Sociology
Undergraduate Programs

What is Sociology and Why Study it?
Sociology examines the social aspects and dimensions of most everything human beings do in the realm of politics, economics, culture, technology, relationships and identity. Sociologists conduct research and develop social theory explaining why and how factors like race, ethnicity, class, gender and sexuality influence how human beings behave, think and feel. Sociologists ask such critical questions as: Why do some people possess more power, wealth, authority and influence than others? Why do some people vote more often than others? Why do more men than women advance in scientific and technological jobs? Why do humans change their behavior based on who is observing them? How do processes of globalization change our everyday lives? How do people respond to human diversity? How do human beings go about changing, or maintaining, social norms and social institutions? Asking these kinds of questions allows us to better understand the social environments in which we live and work today.

Studying sociology at SF State provides students critical and reflexive perspectives with which to understand the world. It pushes students to develop the analytical, research and compositional skills necessary to investigate, understand, analyze, explain and improve the world around them.

Sociology courses cover a broad range of topics, including the study of individuals as social actors; the investigation of social institutions such as law, family, media, popular culture, medicine, education and religion; social processes of ethnic, class, gender and sexual inequalities; and the organization of entire societies in global context.

At SF State, sociology faculty and students are especially concerned with questions of social inequality and justice. We consider the social institutions and practices that perpetuate inequality; and we pursue research and practice that promote greater equity and justice in the world. By addressing what we know (evidence), how we know (method of social research) and how we explain or interpret social data (theory and analysis), the undergraduate major in sociology provides the tools and the intellectual framework to better understand the society in which we live, our own place in society and social worlds unlike our own. By providing information that students can use to better understand the complexity and multiplicity of social worlds, the sociology major provides a broad educational experience not a specialized career training program. The department offers a variety of courses of interest to non-majors as well as majors.

Sociology Faculty
The eleven full-time and several part-time faculty members in the department add to students' experiences in the classroom by drawing upon their own backgrounds and current research projects. Faculty members have worked in health delivery systems; anti-domestic violence agencies; public education reform; prison education; environmental movements; youth activism; lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender movements; and organizing women workers around the world. The faculty's research reflects many areas of interest that concern sociologists. Books and articles written by faculty members deal with topics ranging from female workers in Silicon Valley factories; social change in the public school system; the impact of globalization and industrialization upon the Brazilian rain forests; civil society in Japan; art and social movements in Latin America; lesbian and gay sexuality, relationships and family life; citizenship lessons in sexuality education; and youth activism, popular culture and social change in the United States.

A Future in Sociology
Upon graduation, students can continue their education with graduate work in sociology or in a related field such as social work (MSW), public administration (MPA), public health (MPH) or law (JD). After attaining a sociology BA, some graduates pursue a teaching credential for K-12 education. Many professional sociologists teach and/or conduct research in colleges and universities; others work in government, industry or the nonprofit sector. Teaching in colleges and universities often requires a Ph.D., but many community colleges hire instructors with a Master of Arts degree in sociology.

Employers in many different industries and institutions recognize the value of hiring persons with a BA in the liberal arts and social sciences including sociology. Public agencies, nonprofit organizations and large business corporations often look to hire employees with excellent interpersonal, communication and compositional skills. A solid base in research design, data analysis, statistics and sociological concepts helps students compete for support positions in research, policy analysis, program evaluation and other social service endeavors.
Facilities Available to Students

The Sociology Department provides career, post-graduate and program advising to help students make academic and occupational decisions. Faculty encourage students to supplement their Bachelor of Arts in sociology with significant volunteer work related to their interests and with a selection of elective courses that will enhance their employment prospects upon graduation.

The department maintains a sociology student lounge as a place to study, work on research papers, hold study groups or for students to just relax and get to know their sociology peers. The sociology student lounge has several computers that are available for students to work on research projects and papers. The department also has an active student organization, the Sociology Students Association (SSA). SSA organizes a series of events and is a fun way to bring students together and get involved.

The Sociology Major

Required Courses (19 units)
SOC 300 GW  Sociological Analysis - GWAR  
SOC 300 is a prerequisite for all other required courses in the major
SOC 370  Classical Theories of Society
SOC 371  Contemporary Theories of Society  
(SOC 370 or SOC 371 is a prerequisite for SOC 392)
SOC 392  Introduction to Research Methods
SOC 393  Quantitative Analysis of Social Data
SOC 394  Sociological Field Methods
SOC 500  Senior Seminar
SOC 501  Internship: Applied Sociology
SOC 502  Internship Seminar: Applied Sociology

Sociology Electives (23-24 units)
In fulfilling the elective requirements students must complete at least one course from each of the following two areas*

Area 1: Inequalities in the United States
SOC 272  Social Inequality: Poverty, Wealth, and Privilege
SOC 330/  Comparative Race and Ethnicity in the US: Class Gender, and Nation
SOC 362  The Social Construction of Deviance and Conformity
SOC 400/  Variations in Human Sexuality
SOC 455  Punishment and Social Control
SOC 467/  Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Cultures and Society
SOC 468  Social Aspects of Human Sexuality
SOC 469  Gender and Society
SOC 490  Sociology of Popular Culture
SOC 491  Ancestors or Data?: Kulstre, Conflict and NAGPRA

Area 2: Global Inequalities
SOC 461  Ethnic Relations: International Comparisons
SOC 471  Societal Change and Development
SOC 477  Environmental Sociology
SOC 480  City in a Global Society
SOC 481  Sociology of Brazil
SOC 482  Global Immigration and Immigrants
SOC 483  Global Sociology
SOC 484  Population and Social Dynamics
SOC 645  Identities, Inequalities, and Struggles in Latin America

*The remaining units may include additional courses from these areas, 3-4 upper-division units outside sociology upon approval of a sociology advisor and any other course with a sociology prefix including SOC 105, SOC 110, SOC 200, SOC 245 and courses taken at other institutions.

Total units for major 42-43

The Minor Program in Sociology

At least half the units making up the minor (12 units) must be taken in residence and at least half must be upper division. Students must be assigned letter grades for all courses taken toward the minor.

Required Courses (12 units)
SOC 300 GW  Sociological Analysis - GWAR  
SOC 300 is a prerequisite for all other required courses in the minor
SOC 370  Classical Theories of Society
SOC 371  Contemporary Theories of Society  
(SOC 370 or SOC 371 is a prerequisite for SOC 392)
SOC 392  Introduction to Research Methods

Sociology Electives (6-8 units) Select one course from either of the two areas that appear in the B.A. above. The remaining units toward the 18-20 units may include additional courses from these areas or any other course with a sociology prefix including SOC 105, SOC 110, SOC 200, SOC 245 and courses taken at other institutions.

Total units for minor 18-20