

College of Arts & Sciences

Sociology, BA

Broad Learning Goals

- A. To understand the characteristics and dynamics of the social world, and how sociologists attempt to understand it.
- B. To understand the classical sociological theories of Karl Marx, Emile Durkheim, and Max Weber.
- C. To understand major themes and issues in selected examples of contemporary sociological theory.
- D. To understand the nature of sociological research methods, and major examples of scientific research within sociology.
- E. To understand the nature and role of statistical analysis in sociological research.

Student Learning Outcomes

- A1. Students will be able to define social structure (aka social organization) and explain some important elements of social structure, including status, role, class, power, ethnicity, race, gender, and social stratification.
- A2. Students will be able to define culture and explain some important elements of culture, including beliefs, values, norms, and language.
- A3. Students will be able to explain the socialization process and how it operates through at least three major agents of socialization (for example, the family, education, peer groups, and the media).
- B1. Students will be able to explain the major themes of Marxian, Durkheimian, and Weberian perspectives on the social world.
- B2. Students will be able to compare and contrast these perspectives.

- C1. Students will be able to explain the major concepts and assumptions of at least two of the following perspectives in contemporary sociological theory: symbolic interactionist theory, rational choice, utilitarian, and/or exchange theory; phenomenology; the perspective of Parsons, Bourdieu, Giddens, Habermas, or Foucault; feminist theory; socio-biology.
- C2. Students will be able to discuss the merits and limitations of each of the two chosen theoretical perspectives.
- D1. Students will be able to explain the major characteristics of the scientific method.
- D2. Students will be able to explain the major characteristics of surveys, field research/ethnography, and experiments.
- D3. Students will be able to discuss the main ethical concerns sociologists face in conducting research and how sociologists attempt to address those ethical concerns.
- E1. Students will be able to describe the difference between descriptive and inferential statistics.
- E2. Students will be able describe and give examples of what is meant by measures of central tendency and measures of variation.
- E3. Students will be able to explain what is meant by correlation, how knowledge of the correlation between two or more variables helps clarify understanding of the social world, and why correlation does not necessarily imply causation.
- E4. Students will be able to explain the logic of multivariate analysis, including the concept of controlling for variables.