

Department of Sociology

General Interest Courses

Students with a general interest in sociology are invited to enroll in one or more of the courses offered. Students should plan to take SOCI 1006 first, since this is normally a prerequisite for other sociology courses.

Minor in Sociology

SOCI 1006: Introduction to Sociology AND SOCI 2013: Research Design & Methods OR SOCI 2023: Understanding Statistics and 9 credit hours in any sociology courses.

Major in Sociology

Students majoring in sociology require a total of 36 credit hours in Sociology, including the following required courses:

- SOCI 1006 Introduction to Sociology
- SOCI 2013 Research Design & Methods
- SOCI 2023 Understanding Statistics
- SOCI 2033 Classical Sociological Theory
- SOCI 3023 Contemporary Sociological Theory
- SOCI 4013 Senior Seminar

Honours in Sociology

The Honours program is designed to provide students with an opportunity to engage in independent sociological research under supervision. Completion of the Honours program is the normal preparation for graduate school. Normally, students must have a grade point average of B+ in sociology courses to enter the Honours program. Application for admission to the Honours program in sociology should be directed to the Chair of Sociology. Students honouring in Sociology require a total of 48 credit hours in sociology, including the following required courses:

- SOCI 1006 Introduction to Sociology
- SOCI 2013 Research Design & Methods
- SOCI 2023 Understanding Statistics
- SOCI 2033 Classical Sociological Theory
- SOCI 3023 Contemporary Sociological Theory
- SOCI 3033 Seminar in Research Strategies (recommended)
- SOCI 4006 Honours Thesis
- SOCI 4023 Honours Workshop
- SOCI 4033 Advanced Sociological Theory

To earn an Honours degree, a student must obtain a minimum 3.0 grade point average on 48 credit hours of sociology courses including the required courses, and a minimum B grade on the Honours Thesis (SOCI 4006).

Course Numbers

Guide to numbering system:

- 1000s introduction – open to students with no prior credits in sociology
- 2000s open to students who have 6 credit hours in sociology at 1000 level
- 3000s open to students who have 6 credit hours in sociology at 2000 level
- 4000s open to students who have completed required courses for the Major in sociology – specifically SOCI 2013, SOCI 2023, SOCI 2033 and SOCI 3023
- Last digits represent number of credit hours for the course
- Students who do not have the number of credit hours in sociology required for senior courses, may be admitted at the discretion of the instructor.

SOCI-1006. Introduction to Sociology

A survey course that introduces students to the discipline of sociology with particular reference to Canadian Society. This course examines theories and research concerning the nature of social order and conflict in industrial society; the relations between important structures or elements of society, including the economy, family, education, religion, complex organizations, racial and ethnic groups, and the dynamics of social change. Several major theoretical approaches in sociology are compared throughout the course.

SOCI-2013. Research Design & Methods (NATI) (WSGS)

An introduction to the main research approaches used in sociology. The course includes practical experience in developing a research program by considering research question development, research design, methods of data collection, research ethics and data analysis. Of particular interest are the strengths and weaknesses of different approaches.

SOCI-2023. Understanding Statistics (NATI)

Statistics are used and misused by social scientists, policy makers, and the media to describe the social world. Sociologists use statistics to understand social inequality and examine relations of power. In this course you examine the use and meaning of statistics in sociology, social policy and popular media to increase your ability to differentiate dodgy statistics from valid evidence. Note: To fulfill requirements for the Minor, Major or Honours in sociology, students may take this course or any other statistics course.

SOCI-2033. Classical Sociological Theory

A study of the classical tradition in sociological thought focussing on those theorists whose ideas constitute the foundation of contemporary sociological analysis. This will include a consideration of the work of Marx, Weber, Durkheim, among others.

SOCI-2106. Canadian Society

The purpose of this course is to give the student an understanding of the operation and functioning of the society in which we live. The configuration of Canadian institutions is analyzed in terms of their historical patterns of development.

SOCI-2116. Sociology of Atlantic Canada

This course is designed as an introduction to the sociological study of Atlantic Canada. The first term focuses on the development of the Maritimes and Newfoundland from mercantile societies to under-developed regions within the centralized Canadian economy. The second term focuses on the contemporary structure, problems, and issues of Atlantic Canadian society.

