

NAVIGATING THE SOCIOLOGY MAJOR

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Welcome to the sociology major! As Peter Berger (1963) wrote in his classic book *Invitation to Sociology*², you are embarking on a journey that will lead you to embrace a very special kind of passion, one that will build a curiosity to view the human social experience from a variety of different perspectives. This passion is not satisfied with small answers or small questions. What causes crime? Who succeeds and why? Why do people engage in altruism - or conversely – commit acts of violence against one another? Over the course of the next few years, professors will ask you to consider issues such as these and to develop answers to questions of your own choosing. This is an ambitious mission.

The reality is that the time spent pursuing courses in the major will comprise only a small proportion of your education and life, which makes the issue of navigating the degree wisely a pressing concern. Of course there are nuts-and-bolts concerns of how to select courses that meet the requirements of your program. But beyond this, our advice is intended to help put the sociology major into a larger map that goes well beyond obtaining the necessary credits toward a degree, or landing a job upon graduation. To fully understand what one wants to accomplish through the major requires considering what one wants gain from a college education.

THE LIBERAL ARTS

Many students (and their parents) consider the selection of a college and the major as important steps on the path toward attaining a good job. They are right to do so. More than ever, a college education is critical to achieving career success (Levy 1998; Reich 2002; Sweet and Meiksins 2008). As is the case with other liberal arts majors, sociology majors are prepared to move into careers quite distinct from their immediate interests. Sociology majors are well positioned to work with people from diverse backgrounds and with diverse needs, as well as inform, implement, and analyze social policies. The major opens doors to internships and research opportunities that will help build a record of accomplishment. But it is important to recognize that a liberal arts education is designed to go beyond professional training. It is intended to prepare students for wider responsibilities associated with citizenship and leadership.

A liberal arts education trains students to think critically – to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas – in the context of a broad education in the humanities, fine arts, social sciences, natural sciences, and mathematics. As Benjamin Bloom (1984) argues, the liberal arts are “liberal not in any political sense, but in terms of liberating and opening the mind, and preparing students for responsible action.” For this reason, students enrolled in liberal arts programs are expected to pursue a broad education that exposes them to divergent ideas, new ways of knowing, and alternate forms of expression.

¹ Our thanks to Carla Howery and the American Sociological Association for support of this project, as well as to our colleagues Susanne Morgan and Evan Cooper for their comments and helpful suggestions.

² Many of your professors read this book when they were students. It is still worth reading. Pick up a copy!

The highly influential report “Greater Expectations: A New Vision for Learning as a Nation Goes to College” (2002) makes the following claim:

The best undergraduate education for the twenty-first century will be based on a liberal education that produces an individual who is intentional about learning and life, empowered, informed, and responsible. ... Liberal education for the new century looks beyond the campus to the issues of society and the workplace. It aims to produce global thinkers. Quality liberal education prepares students for active participation in the private and public sectors, in a diverse democracy, and in an even more diverse global community. It has the strongest impact when studies reach beyond the classroom to the larger community, asking students to apply their developing analytical skills and ethical judgment to concrete problems in the world around them, and to connect theory with the insights gained from practice (pg 25).

In sum, a liberal arts education is designed to prepare you to live a rich life, to participate fully in public affairs, and to pursue a wide range of careers. It is a very different type of education than that which occurs in professional programs. It expects students to assume control of the direction of their learning, and to select courses and concentrations of courses (including the major) from a wide range of options. Its goal is not to have you master a limited range of technical skills (it is expected that these will be learned on the job), but rather to prepare you to make knowledgeable and responsible decisions on and off the job. In order to accomplish this goal, a liberal arts education requires breadth – exposure to a wide range of knowledge – both inside and outside of the major. And because sociologists study so many different facets of life, their education necessarily requires becoming well versed in other disciplines, including history, psychology, economics, anthropology, political science, philosophy, literature, and natural sciences. While courses in these disciplines appear external to the major, they are actually central to the sociology major’s education, providing opportunities to bring knowledge back to the study of society and human experience.

SOCIOLOGY: A LIBERAL ARTS MAJOR

Within liberal arts programs, a near universal requirement is for students to major in at least one discipline, which enables them to go into far greater depth and refine their critical thinking skills. But concentrating study in such a manner is not meant to prepare you for one specific career. Rather it is part of a larger effort to foster the development of a well-rounded individual who can bring a sophisticated understanding of society and its operations.

