

Sociology

Sociology studies various aspects of human interaction and social phenomena. The sociology major addresses sociological issues pertaining to self; social groups; social and cultural values; family and community relations; economic and political relations; race, ethnic, gender, class, and sexual stratification; the city and the nature of social organizations. The comparative/historical approach of the program enables students to analyze these issues in the United States, as well as in other societies with varied cultural values and at different levels of development. Furthermore, sociology addresses how social structures influence human beings at both the micro and macro level through the use of logic and varied scientific methodologies.

The sociology curriculum addresses the educational objectives of students who wish to: 1) develop skills in critical thinking and analysis; 2) learn the ways in which sociological thinking can contribute to one's active and constructive participation in society; and 3) apply sociological theories and methods to social public policy, community development, and social justice initiatives.

After completing the sociology requirements, more students will, for example, be able to: apply sociological analysis in real world situations; assess the validity of statements; and employ critical thinking skills in conducting sociological research and conveying ideas and findings to the public.

Career Opportunities

Graduates in sociology will be prepared to seek careers in: 1) local and state governments, planning agencies, community-based organizations; and 2) research positions in government, private businesses and corporations, organized labor and labor-management councils. In addition, the program provides the basis for graduate studies in sociology leading to teaching and research positions in higher education.

See the Graduate section (<http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/archives/2017-18/graduateprograms>) of this *Catalog* for more information on Graduate programs offered at Mount Mercy.

Major

SO 122	Introduction To Sociology	3
SO 215	Methods Of Social Research	3
SO 251	Sociological Theories	3
SO 430	Experiential Learning Internship	3
SO 441	Senior Seminar	3
Total Hours		15

Students are strongly advised to complete SO 122 Introduction To Sociology and SO 251 Sociological Theories by the end of their sophomore year.

Analytical/Topical Electives: two courses from each of the following three areas:

1. Social Groups and Organizations:

SO 176	Criminology	3
SO 202	Marriage and Family	3
SO 320	Sociology of Work	3
SO 245	Sociology Of Law	3

2. Social Stratification:

SO 155	Social Problems	3
SO 235	Social Inequalities	3

SO 240	Medical Sociology	3
SO 290	Urban Sociology	3
SO 310	Sociology Of Sex And Gender	3
SO 330	Global Race Relations	3

3. Historical/Comparative:

SO 183	Introduction to Cultural Anthropology	3
SO 285	Islam And Politics	3
SO 327	Social Change and Technology	3
SO 420	Social Movements and Revolutions	3

In consultation with an advisor, students may substitute one of the following for one of the analytical/topical electives: CJ 365 Diversity and the Criminal Justice System, or PS 221 Social Psychology. Students preparing for graduate studies in sociology should emphasize skills in quantitative analysis, and may consider electing one of the following: BA 270 Business Statistics, MA 135 Basic Statistics, or PS 325 Statistics For Behavioral Sciences.

Note: Students planning to pursue teacher education should follow the program guidelines within the Education (<http://catalog.mtmercy.edu/archives/2017-18/curriculum/education>) section of this *Catalog* and contact an advisor in the education division for assistance.

Academic Requirements

SO 122 Introduction To Sociology is a prerequisite for all sociology courses. Students must maintain a grade of C or above (C- does not count) in each required course for the major and minor, this includes SO 122 Introduction To Sociology.

Sociology Minor

SO 122	Introduction To Sociology	3
SO 215	Methods Of Social Research	3
SO 251	Sociological Theories	3
One elective from each of the analytical/topical areas listed in the major		9

Total Hours 18

Courses

SO 122 Introduction To Sociology: 3 semester hours

This course introduces students to sociology, the core issues of the discipline, and the way sociologists analyze social behavior. In addition to mastering basic concepts and principles, students will learn a great deal about American society and how to analyze ordinary experience from a sociological perspective. (Offered fall and spring semesters).

SO 155 Social Problems: 3 semester hours

This thematic course introduces the student to a sociological understanding of various social issues such as inequalities of class, gender and race; problems of work and unemployment, economic restructuring and downsizing; environmental problems; homelessness and poverty; and inadequacy of the health care system to name a few. Students will have the opportunity to critically evaluate the root causes of social problems both at the national and global levels, analyze and interpret data, and work within groups to develop skills for problem solving and social policy planning.

