Humanities (GH): 6 credits
• Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 6 credits
• Natural Sciences (GN): 9 credits

Integrative Studies (may also complete a Knowledge Domain requirement)

• Inter-Domain or Approved Linked Courses: 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.
Cultures Requirement
6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements
- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum
3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits
A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work
Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition
The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major
A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Integrated Undergraduate/Graduate Degree Program B.S. in Sociology and Masters of Public Policy
This Integrated Undergraduate/Graduate program (IUG) provides an opportunity for academically strong students to complete a bachelor of science degree in sociology and a master’s degree in public policy in the course of approximately five years of study. The public policy curriculum and sociology curriculum cover require similar technical and analytic skills and provide complementary substantive knowledge – criminal justice is an important area of policy making from a public policy standpoint and it is critical to understand the policy process to understand the structure and impacts of criminal justice policies.

Students in the MPP are required to complete an elective specialization of four courses. Students in the Sociology-MPP IUG will take four courses in their fourth year of study that will double count for both the sociology BS and MPP. The students’ IUG specific program of study will be structured on an individual basis giving IUG students a range of program options from the menu of course selections summarized below.

Admission
Qualified students can apply formally during the semester in which they will complete 60 credits, typically the spring semester of their sophomore year. Consistent with general guidelines, students shall be admitted to an IUG program no earlier than the beginning of the third semester of undergraduate study at Penn State (regardless of transfer or AP credits accumulated prior to enrollment). It is recommended that students apply for admission to the IUG program before completing 90 credits, or in the last semester of their junior year, but consistent with general IUG guidelines, students can apply as late as the end of the second week of the semester preceding the semester of expected conferral of the undergraduate degree.

Admission is selective based on criteria established by the leadership of the public policy program and political science program. Though exceptions are possible, student applicants will generally have a minimum overall GPA of 3.4 in their major, and a minimum 3.4 GPA overall at the time of application (on a 4.0 scale). Students are admitted to the IUG based on good progress in their major, success in statistics and data analysis courses (evidenced by minimum 3.0 GPA in undergraduate data analysis and statistics courses), faculty recommendations (two letters), GPA and a 2-page statement of purpose explaining why they want to participate in this program and why they are qualified to do so. Students must apply to the program via the Graduate School application for admission, and must meet all the admission requirements of the Graduate School and the Public Policy graduate program for the Master of Public Policy degree. GRE scores are not required for IUG applicants.

In consultation with an adviser, students must prepare a plan of study appropriate to this integrated program, and must present their plan of study in person to the head of the graduate program or the appropriate committee overseeing the integrated program prior to being admitted to the program. The plan should cover the entire time period of the integrated program, and it should be reviewed periodically with an adviser as the student advances through the program.
Advising
Students admitted to the program are advised by co-advisers, one from each participating unit. Each student will have a primary adviser in public policy who will work with the student and the co-adviser in sociology to ensure successful completion of the degree. The co-advisers will help the student prepare the initial plan of study, and assist in making changes and approving the student's plan of study each semester during the advising period.

Sequence of Courses
During the first three years of study students will follow the basic course sequence provided for by the existing BS plan in sociology. In the fourth year of study they will take four courses that will count both toward the BS in sociology and the masters in public. At least two of these courses will be at the 500 level. Specifically, 2 of the 400 level sociology courses will count toward the MPP and 2 800 level MPP courses will count toward the sociology BS "other social science" credit requirements. Students who wish to graduate in 5 years will also take additional MPP courses in their fourth year beyond this two, but these credits will count only toward the MPP degree.

Plan of Study
Prior to admission to the program, and in consultation with their sociology and public policy advisers, students must prepare a detailed plan of study for years 4 and 5 of the program. The plan is periodically reviewed by the student and advisers, and revised as necessary. Most students will complete all requirements for the BS in sociology and complete some graduate level MPP requirements in the first four years, and take only MPP courses in year 5. However, the IUG is flexible enough to accommodate alternate scheduling and the completion of some undergraduate coursework during the fifth year.

Degree Requirements
Students must fulfill all requirements for each degree in order to be awarded that degree, subject to the double-counting of credits as outlined below. Degree requirements for the B.S. in Sociology are listed in the Undergraduate Bulletin. Degree requirements for the M.P.P. degree are listed on the Degree Requirements tab. Up to 12 credits may be double-counted towards the degree requirements for both the graduate and undergraduate degrees; a minimum of 50% of the double-counted courses must be at the 500 or 800 level. Credits associated with the culminating experience for the graduate degree cannot be double-counted. The courses that are eligible to double count for both degrees are: SOC 400W, SOC 405, SOC 423, SOC 440, SOC 526, SOC 528, SOC 532, SOC 530.