Virtually every sociology course, whatever its specific topic, has at its core the goal of instilling what C. Wright Mills (1959) termed “the sociological imagination.”

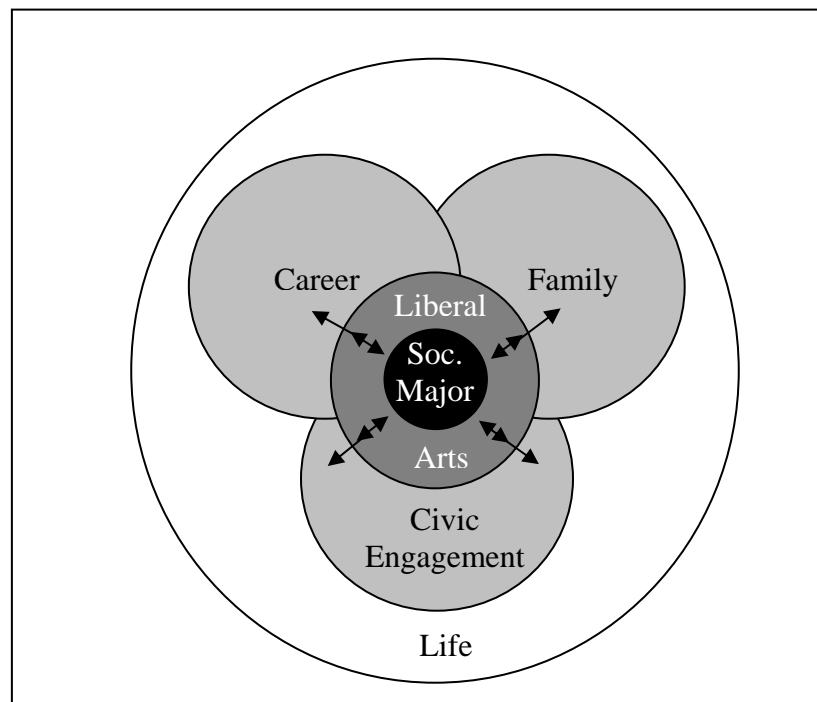
What [people] need, and what they feel they need, is a quality of mind that will help them to use information and to develop reason in order to achieve lucid summations of what is going on in the world and of what may be

happening within themselves. It is this quality ... that journalists and scholars, artists and publics, scientists and editors are coming to expect of what may be called the sociological imagination.

The sociological imagination enables its possessor to understand the larger scene in terms of its meaning for the inner life and the external career of a variety of individuals. It enables [him or her] to take into account how individuals, in the welter of their daily experience, often become falsely conscious of their social positions. Within that welter, the framework of modern society is sought, and within that framework the psychologies of a variety of men and women are formulated. By such means the personal uneasiness of individuals is focused upon explicit troubles and the indifference of publics is transformed into involvement with public issues (Mills 1959:5).

Sociology, for many, is a passion. It drives us to consider not only our own personal problems, but also those experienced by others. As we illustrate in Box 1, once a student is hooked on sociology, it commonly becomes a central influence in the biography they chart, their career options and plans, their construction their own family lives, and commitments to the wider community (the sense of duty to others, political views, etc.). It is not unusual for new sociology majors to find that their world had been turned “upside-down,” and that their plans for the future in need of substantial revision.

Box 1: The Intersections of the Major, the Liberal Arts, and Life



Note - Diagram Not Drawn to Scale!

COURSES AND COURSEWORK

What Courses Should I Take?

Very few sociology students come to college with the intent of majoring in sociology. Most discover sociology by accident, perhaps gravitating into the major because of an especially interesting introductory level sociology course. You may recall the moment when you began to formulate linkages between individual experiences and the all-encompassing cultural and structural arrangements. Ideally, these “aha!” events will continue throughout the major, but with refined insight and greater nuance to contextual concerns. Maintaining a high frequency of these events, and fostering intellectual growth, will require you to strategically select courses within the wider offerings. For most sociology majors, the question of “what courses should I take?” comes down to a happy choice of selecting the best of many different potentially positive course options. There will be considerable discretion to explore diverse course offerings and to gravitate to classes that sound interesting, even if they have no immediately apparent link to your future career goals.