SOCI-2123. Introduction to Sociology of Globalization

Introduction to Sociology of Globalization explores social conditions characterized by global economic, political, cultural, and environmental interconnections and flows that cross existing political borders. Therefore, it challenges our existing conceptualization of an international world of borders and nation states. The course explores the concept of globalization and its relevance to our lives. Types of empirical topics covered include contemporary global inequalities; environmental problems; transnational communities and families; transnational migration; the effect of globalization on gender, race, ethnicity, and religion; transnational social movements; and the women's movement. Prerequisites: SOCI-1006. Introduction to Sociology or instructor's permission.

SOCI-2143. Interaction and Everyday Conduct

Studies in conversation analysis show that in their everyday human interaction people fine-tune their actions in co-ordination with others. Using practical, everyday reasoning, the members of society produce and sustain the ongoing orderly details of everyday life. The course will teach students to identify and analyze how people orient to and build up the numerous micro-structures of social interaction that make up daily life in the family, amongst friends, at work, in medical encounters, in the media, and in other institutions in society. Materials will be drawn from published observations, recordings and transcripts of everyday human interaction. Students will be taught how to begin making their own empirical observations and analyses. Controversies about the influence of social structure and social context on interaction will be examined.

SOCI-2213. Society and Ecology (ENVS)

This course is an introduction to the sociological study of environmental problems and the issues they raise, using C. Wright Mills' notion of the 'sociological imagination.'

SOCI-2223. Sociology of Time

Time has always been an integral dimension of sociological research and is closely linked to the sociology of work and leisure. Time as a socially constructed concept that guides our daily lives has increasingly become a specialized area of sociological research. This course introduces students to sociological and multidisciplinary research and analysis that investigates the concept of time and time use in multiple facets of our daily lives.

SOCI-2313. Deviance (WSGS, CRIM)

This course reviews theory and research with a focus on the social basis of deviance, deviance construction, and the consequences of social reactions to selected forms of deviance.

SOCI-2323. Sociology for Cyborgs: The Social Organization of the Internet

This course is a critical introduction to the social, political, economic, and cultural organization of the Internet. The purpose is to provide media literacy tools to penetrate beneath its commonly experienced surfaces. The focus is on "who organizes the Web": its commercialization and the potential for democratization of its "users." An important goal is discovering "the academic Web" as a resource for both Liberal Arts education and lifetime learning.

SOCI-2333. The Sociology of Chinese Women in Literature and Film (WSGS)

This course explores the sociology of women and China in recent literature and film, particularly in recent work by women in China and of those Chinese origins in Western countries. Topics include 20th century migration, settlement and early family experiences. The novels focus on three generations of families and illustrate the traditional expectations for women within China and in North America. The films include recent works by Chinese filmmakers that comment on women's place in pre-revolutionary and modern society.

SOCI-2416. Inequality in Society (WSGS)

This course explores existing patterns of social inequality and debates concerning the possibility and desirability of greater equality. Taking a theoretical and historical focus, this course examines the changing nature of inequality in contemporary Canadian society in the context of globalization. Throughout, we develop our understanding of how different forms of inequality - particularly social class, gender and race - intersect. One section of the course may have a service learning requirement, where students engage in volunteer work in the community, and then reflect upon their experiences through reading, writing, and discussion.

SOCI-2423. Social Problems I - Sociological Perspectives (WSGS)

The various perspectives used by sociologists to examine social problems will be described and evaluated. Concrete social problems will be used as examples of these perspectives.

SOCI-2433. Social Problems II - Canadian Social Problems (WSGS)

Several current Canadian social problems will be examined from the perspectives used in SOCI 2423. These problems include: poverty, minorities, Canadian identity, the effects of urbanization, and technology, etc. Prerequisite: SOCI 2423.

