

# Department of Sociology and Criminology

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## MISSION STATEMENT

The Department of Sociology and Criminology seeks to educate students about the richness and diversity of social life and prepare them for professional careers. Department faculty offer students opportunities to cultivate the development of sociological and criminological perspectives, which link the individual to history, society and culture. We accomplish this through a variety of pedagogical practices both inside and outside of the classroom, enhancing critical intelligence (independent thinking), fostering compassionate service, and encouraging students to become informed, deliberative and engaged citizens.

Drawing on the theoretical and analytical tools of sociology and criminology, students are taught to use the results of empirical investigation to look under the surface of social phenomena and to probe the taken-for-granted social world in which they live. Developing the requisite skills to accomplish this also prepares students to compete successfully in the 21st century global economy where critical thinking, writing, and oral communication are at a premium.

The Department of Sociology and Criminology contributes to a liberal arts education within the context of Catholic intellectual traditions by encouraging self-discovery and promoting social justice. The department educates students to understand their world and encourages them to work for social change.

## LEARNING GOALS

The Department of Sociology and Criminology has identified the following specific learning goals for our students:

- 1) To develop an understanding of sociological and criminological approaches to analyzing and addressing the complex interactions between individuals and societal, historical and cultural forces;
- 2) To appreciate the diverse ways of being human and understand the need for multicultural awareness;
- 3) To better understand how social inequality is based upon divisions of class, race, ethnicity, gender, age, and sexual orientation;
- 4) To gain specific competencies in social research;
- 5) To acquire the essential skills for successful careers and post-graduate education.

## MINOR IN SOCIOLOGY (6)

Students who wish to minor in Sociology will be required to take 18 credits in the field. These must include Principles of Sociology (SOC 121) and Sociological Theory (SOC 350). The four elective courses may be selected from any of the required or elective courses that are a part of the Sociology major. Students majoring in Criminology, Data Analytics, Economics, Global Studies, History, Human Services and Rehabilitation Studies, Latin American Studies, Political Science, or Psychology, or intending to go to medical school may find such a minor particularly useful.

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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### SOCIOLOGY (SOC)

#### SOC 121 PRINCIPLES OF SOCIOLOGY

This course consists of an introduction to how the academic discipline of sociology studies the social world and how it can be used outside of higher education to raise awareness about public issues, inform social policy, and be used in a range of occupations. The student will become acquainted with the approaches, methods, and findings of contemporary sociology and

the ongoing process of understanding social interaction, groups, problems, and sociocultural systems. Topics covered may include socialization, social inequality, deviance, the corporation and occupational roles, the community, interrelationships, change of institutions, and other related subjects. This course counts in the Core Curriculum as a social science in either Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning or Person and Society. (Fall, Spring)

*Staff/Three credits*

### **SOC 122 SOCIAL PROBLEMS**

This course is an introduction to the discipline of sociology, the study of social interaction and institutions as it relates to contemporary American social problems. The course will focus on several sociological perspectives that are used to analyze such problems as poverty, homelessness, racism, sexism, addiction, crime, delinquency, ageism, and health care. This course counts in the Core Curriculum as a social science in either Scientific and Quantitative Reasoning or Person and Society. (Fall, Spring)

*Biggert, Prior/Three credits*

### **SOC 206 THE SOCIOLOGY OF URBAN LIFE**

This course examines the patterns, causes, and consequences of urbanization and suburbanization. While the major focus will be on the development of cities, metropolitan areas, and megalopolitan regions within the United States, a major goal of the course is to understand the increasingly critical role that economic globalization plays in creating uneven development and decline within and among cities and metropolitan regions throughout the world. Specific topics to be investigated include: urban renewal and redevelopment; residential segregation; gentrification; conflicts over land use; urban planning; and the problems of concentrated poverty and crime in central cities.

*Prior/Three credits*

### **SOC 216 RACIAL AND ETHNIC RELATIONS**

This course explores how race and ethnicity structure social relations and identities in the United States. Students will become familiar with the history of race and ethnicity in the U.S. and why it continues to be a central aspect of social life. The course will also focus on a variety of debates regarding the persistence of institutionalized racism and white privilege in the post-Civil Rights era. The process of how class, gender, and sexuality structure various racial and ethnic groups will be explored as well. Current issues on race and ethnicity addressed in this class include: racial profiling, immigration, increasing diversity in the U.S., affirmative action, Ebonics, reverse discrimination, post-September 11th forms of discrimination, and unequal access to employment, housing, and mortgages by race.

*Farough/Three credits*

### **SOC 218 SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

The course will analyze the internal dynamics and external environments of social movements as mechanisms of social change. It will examine several case studies of American social movements, focusing on their rise and fall and their impact on institutions.

*Biggert/Three credits*

### **SOC 223 THE FAMILY IN SOCIETY**

A study of the institution of the family from historical and cross-cultural perspectives that focuses on the relationship between other social developments and changes in family structure. A comparative view will be conjoined with a problems approach in order to examine contemporary family patterns and their alternatives.