Any place where people interact or leave marks on the world can provide fodder for study and learning. This enables sociology departments to offer numerous courses that range from popular culture, social change, and poverty, to intimate romantic encounters. Some sociology courses examine how society is fragmented into different subgroups, considering how gender, race, class, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, and other socially constructed divisions separate individuals from one another. Other courses, or course components, illuminate social cohesion and the common values that underpin social order. While some courses focus on individuals and small group encounters, others analyze organizational arrangements (such as workplaces, healthcare systems, and schools) and even international relations and globalization. The simplest answer to the question “what courses should I take?” is “what courses strike you as interesting?” But you can go beyond this to consider the breadth and depth of knowledge you want to achieve, as well as the timing of when you should take different courses as you pursue your degree.

Should I Strive to be an Expert or a Generalist?

Here is a challenge that is especially salient to sociology. Should sociology majors try to become experts (know everything about something), or generalists (know something about everything). The answer is that they should strive for both goals, and do so by clustering their inquiries to focus on specific types of issues (such as gender, crime, race, inequality), but also to diversify their knowledge so that they can make connections that might otherwise go unnoticed.

Diversifying your course selection facilitates the development of understandings of how the confluence of social structures and cultures affect lives. For example, consider how a budding criminologist will benefit by taking courses relating to income inequality and gender. Why are there so many poor people in prison? Why are so many men but so few women incarcerated? Conversely, students with intense interests in social class or gender may be well served by taking a course in criminology to understand how the

criminal justice system operates and intersects with these social markers. Note also how diversifying the selection of sociology courses embraces the spirit of the liberal arts education – to explore and to find new ways of thinking. In fact, the American Sociological Association recommends that all sociology majors be exposed to courses that place a major focus on gender, racial diversity, and class inequality, as well as multi-cultural, cross-cultural, and cross-national content (McKinney, Howery, Strand, Kain, and Berheide 2004). While faculty are responsible for designing programs that enable students to satisfy these goals, students such as yourself are as responsible – as you will be the one to select courses that fit into this overarching plan for intellectual growth.

On the other hand, many sociology majors develop strong interests in particular areas in sociology and rightly pursue clusters of courses that address a specific issue or population. Some departments even offer concentrations that direct students into pre-designed course clusters (such as criminal justice studies, gender studies, or race and ethnicity). However, even when departments offer specific concentrations, not all students will find their interests met. For example, few sociology departments offer concentrations in disability studies. Fortunately, students interested in this topic will be able to find other courses (such as Sociology of Education, Social Work, Medical Sociology, Social Policy, and Sociology of Families) that open opportunities to consider disability from different vantage points. The key is to think of how each course can be used to create connections between institutional arrangements and populations, and then to focus term papers and research projects accordingly.

When Should I Take Different Courses?

Ideally your pursuit of the major should help you build knowledge in a progressive fashion. Course reference numbers, such as 100, 200, 300, and 400 indicate levels roughly equivalent to what students should gravitate towards in their freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior years (respectively). This is not a hard and fast arrangement. Some courses are offered only periodically and they need to be grabbed when the opportunity arises. However, by the time you are in your junior and senior years, you should take mostly 300 and 400 level courses in the major. By the same token, lower level sociology courses should be avoided in the final years of study, as these will likely present simplified versions of what can be addressed in more sophisticated upper level classes or through guided independent studies.

Most sociology departments require their majors to take courses in Research Methods, Theory, and Statistics – and for good reason. These areas of inquiry foster the development of abilities to frame studies, interpret findings, and link analyses to the understanding of the fabric that constitutes society. Sociology is an empirical science, and much of our ability to gauge issues such as inequality, opportunity, and social change requires an ability to link measurement strategies with theoretical explanations. Like it or not, this requires knowing statistics, understanding the techniques of collecting information, learning how to construct a theory based on observation, and acquiring the skills to assess the merits of alternate explanations. Courses in Research Methods, Theory, and Statistics teach these skills. They prepare students to not only learn about sociological facts and perspectives, but also to *engage* in sociology and put this knowledge to work.