SOCI-2443. Racialization, Racism & Colonialism

This course explores the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological understandings most relevant to the sociological study of "race," racialization, racism, and colonialism. We give particular attention to critical decolonial thinking on race. We examine the process of racialization, through which "being white" becomes the normative standard of "just being human." We contextualize how the creation of whiteness as an identity-based entitlement has led to social division and oppression. We draw on the experiences of diverse groups of Black, Indigenous, and other People of Colour (BIPOC) in Canadian and global contexts. We begin with the premise that BIPOC share a common history in terms of dispossession, discrimination, and oppression, but also pursue a range of different struggles and dreams in relation to their lands and nation-states. We explore racialization of bodies in contemporary culture to probe a series of assumptions and theories about race, racism, and colonialism in both academic and popular thought.

SOCI-2513. Sociology of Communication

This course considers the mass media (principally print and electronic), its place in, and impact upon Canadian society. Various perspectives and related research are considered with respect to the control and ownership of the media, the social organization of the production of news, facts, statistics, and other messages; and the themes expressed in popular culture as conveyed by the media. Underlying concerns are the social construction of what-is-taken-to-be reality and the language that is used in the conveying of messages.

SOCI-2523. Sociology of Aging (WS/GS, GERO 2113)

This course will explore the comparative situation of older women and men in different cultures and different historical periods within Western societies. The cultural and social-structural determinants of their changing status will be examined through alternative theoretical perspectives within sociology. The social construction of 'elderly' as a status will be explored through how older people are perceived, described, talked about, and interacted with, in everyday behaviour and how these relations may be 'negotiated' by the elderly themselves. The political economy of aging focuses upon disparities of income, and the determinants and effects of poverty on the lives of older people.

SOCI-2543. Sociology of Religion

This course focuses on the relations between the beliefs and institutionalized practices that people hold sacred, and contemporary community life. Students explore the contradictory trends of mass secularism and the rise of religious fundamentalism, and the practices through which people collectively mobilize to sustain, challenge, and change religious identities. The question raised by Durkheim is explored: If religion expresses and reinforces community solidarity, how can modern societies accommodate religious diversity? A further question is: How are religions implicated in political struggles, the women's movement, nationalism, and war?

SOCI-2563. Sociology of Sport

This course unpacks issues associated with sport in North America. Students are asked to critically engage with sport practices as they intersect various social phenomena including identity, nationalism, the body, colonialism, and the family. Students examine how power operates through the practices associated with sport and consider the potential, and consequences, of using sport for social change.

SOCI-2613. Sociology of Gender (WSGS)

This course focuses on particular aspects of the social processes that shape, and are shaped by female and male social roles such as gender and power, gender and social structures of work, and feminist social movements.

SOCI-2623. Gender in the Global South: A Political Economy Perspective (ECON 2303) (WSGS)

This course will critically examine the role of women in the global South. It will concentrate largely on the changes in these roles and their correspondence with the transition from traditional to new forms of economic organization, production, and power.

SOCI-2633. Sociology of the Family (WSGS)

A critical analysis of various conceptual frameworks in family research, and a cross-cultural analysis of marriage and the family, both past and present is pursued. Particular attention is paid to the current developments in marriage arrangements, changes in the meaning of marriage and the family, as well as the future of the family.

SOCI-2643. Selected Topics on the Political Economy of Women (ECON 2223) (WSGS)

This is a seminar course examining selected topics on the political economy of women. Potential topics include women as paid workers, domestic labour, and women and poverty.

SOCI-2653. Sociology of Health

This course provides an introduction to the sociology of health. We analyse the social construction of health promotion knowledge, experiences of health, media representations of health, the social foundations of health inequalities, the formal institutions that define and manage health and health care, and the social consequences of the moralization of healthy behaviours.

SOCI-2733. Special Topics

The content of this course changes from year to year to reflect the special strengths of faculty and particular needs of students.

SOCI-2743. Special Topics

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SOCI-3023. Contemporary Sociological Theory

A study of modern developments in sociological theory, focussing on major trends and their interrelationships, and on contemporary theoretical issues and controversies. Prerequisite: SOCI 2033.