*Staff/Three credits*

### **SOC 224 GENDER ISSUES IN SOCIETY**

This course addresses gender inequalities, practices, and identities from a sociological perspective. This means that gender differences and inequalities are socially produced and vary across history and cultures. In this course, students will become familiar with more recent sociological research that argues gender is a central institution in social life, organizing "men" and "women" into specific social practices and positions within the social structure. This course will also explore how gender inequality and differences interact with race, class, and sexuality. Specific areas of study include the changing roles of masculinity and femininity in work, family, sexuality, health, religion, education, and marriage.

*Farough/Three credits*

**SOC 225 LITERATURE OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: COMMUNITY SERVICE LEARNING**

An interdisciplinary course that offers students a combination of academic classroom learning and experiential learning in the community. Students will read contemporary American fiction and sociological monographs and cultural analyses, using these ideas to think critically about political, economic, and social issues in the community. Same as ENG 225.

Land/*Three credits*

**SOC 232 SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN SOCIETY**

The purpose of this course is to focus on social inequality in the United States. Topics to be covered include the dimensions of stratification, theories of social stratification, social class, social mobility, occupational prestige, status attainment, poverty, wealth, and racial and sexual inequality in the United States.

Biggert/*Three credits*

**SOC 234 SOCIAL POLICY**

This course examines the nature, purposes, and effectiveness of social policy in America. It looks at the relationship of society and politics, as well as the processes of creation and implementation of social reforms. The role of government, the corporate sector, social science, the media, and the public in shaping social policy is examined. The course presents an assessment of the successes and failures of American social programs having to do with children and their families, income support, the elderly, health care, education, energy, and the environment. The skills and topics provided centrally address one of the major tenets of public sociology: how it informs the public about social policy outcomes and how the discipline can shape social policy for the greater good.

Biggert/*Three credits*

**SOC 250 PUBLIC SOCIOLOGY**

This course introduces students to how the discipline of sociology can be used in the real world for the purpose of contributing to the greater good. Public Sociology therefore links the formal study of sociological phenomena conducted in higher education and professional social science research to various audiences in the public. Student will learn (1) how sociologists raise awareness about sociological research; (2) how sociological studies can help people engage in social activism and responsible citizenship; (3) how sociological analysis can inform social and public policy; and (4) how sociology can be used in nonprofit, social service, and private enterprise work. Public sociology demonstrates how sociology leads to meaningful careers and participation in our social order. All work will take place on campus. (Spring)

Farough/*Three credits*

**SOC 255 SELECTED TOPICS IN SOCIOLOGY**

This course will permit the study of a selected topic within Sociology. The topic may change each time the course is offered.

Staff/*Three credits*

**SOC 300 STATISTICS**

An introduction to the logic and techniques of statistical analysis in sociology. The focus of the course is on exploratory analysis, including measures of central tendency, dispersion, and hypothesis testing using linear regression including both bivariate and multivariate. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) will be used. This course counts as a second scientific or quantitative reasoning course in the Core Curriculum. (*Fall*)

Biggert/*Three credits*

**SOC 315 MASCULINITIES**

This course explores the lives of men in the United States from a broader social and historical context. It also examines the extent to which masculinity is rooted in biology and culture. Masculinities will also survey contemporary issues facing men such as the relationship between masculinity and the Great Recession; the significant change of gender roles in family and work; the influences of class, race and sexuality on masculinity; the development of social movements centered on men's issues; the relationship between masculinity and major social institutions such as education, government, and military; the interdependent connection between masculinities and femininities; the question of power, privilege and masculinity; and violence against women and bullying.

Farough/*Three credits*

**SOC 350 SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY**

This course will examine the works of the three major classical theorists in sociology (i.e., Durkheim, Marx, and Weber), the theoretical contributions of symbolic interactionists such as Goffman and Geertz, and several major contemporary social theories, including post-structuralism and feminism. Prerequisite: SOC121. (Fall)

Farough /*Three credits*

**SOC 385 INDEPENDENT STUDY**

Individually supervised study of a sociologically relevant topic. Offered only to Senior Sociology majors who have demonstrated an ability for independent research.

Staff/*Three credits*

**SOC 465 SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS**

This course is designed to introduce students to the analysis of sociological and criminological data using the three main methods in the discipline: qualitative, comparative-historical, and quantitative. Specific topics will include: how to select research methods appropriate to the problem under investigation; the relationship between theory and research; how to conduct a literature review; ethical issues involved in conducting social research. Students will get “hand-on” experience using each of the three main research methods by designing and conducting small-scale research projects. Prerequisite: SOC121.

(Spring)

Cares/*Three credits*

**SOC 475 SENIOR SEMINAR**

In this seminar, students will work closely with the instructor – and with each other – to review and synthesize the content of their previous sociology courses to create a major research paper in the tradition of public sociology: taking the disciplinary skills of sociology outside of higher education into the public for the purpose of contributing to the greater good. The course will also incorporate professional development skills, such as resume building, recommended interview etiquette, and how students might present their sociological research to potential employers or graduate programs. This course is a capstone for and required for sociology majors. Prerequisites: SOC121 and SOC 465. (Fall)

Farough/*Three credits*