Many students feel intimidated by these courses and, as a consequence, delay taking them until late in their program. We recommend that students take statistics early in their careers as sociology majors. This provides them with a basis for understanding and evaluating many research articles. In our experience, students tend to do best in (and get the most out of) Research Methods and Theory if they take them after being exposed to at least a few sociology courses. But we also urge students not to put these courses off until their final semesters as these courses enable knowledge to be put to use in subsequent classes, such as designing one's own research project as part of an independent study course. For these reasons, we suggest that Research Methods and Sociological Theory be taken in the middle of the major – which for most students will be during the second semester sophomore year, or beginning semester of the junior year.

How Many Sociology Courses Should I Take?

Every so often we find ourselves advising a student who wants nothing more than to eat, drink, and breathe sociology. Imagine eating cake for every meal of the day. There can be too much of a good thing! Furthermore, as we discussed earlier, a broad range of course work outside of sociology can greatly enhance the potential to get the most out of sociology courses.

Sociology departments specify a minimum number of courses to be taken within the major, and the quantity of courses you will need each semester will vary depending on how late you identified sociology as a declared major. For some students, there may be good reason to take courses beyond these minimums, but for most, using the remaining course opportunities to explore issues outside of the major will be as valuable.

One useful activity is to create an anticipated schedule of sociology courses so that they occur evenly throughout the pursuit of the degree. For instance, students who enter into a program that requires 14 courses, and who begin their sociology major in their first year, need to take only about 2 courses per semester to satisfy the requirements. But if they begin to follow the calling of sociology in their sophomore year or later, they may need to take 3 (or possibly more) courses in some semesters. Appendix A offers a worksheet that will help you to make these calculations.

How Should I Select (or Avoid) Professors?

While course topics should be the primary consideration in selecting what classes to take, a related concern is selecting professors. Students commonly ask academic advisors their opinion concerning Professor X or Professor Y. But there are reasons to wonder if this is the right person to ask, as the question places the advisor in a situation that can present competing obligations to demonstrate collegial loyalty and to provide you with useful advice. What risks could an advisor face if she speaks candidly to her students about a colleague's challenged teaching skills? Can one expect complete honesty? There also is the possibility that the advisor knows little about what goes on behind the closed doors of her colleagues' classes.

Some students rely on the popular internet site *ratemyprofessor.com*. What would a sociologist think about using this site as a means of gauging which professors are good teachers and which are to be avoided like the plague? Consider the merits of the

sample. Which students take the time out of their busy lives to log in reviews? How many reviews are submitted for each professor? Are there any quality controls over who can and cannot submit reviews? All of these concerns suggest major sample biases and caution against relying on these data.

But there are ways of getting a sense of who classes from in advance of registering for your courses. Some colleges and universities, such as the University of New Hampshire, post student course evaluations. Alternately, you can talk to other students and ask their opinions about different faculty and the courses they offer. This type of purposive sample, while small, can give far better insight than the anonymous offerings on an uncontrolled website.

As with courses, most students will benefit by both clustering and diversifying the professors who teach their courses, and to do so by considering their own particular interests and future career needs. Whether the next step is graduate school, job, or service work, sociology majors will need references to vouch for their skills and character. With this in mind, most majors benefit by taking two or more courses with individual professor(s) and by getting to know them during office hours or over coffee. But most importantly, ***get these professors to know you.***

How can you become recognized? Apart from doing well in your courses, you should make it clear to your professors that you want to be engaged and challenged. If you found something of interest in one of your classes, ask your professor for advice on further readings. When you are doing assignments, seek guidance early in the projects. This will help your professors shape your work and learn of your interests. Ask your professors to be advisors in your clubs and organizations. Send them clippings of items you observed in the news that you think they might find of interest. Are your professors doing research? If so, ask them about their projects and inquire if they might need your assistance. Sometimes they may even be able to pay you for these efforts or include you as a co-author on an article or presentation!

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM

Successful sociology majors are successful liberal arts students - they take a wide range of courses inside and outside of the major, and strive for excellence in their classes. And like other liberal arts students, sociology majors are encouraged to go beyond classroom confines. They are pushed to consider their role in society, and their responsibilities to make the world a better place. We have had many students over the years perform outstanding work in their courses, but the ones we really pull for are those who become engaged in campus affairs and the wider community. Consider, for example, the accomplishments of Joseph Piko Ewoodzie (Box 2). Here we consider some of the strategies Piko adopted and ways that you might think of pursuing similar objectives to build your career and a better world.