SOCI-3033. Seminar in Research Strategies

This course helps students learn what original research entails from its initial conception to its completion. It highlights the techniques and strategies successful researchers use to develop their research questions; select an appropriate research design and data collection method(s); meet university research ethics requirements; ensure the research is socially relevant and completed in a timely manner. Students are expected to design a research project and write a proposal outlining their plans. This exercise allows students to gain an appreciation of the research design process and the components of research. For some students the proposal will be the initial work towards an honours thesis; for others it will be a model for the preparation and planning of research in other courses or outside academia. After taking the course students should feel prepared to undertake research projects in any academic, government, research, or policy setting.

SOCI-3043. Qualitative Research Methods

This course is intended for 3rd-year Honours students who are considering using qualitative analysis in the research for their Honours thesis. It will address theoretical foundations of qualitative analysis, research ethics for qualitative researchers, and provide hands-on experience in developing a research question and collecting and analyzing data using basic qualitative techniques including observation, in-depth interviewing, and unobtrusive measures.

SOCI-3113. Political Sociology

The focus of this course is on the type of political system known as liberal democracy. Particular emphasis is placed on the historical genesis of liberal democracy, on its structural dynamics, and on the role of the working class within the system. The examination includes an analysis of the sources of stability and cleavage governing the development of liberal democracies. Finally, the functioning of liberal democracies is contrasted with that of communist political systems.

SOCI-3123. Social Movements, Social Activism & Social Change

This course explores conceptual, theoretical and methodological understandings of social movements and activism as an organized way of effecting social change. It also examines a series of historical and contemporary case studies within Canadian and global contexts. Students analyze social movements or activism for social change in their local and/or global communities.

SOCI-3133. Sociology of Work and Leisure

It was expected that by the 21st century our lives would be filled primarily with leisure activities, but this is not the case. This course studies from pre-industrial to contemporary times the interplay between production and consumption, work and leisure, paid and unpaid work. It is concerned with how our work occupations shape our class positions and leisure pursuits, the gendered division of labour, and the ability to live the 'good life'.

SOCI-3153. Sociology of War

The sociology of war explores organized mass violence across societal boundaries. Topics include the rise of the military-industrial complex, cultures of militarism, the political economy of war in the context of global struggles to control resources, and the active practices that militarize religious and ethnic identities, moralize political and economic conflicts, and impose dominant justifications onto the conduct of war.

SOCI-3173. Women and Education (WSGS)

With the rise of neo-conservative governments in Canada, we see changes in schooling and higher education due to the restructuring of government finances and privatization. By beginning from the standpoint of women engaged in mothering, classroom teaching, graduate studies and university teaching, this course examines the impact of re-structuring on gender, ethnicity and class in the classroom and in higher education.

SOCI-3183. Sociology, the Self & the Other

We are nearly always relating to other people, even when we are alone. In this course, we look at several aspects of this relationship between self and other, using a variety of different theories. Topics may include: Taking the attitude of the other towards yourself (Theory: Symbolic Interaction); Being intensely engaged with another person (Theory: Phenomenology) The moment-by-moment co-ordination of our activities with others (Theory: Conversation Analysis.) Presenting a version of ourselves to others (Theory: Goffman); Mourning the death of someone close to us (Theory: Deconstruction). A number of feature films engaging with the themes of the course will be viewed and analyzed. Students are encouraged to discuss popular culture and their own experiences in light of the themes of the course.

SOCI-3223. Globalization and Gender (WSGS)

Globalization and Gender will examine how definitions of gender and sexuality are reproduced, negotiated and deployed in the context of globalization and transnational flows. Through a critical inquiry into a variety of texts, i.e. theoretical texts, ethnographic case studies and analysis of media representation, students will examine the topics of citizenship, global labor flows, migration, militarization, neoliberalism and the construction of the gendered global subject. They will study both the opportunities and challenges that are inherent in postcolonial and transnational feminist scholarship and activism.

SOCI-3243. Sociology of Men and Masculinities (WSGS)

In this course, students examine the social production of masculinities in North America and the impacts of these gender expressions on the lives of boys and men, and girls and women. Students are introduced to theoretical perspectives used to understand the lives of men and boys, while examining topics such as fathering, the social construction of men's bodies, the ways the media (re)produces notions of masculinity, and sports masculinities.

