

# Sociology

## The Field of Sociology

Sociology is the scientific study of social interaction and institutions and seeks to understand the social causes and consequences of human behavior. Developing out of philosophy and 19th-century industrial Europe, sociology evolved into a methodologically rigorous, empirically based analysis of social life.

Sociology's main concept—social structure—rests on the observation that society is more than a collection of individuals. As humans interact, they create social structure—a pattern of social arrangements and relationships. The concept of social structure refers to interaction networks, social organization, and power relationships. Studying the social structure helps understand how our choices, attitudes, and behaviors are shaped by the society in which we live.

Sociology can help identify social problems, locate the source of those problems in the social structure, assess their scope and design, and evaluate possible solutions. This understanding helps us take better charge of our lives, to become shapers of society, and not to be just shaped by it. From the sociological perspective, effecting social change necessarily involves understanding social structure.

## The Department of Sociology

Sociology majors receive strong grounding in traditional and contemporary social theory,

methods of conducting social research, and techniques of analyzing social data. Courses with a service-learning component provide students with an opportunity to engage in participant-observation studies, while the Social Research Laboratory (SRL) gives them a chance to participate in survey research. Encouraging student research is one of the hallmarks of sociology at Fresno State.

The program also offers advanced courses on topics ranging from medical sociology, religion, and family to popular culture, deviance, and social movements and social change.

All full-time faculty members have Ph.D.s and have a wide range of interests in the field of sociology. All are involved in the Center for the Study of Social Life in the San Joaquin Valley, which promotes scholarship and research with a regional focus.

Sociology is also the home to the Humanics Program, which prepares students and community members for professional positions in public benefit corporations and offers national certification in administration and leadership.

## Careers in Sociology

The study of sociology provides students with a rewarding academic experience as well as a variety of career possibilities. The American Sociological Association notes in surveys that people who have majored in sociology have some of the highest levels of job satisfaction, regardless of career choice.

A baccalaureate degree in sociology provides strong liberal arts preparation for entry-level positions in social services, business, and government. The degree serves as a launching point for careers in journalism, politics, public relations, business, and public administration. When combined with the Humanics Certificate, the degree opens up another area for employment: non-governmental organizations. Likewise, for those interested in attaining professional degrees, sociology provides a rich fund of knowledge that directly pertains to fields such as law, education, medicine, social work, and counseling.

## Future Education

Professional sociologists have an M.A. or a Ph.D. in the field. Graduate degrees in related fields may be necessary for careers in law, social work, counseling, criminology, library science, public administration, and business. Other avenues of potential employment with a graduate degree in sociology include urban planning, survey research, demography, human resource management, consultancy, policy analysis, and community development.

## General Preparation

Ideally, sociology students are curious about the world around them. Analyzing people's behavior and discovering patterns in social life should be both an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

**California State  
University, Fresno**

**Department of  
Sociology**

**559.278.2234**

**B.A. in Sociology**

**Minor in Sociology**

**Humanics Nonprofit  
Community Benefit  
Certificate**

**Certificate in Applied  
Sociological Research  
Methods**

**FRESNO STATE**

Discovery. Diversity. Distinction.

# Sociology

Sociology looks critically at the institutions and structures of society and challenges commonly held perspectives about human behavior by questioning what we normally take for granted.

Studying sociology is more than just acquiring knowledge; one must develop what C. Wright Mills (1959) called the sociological imagination—the ability to view things in a broader context—to see how larger social forces impact an individual's private life.

## High School Preparation

Students should meet California State University's admission requirements in terms of college preparatory course requirements, grade point average, and test scores. Courses in English (especially writing courses), history, social studies, communication, mathematics, philosophy, journalism, physics and the other sciences are good preparation for the sociology major.

## College Program

Students should consult the university's *General Catalog* for specific major and university requirements. Community college transfers should consult their catalogs and [www.assist.org](http://www.assist.org) to ensure that courses taken are CSU transferable (baccalaureate level).

## General Education

Students should complete as many of the Fresno State General Education requirements as possible during the freshman and sophomore years, whether they are attending Fresno State or a community college.

## Humanics Community Benefit Administration Program

Housed within the Sociology Department, the Humanics Program prepares students and community members for professional positions in 501c3 community benefit organizations (CBOs). Our program partners with community leaders and CBOs committed to preparing leaders for service to humanity.

Participation in the Humanics Program builds on and enhances students' chosen major course of study and provides the tools to achieve success in the community benefit sector. This interdisciplinary program is open to students of all majors and to community individuals. Courses may be taken through Open University.

## Course Requirements

Since program changes may occur, students should consult the *General Catalog* and a Fresno State adviser prior to registering for courses.

### Lower Division

Freshman-Sophomore level courses  
(may be taken at a community college)

Principles of Sociology (SOC 1/SOC 1S)  
Critical Thinking about Society (SOC 3)  
Statistics for the Social Sciences  
(Fresno State SOC 125)

### Upper Division

Junior-Senior level courses  
(to be taken at Fresno State)

SOC 130W/WS or Upper-Division Writing  
Exam  
Sociological Theory (SOC 153)  
Social Classes and Inequality (SOC 151)  
Quantitative Research Methods (SOC 175)  
Social Psychology (SOC 162)

### Upper Division Electives

SOC 111 Sociology of Race and Ethnicity  
SOC 122 Social Movements  
SOC 131 Sociology of Sex and Gender  
SOC 142 Sociology of Popular Culture  
SOC 143 Deviance and Control  
SOC 144 Social Policy Analysis  
SOC 145 Social Organization  
SOC 147 Medical Sociology  
SOC 148 Sociology of Education  
SOC 150T Special Topics Seminar  
SOC 157 Social Change  
SOC 161 Population Analysis  
SOC 163 Urban Sociology  
SOC 165 The Family  
SOC 168 Interpersonal Relationships  
SOC 169 Sociology of Religion  
SOC 170T Research Topics  
SOC 174 Computer Data Analysis  
SOC 183 Philanthropy and Grant Making  
SOC 184 Grant Writing and Evaluation  
SOC 185 Field Experience in Sociology  
SOC 190 Independent Study

For additional  
information, write

California State  
University, Fresno  
Department of  
Sociology

5340 North Campus  
M/S SS97  
Fresno, California  
93740-8019

Visit or call

Department of  
Sociology

Social Science Building,  
Room 211  
559.278.2234

[www.csufresno.edu/sociology](http://www.csufresno.edu/sociology)  
[www.csufresno.edu/ah](http://www.csufresno.edu/ah)

**FRESNO**  
**STATE**

Discovery, Diversity, Distinction.

**PLEASE NOTE:** This document is for general informational purposes only. The information is subject to change; consult the appropriate department or an academic adviser. Entering freshmen must follow the revised General Education program effective fall 1999 and thereafter. The university catalog and schedule of courses are available online at [www.fresnostate.edu/ClassSchedule](http://www.fresnostate.edu/ClassSchedule) and [www.fresnostate.edu/catalog](http://www.fresnostate.edu/catalog).

Revised 7/14