Box 2: A Student Who Took Control of His Sociology Major



Joseph “Piko” Ewoodzie shows what a student can accomplish when he assumes ownership of the sociology major. Piko came to Ithaca College as an undeclared liberal arts student and declared his major in sociology in his sophomore year. In his junior year he worked as an undergraduate teaching assistant and helped a faculty member lead student discussions. In the summer preceding his senior year he pursued an internship in the Summer Research Opportunity Program at the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he wrote full length research project *The New White Negro in Hip Hop—A Critical Study of Eminem*. In his senior year Piko studied abroad in Ecuador. He joined numerous organizations on campus and became the founding editor of the *Ithaca College Journal of Race, Culture, Gender and Ethnicity*. He is now pursuing a doctoral degree in sociology at the University of Wisconsin – Madison.

Internships

One thing that Piko did was pursue educational experiences that went beyond the classroom confines. Sociology departments commonly offer opportunities for students to engage in internships in the local community. These can include work at shelters, in schools, police departments, correctional facilities, and many other interesting organizational locations. Like employers, sponsors want interns who demonstrate responsibility and clear motivations to work with their clients.

How does one become an intern? Many departments have a list of participating organizations and can direct students to positions that have already been identified. New opportunities can also be created through student initiated internships. These require students to consult with an academic advisor, and to also seek out a sponsor who may not have worked with students in the past.

Box 3 illustrates some of the opportunities available to students who take initiative in seeking internships at the national level. The National Science Foundation sponsors numerous paid research opportunities for undergraduates (http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.cfm). Other opportunities for paid internships can be found through Resource Guide of Summer Opportunities for Minority Undergraduate Students (<http://www.doorsofopportunity.org/>), or through the National Internship Guide (<http://www.internships.com/>). It is also worth checking if your college has an internship coordinator, who may be able to direct you to additional opportunities.

Box 3: National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduate Sites (Samples from 2007).

California State Chico Research Foundation

Rural Crime and Justice

Michigan Technological University

Sustainability

University of California

Summer Program in Ethnographic Research on LA at Play

University of Hawaii

Integrating the Study of Hawaiian Landscapes through Archaeology, Geography, Hawaiian Studies, and History

University of South Florida

Florida Mental Health Institute Summer Research Experience for Undergraduates

University of Texas

Undergraduate Research in Minority Group Demography

Washington University

Interdisciplinary Research on Aging

Note- These programs offer paid internships during summer months and are open to students throughout the nation. For most current listing see

http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.cfm

Study Abroad

Piko also considered understanding cultural values to be central to his education, and recognized that if he remained bound to restricted social networks, he would face considerable challenges in developing an appreciation of the ways social experiences and life chances vary. For many students, college offers a rare opportunity to pull up roots, to explore the world, and make new friends through study abroad. For the sociology major, such experiences can be extremely valuable as they offer a chance to see their own society, and its values, from outside perspectives. The ideal time to study abroad is during the junior, or the first semester of the senior year.

Civic Engagement

A call to *public sociology*, one felt by many sociologists, requires putting sociological knowledge and perspectives to use in the advancement of society (Burawoy 2005; Feagin and Vera 2001). Like Piko, all students can play a significant role in this initiative by involving themselves in the liberation and the humanization of social relations. Most campuses have service organizations that bring student volunteers into the community, such as Key Club, Rotoract, and Habitat for Humanity.

As important as these service groups are, they are often criticized as being “band-aid” approaches that leave intact the underlying causes of hardship. Sociology majors are

ideally positioned to reflect on the extent to which these (and other) groups remedy social problems, and to organize students to respond to pressing social concerns and to create innovative solutions to these problems. A good example can be found in student campaigns against labor abuses, which have fostered the development of campus chapters of United Students Against Sweatshops and United Students for Fair Trade. By pressuring colleges and universities to sever contracts with companies that exploit their employees, these student groups have made very real differences in the lives of workers (Crawford 2003). Efforts to increase social awareness of injustice have also led to the formation of student chapters of Amnesty International, the National Organization for Women, and other activist groups.