SOCI-3263. Capitalism and Modern Culture

The course explores how the emergence of new forms of commerce and production gave rise to new cultural ideas and social formations in the 19th and 20th centuries. Emphasis is placed on the historical emergence of taken for granted themes in modern culture. This will enable students to better appreciate current developments in culture and in our economic system.

SOCI-3293. Animals & Society

In Sociology we study human society. Humans, however, have always lived in relation to other non-human animals, and these relations and these animals have in fact been central to human society. In this course we will re-think what we mean by 'human society,' by showing how integral animals have always been to what we take to be 'human society.'

SOCI-3313. Sociology of Law (CRIM)

This course critically examines law from various sociological perspectives, with particular reference to Canada. The course is designed to cover sociological jurisprudence and selected theories of law, as they relate to family, administrative, labour, criminal and other types of law.

SOCI-3323. Sociology of Women and Law (WSGS)

This course explores the relationship of women to the state and to law. The ways in which criminal and family law influence gender relations in society are analyzed, including the implications of legal intervention and non-intervention in family relations. Sex-specific and sex-related legislation concerning such issues as sexual harassment, rape, pornography, and affirmative action, are also examined. Theoretical concepts and issues, such as the position of women within capitalism, patriarchy, sexuality and reproduction, formal and informal control, are addressed.

SOCI-3413. Employment Equity Policy and Gender Inequality at Work (WSGS)

This is an advanced course on the organization of gender inequality in the labour force. It begins by studying how gender segregation is organized in the occupations of teaching, clerical work, and other professions. The course examines from a sociological perspective, the federal and provincial government policies which are aimed at the equal and fair treatment of individuals regardless of sex: pay equity legislation, employment equity programs, contractual provisions and human rights legislation on fair employment practices

SOCI-3513. Sociology of Education

This course focuses on the nature of the relationship between school systems and the broader societies of which they are a part. This is done with two purposes in mind: (1) to determine both the structural configuration and the functions of education in contemporary society and (2) to demonstrate the effects of this relationship on the internal functioning of schools. A variety of theoretical perspectives on the conceptualization of the school-society connection are examined.

SOCI-3523. Sociology of Knowledge

This course is concerned with the social organization of knowledge. The focus is on the political and social processes and contexts in which local and ruling forms of knowledge are produced. For the purposes of this course, knowledge may range from common sense and popular culture to ideology, science, and information. Topics may include the connection between knowledge and power and how they are controlled by states, corporations, and professions, and the implications of the nature and distribution of print and electronic information. This course combines discussion of major theorists with an examination of current issues.

SOCI-3553. Sociology of the Body

This course explores the interaction between society and the body. It begins with an examination of classical and contemporary theories of the body, and then explores special issues with regard to the development of the civilized body, as well as gender, sexuality, marginalization, deviancy, chronic illness and disability.

SOCI-3563. Sociology of Music (FNAR)

This course combines a number of macro- and micro-sociological perspectives on music. The former refers to the wider socio-cultural context in which music is produced, distributed, and listened to. It includes the social functions and uses of music ranging from rituals and ceremonies to its political-economic organization in cultural industries. Forms of music, such as the functional harmony vs. the Afro-American traditions, area related to forms of society. Micro perspectives analyze how performers create and make music together in terms of the interaction among musicians, audience, and conductor. The practices of improvisation and maintaining synchrony will be examined principally in both classical and jazz contexts.

SOCI-3573. Sociology of Art and Culture (FNAR)

Employing both classical and contemporary sociological perspectives, this course explores the nature of art in society by looking at how art objects are produced, distributed, and consumed. Theoretical perspectives are related to historical and contemporary examples from a range of artistic media (e.g., pictorial art, film, photography, literature, and music) to expose the interplay between art and society. The relationship between the fine arts and popular culture are examined, as well as the role of technology in the various arts.

SOCI-3583. Research for Social Change (WSGS)

This seminar course encourages students to explore how research can inform social justice and social change. Examining specific debates from the fields of feminist research, Indigenous methodologies, and critical race theory, students will gain new understandings in the various ways research can both reproduce and challenge operations of power and privilege. This course offers students the opportunity to engage in debates around these methodologies as they consider how to do research for social change.