Students must sequence their courses so all undergraduate degree requirements are fulfilled before taking courses to count towards the graduate degree. If students accepted into the IUG program are unable to complete the M.P.P. degree, they are still eligible to receive their undergraduate degree if all the undergraduate degree requirements have been satisfied.

Program Learning Objectives
Upon completion of their degree, students majoring in sociology will be able to:

Content Knowledge:

1. Describe the focus of sociology as a discipline.
2. State what is distinctive about the sociological perspective.
3. Apply the sociological perspective to a problem or scenario.

Understanding of Theory:
1. Identify theories and concepts from classical sociological theories.
2. Apply theories and concepts from classical sociological theories.
3. Identify theories and concepts from contemporary sociological theories.
4. Apply theories and concepts from contemporary sociological theories.

Research Skills:
1. Demonstrate the ability to analyze and interpret quantitative sociological data using statistics, graphs, and data tables.
2. Do research that develops and tests hypotheses using data, including use of appropriate previous research, theory, data collection, statistical analysis techniques, interpretation of research results and development of conclusions.
3. Present research results in correct tabular and written form.

Communication Skills:
1. Write a paper following the format of published sociological research, including each of the major sections of a research paper.
2. Communicate the results of sociological research in oral form.

Knowledgeable Consumers of Research:
1. Comprehend and effectively extract central points from sociological research as this research is presented in professional articles, including substantive content, theory, methods and conclusions.

Career-Related Skills:
1. Demonstrate an understanding of the career options available to someone with a background in sociology.
Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2020-21 academic year. To access previous years' suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive/) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contain suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

University Park Campus

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit. Academic advisers can provide a list of FYS courses for each incoming Schreyer Honors College student at University Park.

Integrative Studies courses are required for the General Education program. N is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate a Linked course.

All incoming Schreyer Honors College first-year students at University Park will take ENGL/CAS 137 in the fall semester and ENGL/CAS 138 in the spring semester. These courses carry the GWS designation and are used to designate a Linked course.

Advising Note:

All incoming freshmen must take a First-Year Seminar (FYS) during Fall or Spring of their first year. Academic advisers can provide a list of FYS being offered and help the student enroll. Most FYS in the College of the Liberal Arts are worth 3 cr. and count as a General Humanities (GH) or General Social Sciences (GS) course. For this reason, the FYS is not listed separately on this eight-semester plan; most students will be able to fulfill the FYS requirement while also fulfilling a GH or GS requirement.

Commonwealth Campuses

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.
# Sociology, B.S. (Liberal Arts)

**First Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall Credits</th>
<th>Spring Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>ENGL 15 or 30†</td>
<td>3 SOC XXX*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 1*</td>
<td>3 STAT 200‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3 General Education Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
<td>3 General Education Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS 100‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC XXX*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Sciences Field I*</td>
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<tr>
<td>MATH 110 or 140§*</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course</td>
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<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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<tr>
<th>Third Year</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC 207*</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAS 283 or MATH 441†</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC 4xx level course*</td>
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<td>Social Science Field I*</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT 480*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fall Credits</td>
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<td>SOC 400W*</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC 4xx level course*</td>
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<td>Social Science Field I*</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Health and Wellness (GHW)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elective</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 121-126

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
† Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
‡ Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
§ Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

**University Requirements and General Education Notes:**

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy University Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GHW, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GHW, GN, GA, GH, GS, and Integrative Studies). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of “C” or better.

Integrative Studies courses are required for the General Education program. N is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate an Inter-Domain course and Z is the suffix at the end of a course number used to designate a Linked course.

**Career Paths**

Sociology offers you a background in research, data analysis, statistics, and sociological concepts. You can explore positions in social work, corrections, business, health services and government services. Additionally, you’ll be well prepared to further your education in graduate school.

**Careers**

The Sociology degree prepares you for graduate school in sociology or a variety of careers in social science-oriented jobs.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL CAREER OPTIONS FOR GRADUATES OF THE SOCIETY PROGRAM ([http://sociology.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/career-and-professional-development/](http://sociology.la.psu.edu/undergraduate/career-and-professional-development/))

**Opportunities for Graduate Studies**

Ranked among the top sociology programs in the nation, the Penn State Graduate Program in Sociology offers students the flexibility to study a wide range of topics, reflecting both the size and intellectual breadth of the faculty. Our department provides strong training in the areas of Demography, Families, Relationships and Interpersonal Networks, Quantitative Research Methods, Social Inequality, Urban and Community Studies, Health, Immigration and Incorporation.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDIES ([http://sociology.la.psu.edu/graduate/](http://sociology.la.psu.edu/graduate/))

**Professional Resources**

- The International Sociology Honor Society ([http://alphakappadelta.org/](http://alphakappadelta.org/))

**Contact**

**University Park**

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND CRIMINOLOGY

211 Oswald Tower

University Park, PA 16802

814-865-2527

sociology@psu.edu

[http://sociology.la.psu.edu/](http://sociology.la.psu.edu/)