The key is for sociology majors to consider those elements of social relations that need change - on their campus and beyond its confines - and then to strategically organize fellow students to exert pressure on policy makers, consumers, or other stakeholders. Recall that students have been at the forefront of many battles, including civil rights, women's rights, and anti-war protests. There are sociological explanations for their leadership in these movements, including the ability to use social networks, the limited losses experienced for involvement, the amount of discretionary time that can be spent on activism, and the optimism shared by young adults that they can make a difference in their world (Loeb 1994).

PREPARING FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Ultimately, college is a place to prepare students for their future responsibilities in society. While our advice thus far has been designed for students just entering the sociology major, it is worth briefly considering what will happen at the end of the major, and how to prepare oneself for what lays ahead in the more distant future.

Presenting Oneself to Employers

A choice to major in sociology is a statement about who you are and where your interests gravitate. When sociology majors apply for jobs, prospective employers are likely to view them as people who care about others, and who want to make the world a better place. There are numerous jobs open to undergraduates who have majored in sociology, opportunities summarized in the American Sociological Association's (2006a) book *Careers with an Undergraduate Degree in Sociology*.

Majoring in sociology gives students certain skills that they should emphasize either in the body of the resume, in cover letters, and in interviews. These can include the abilities to:

Understand social processes and contextual experiences

- Identify how cultural, economic, historical, and institutional factors affect individual experience
- Contribute to the accommodation of a multicultural workforce

Develop evidence-based arguments

- Engage advanced critical thinking skills

Work effectively in groups and on projects

Lead peers in formal and informal leadership roles
Synthesize group discussions into written report
Engage in internships; fieldwork

Perform quantitative and qualitative research

Use statistical software such as Excel or the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
Use computer resources to develop reference list
Design and implement research such as experiments, surveys, ethnographies, and content analyses
Interpret statistical information

Communicate information to others

Write reports
Present in public forums
Interpret and translate research for general audiences

Keep in mind that ultimately your goal is not to land one job, but to carve a successful **career** and an enriching life. Chance plays a big role in the direction people's lives take over time, and you will not always be in a position of control. But what you can do is develop an expansive repertoire of skills and a wide network of social connections, which will enable you to cultivate opportunities. Doing well in your courses will be a good start.

Applying to Graduate School in Sociology

Some sociology majors decide to go on for graduate studies in sociology. A Ph.D. is generally required for those who would like a career in teaching and research in colleges and universities. A Ph.D. or master's degree also opens doors for careers in research and policy centers.

Unlike professional training in fields such as law, medicine, social work, and education, most graduate programs for Ph.D. students (and this is true for most fields, not just sociology) cover the cost of tuition and living expenses for many of their students. In exchange, most graduate students work as teaching assistants or research assistants.

The American Sociological Association's (2006b) *Guide to Graduate Departments of Sociology* offers information on faculty, financial aide, the size of the program, and other important information. When the time comes, it is well worth the effort to examine at this resource carefully. If attending graduate school is one of your goals, here are some things you can do as you progress through the major.

- Do well in your courses. Graduate programs want students who demonstrate the ability to perform excellent work in their classes.
- Set yourself apart from your peers by going beyond your classes and becoming an engaged student.

- Speak to faculty members in your current department who share your interests. Likely, you will have taken one or more courses from these professors. They will know you personally and should be able not only to direct you to programs that are strong in your particular interests, and also to schools that will provide a good fit for your personal strengths and needs.
- Note the authors of contemporary sociology books and articles that you find particularly interesting and compelling. Find out where these authors are and, if they are in institutions with graduate programs, investigate those schools. After you have researched their programs and their scholarship, it may be appropriate (and in some circumstances strategic) to contact these individuals. But remember, they will likely have many other pressing obligations, so be direct and present yourself in the best possible light in these encounters.
- Pay attention to location. Ph.D. programs can take six years (or more) to complete. It is worth trying to find a place where you would like to live (and a place that is affordable). Also, location can make certain types of research more or less difficult. For example, students who are interested in urban sociology would do well to select a graduate program in an urban setting.
- Make sure to clarify funding arrangements before you accept an offer of admission to a graduate program.

Alternate Paths

Many students complete their undergraduate degrees and spend a year or two working in a service organization such as the Peace Corps, Teach for America, AmeriCorps, etc. These are wonderful opportunities for all students, and provide important services. Sociology majors are well equipped for work in such organizations. For those students planning to go on for graduate degrees, a year or two of such work provides grounding in “the real world.”