SOCI-3663. Queer Sociology (WSGS)

This course explores the social construction of queerness in heteronormative societies. Students apply sociological concepts and theories to the study of queer identities, communities, and sexual practices. They examine social and political responses to queerness, and the ways in which these responses shape the lives of queer people.

SOCI-3693. Discourse and Society

Discourse analysis is the study of language in use, and is thus distinguished from approaches that treat language formally and structurally, as an abstract system of signs and symbols. We examine instances of written and spoken language that occurs in a wide range of contexts, including: everyday conversations among friends, encounters between professionals and clients, the activities of creating, disseminating and consuming mass-mediated texts, and governmental and corporate settings where policies are established, monitored and changed. Combining a theoretical and practical orientation, the course draws primarily on the work of sociologists, but also includes that done by scholars in disciplines such as sociolinguistics, psychology, anthropology, semiotics and literary studies. A basic premise of the course is that in our so-called information or knowledge-based global society, a critical awareness of discursive practices is becoming a prerequisite for democratic citizenship.

SOCI-3723. Special Topics

The content of this course changes from year to year to reflect the special strengths of faculty and particular needs of students.

SOCI-3733. Special Topics

The content of this course changes from year to year to reflect the special strengths of faculty and particular needs of students.

SOCI-3913. Sociology of Disease

This course will explore the social construction of disease in modern medicine. We will examine the process of medicalization, focusing on the classification of human experience into disease categories; medical authority to diagnose and treat disease; the ways in which disease categories validate or invalidate experiences of illness; and the effects of being labeled as diseased. These topics will be explored through sociological analyses of specific diseases, including diseases that are contested and stigmatized.

SOCI-3973. Introduction to Narrative and Narrative Analysis (SCWK)

Framed around three key approaches to narrative this course will provide students with the basis on which to develop their understanding of narrative and their skills in narrative analysis. The three approaches are: the narrative study of lives; the narrative analysis of texts; and, the analysis of narrative dynamics. Through these approaches students will be introduced to the work of key narrative thinkers. The course, in content and delivery, reflects the interdisciplinary nature of narrative.

SOCI-4006. Honours Thesis

The Honours thesis is a scholarly essay or research paper on a topic chosen by the student in consultation with a faculty committee composed of a Thesis Supervisor and another advisor. When completed, the thesis is read and graded by this thesis committee. To pass the thesis a minimum grade of B is required

SOCI-4013. Senior Seminar

The senior seminar is a one-semester course, required for a Major degree in sociology, which is to be taken in the final year of study. The course is organized around substantive issues, with different sections devoted to different topics. The issues are addressed as puzzles or lines of inquiry that explore current concerns. Students are expected to bring the knowledge they have acquired of the competing traditions of sociological inquiry to bear on the theme. This course will be conducted as a seminar, with students taking responsibility for researching, presenting, and discussing material. Regular attendance and active participation will be emphasized.

SOCI-4023. Honours Workshop

This is a required course for Honours students in their final year. Enrolment is restricted to Honours students. The course is organized around two sets of activities: 1) workshops oriented to the development of knowledge and skills directly applicable to the process of thesis research, covering such topics as ethical decision-making in social research, practical problems in collecting and analyzing research material, writing in social research and 2) student presentations of thesis proposals, progress reports, and final results. Entry of non-Sociology students is with permission of instructor.

SOCI-4033. Advanced Sociological Theory

A critical examination of selected orientations from contemporary sociological theory. The implications of these perspectives for both the nature of sociological inquiry and the prevailing models of society are considered. Prerequisite: SOCI 2033, 3023.

SOCI-4043. Independent Study

A program on independent study under the direction of a member of the faculty selected by the student. It is designed for students who wish to pursue an area of special interest through reading, research, and writing.

SOCI-4053. Independent Study

A program on independent study under the direction of a member of the faculty selected by the student. It is designed for students who wish to pursue an area of special interest through reading, research, and writing.

NOTE: Not all courses listed are offered each year. Please consult with the Department Chair for more information about current and planned course offerings.