CONCLUSION

Ultimately the course you chart through the major, through college, and through life, will be influenced by a variety of factors – some within your control, but many others beyond it. And even if you think you know where you want to end up, there are great possibilities that your destination will be very different from the one you are setting out to pursue. In this spirit of a liberal arts education, consider our advice on charting the sociology major as a call to explore and to engage in a rich and rewarding education. Push yourself, strive for excellence, and make a difference.

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Appendix A
Worksheet for Planning the Major

Pace of Courses

- A. How many courses to satisfy the major _____
- B. How many sociology courses already taken _____
- C. Number of courses needed (A-B) _____
- D. How many semesters until I would like to graduate _____
- E. Number of sociology courses needed each semester (C/D) _____

Required courses

- _____ Introduction to sociology
- _____ Research Methods
- _____ Theory
- _____ Statistics
- _____ Other required course _____
- _____ Other required course _____

Ideal Courses in the Major

Look in course catalog and list out the courses you would like to explore in the major. These can be integrated into each semester's course selection as they become available. Ideally, take these courses in a progressive fashion with lower division courses taken first, followed by upper division classes. Think about having a diverse set of courses, but also some clusters.

Have you selected some courses that focus on.....

- _____ Gender
- _____ Race
- _____ Class
- _____ Multicultural & International Concerns

Ideal Courses in the Liberal Arts Degree

Look in course catalog and list these out. These can be integrated into each semester's course selection as they become available. Ideally, take these courses in a progressive fashion with lower division courses taken first, followed by upper division classes. Each semester try to have at least one course that you take simply because it sounds interesting or fun.

What are my grade point average (GPA) goals?

GPA in the major _____

GPA in the degree _____

In what clubs or activities could I become involved?

Do I plan to study abroad or perform an internship?

Where? _____

When? _____

What are my career plans?

If I don't know my career plans, when will I visit the campus career counseling center?

What do I need to accomplish to pursue my goals before graduating?

The Sociology Major combines a solid foundation in sociological theories, perspectives, methods, and analysis, with the opportunity to focus your elective courses around topics that interest you. The Sociology Major requires just 10 courses – 3 core courses and 7 electives. The core courses provide an overview of sociological theories and methods that unite us as a discipline. These 3 courses are

Sociology majors also have the opportunity to volunteer during class and do fieldwork while earning credits toward graduation. They can make an impact in their community by creating programs or guides that provide solutions to social issues. By integrating real-life situations into their coursework, sociology majors learn how to navigate complex situations through hands-on experience. Sociology majors develop a well-rounded way to strategize and adapt to new situations or diverse business environments in both their personal and professional lives. Find Sociology Programs. Interested in majoring in sociology? Find the perfect match today using our advanced search tool. You'll also likely want to vie for an internship or entry-level job in both your undergrad and graduate studies to gain valuable experience that will make you a more appealing candidate when it comes time to start sending out resumes for more significant opportunities. Sociology provides the base for a variety of jobs. Becoming a sociologist is the obvious jump after leaving college, where you can go to work for the government, universities, nonprofits, or private businesses with some kind of stake in behavioral patterns (perhaps they're selling a certain product or service and need to figure out the best targeted demographic). Sociology Majors Guide. Updated On March 12, 2018 | WorldWideLearn Editors. Home » Sociology professionals can play a prominent role at major investigative bureaus. Working alongside detectives and profilers, sociologists can help law enforcement officials anticipate crime by identifying obscure patterns in criminal activities. Targeting areas that are likely to be the focus of criminals helps officials to deploy their limited resources more effectively. The Sociology Major combines a solid foundation in sociological theories, perspectives, methods, and analysis, with the opportunity to focus your elective courses around topics that interest you. The Sociology Major requires just 10 courses – 3 core courses and 7 electives. The core courses provide an overview of sociological theories and methods that unite us as a discipline. These 3 courses are Declaring a Major or Minor in Sociology. Please complete the online Declaration of Major/Minor form by clicking here for the Office of Undergraduate Education webpage containing OUE Forms and then choosing (and submitting online) the "Declaration of Major/Minor Form." After submitting your request by way of that form, you must click here to make an appointment with Brandon Mitchell, our Undergraduate Program Coordinator. At that appointment meeting, Brandon Mitchell will review with you the sociology requirements and the sociology opportunities available. He will also assign you a re