SO 176 Criminology: 3 semester hours

This course presents a sociological analysis of crime and society's response to it. The course surveys the wide span of deviant behavior from street crime to elite crime, from individual behavior to social irrationality. In addition to describing reality, the course will deal with crime and ways certain behaviors are defined as criminal (gambling) while praising similar ones (betting on the stock market). Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 183 Introduction to Cultural Anthropology: 3 semester hours

This course focuses on the study of human behavior within various social contexts, as well as the development of a wide array of cultural traits and belief systems in human communities. By studying distinctive forms of social relations and universal and particular aspects of human culture, students are exposed to the fallacies of cultural and racial superiority of western societies over the rest of the world, particularly primitive cultures.

SO 200 Introduction to Gender Studies: 3 semester hours

This course introduces students to the interdisciplinary field of Gender Studies. It is designed to help students develop a critical framework for thinking about questions relating to gender and the ways that gender is constructed and institutionalized. The course will provide social, cultural, historical, and political perspectives on gender and its construction. We will explore the intersections among gender, race, class, sexuality, nation, and ability in multiple settings and contexts. Taking an interdisciplinary approach to a variety of questions, we will consider the distinctions between sex and gender, feminist theories, the making of masculinity, sexuality and the body, the gendered economy, intersectionality, health and science, and the challenges of feminist activism across nations. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 202 Marriage and Family: 3 semester hours

This course provides an analysis of the American family as a social institution; its changing functions and structure; its life cycle and its internal organization; and sources of conflict within the family as a socio-economic and political unit at the micro-level. Critical questions are raised concerning the impact of economic restructuring and deindustrialization on courtship, marriage, and family life. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 215 Methods Of Social Research: 3 semester hours

This course provides an introduction to the application of scientific research methods to the study of sociology and related fields. Students will review both qualitative and quantitative research methods such as historical documentation, survey and field research, content analysis and interviewing techniques. The quantitative research component includes topics in descriptive and inferential statistics such as the measures of central tendency, the normal curve, t-test and chi square and hypothesis testing. Students also will participate in individual and group projects in order to gain hands-on experience relating social theory to data collection and critical analysis. Prerequisite: SO 122, Sociology majors and minors should also take SO 251 as a prerequisite. (Offered fall and spring semesters).

SO 235 Social Inequalities: 3 semester hours

This course contrasts functionalist theories of stratification that justify social inequalities and advocate meritocracy, with critical conflict theories that question the legitimacy of class, gender and race-based stratification. The main focus of the course is on the crucial role the political and economic forces play in polarization of social classes and redistribution of national wealth and resources in the United States. However, dynamics of social stratification in the developing countries and socialist societies will be studied as well. (Offered alternate years).

SO 240 Medical Sociology: 3 semester hours

This course is a study of the medical profession as a societal institution in regard to the effects of the norms and beliefs of society. Areas analyzed include the social factors involved in the physical and mental health areas, the norms and roles of health care professionals in the treatment process, environmental and occupational health, non-physician providers, and cross-cultural reforms in response to the health care crisis. Prerequisite: SO 122 (Offered alternate years).

SO 245 Sociology Of Law: 3 semester hours

This course includes an analysis of the social nature of law including the theoretical, cross-cultural, and legal components. Studies of the societal forces and procedures, past and present, will be discussed in relationship to the impact of law on social change. Prerequisite: SO 122. (Offered alternate years).

SO 251 Sociological Theories: 3 semester hours

This course attends to the basic theoretical issues in sociological theory, including an analysis of the key theorists Marx, Weber and Durkheim. This course also provides an overview of modern social theories such as conflict, structural functionalism, symbolic interactionism, and postmodernism. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 285 Islam And Politics: 3 semester hours

The Iranian Revolution of 1979 and establishment of an Islamic Republic opened a new chapter in the church-state relationship, particularly in the Muslim world. Subsequent Islamic movements in Egypt, Algeria, Lebanon, and other Muslim and Arab countries have further involved public interest in what is dubbed by the Western media as "Islamic fundamentalism." This course will critically examine Islam as a holistic religion which integrates faith, law, philosophy and social commitment to build communities; the rise and development of Islam as a social movement; the historical roots of the Shii-Sunni split; and a growing conflict between traditional Islamic and modern western cultural values. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 290 Urban Sociology: 3 semester hours

Within a historical context this course explores the way social, economic, and political forces shape the cities and affect urban development both at national and global levels. Earlier analyses of cities and urbanization by Marx, Engles, and Weber; the ecological approach of the Chicago School of Urban Sociology; and more recent analyses by neo-Marxists and urban political economists will be discussed. Several social issues such as rural-urban migration, suburbanization in the U.S., Third World countries, as well as socialist nations will be studied. Students also will work on a mini project dealing with an urban-related issue in the Cedar Rapids area. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 300 Introduction to Feminist Theories: 3 semester hours

This course will introduce students to both recent feminist theories and methodologies as well as past theoretical works. The historical origins, philosophical assumptions, and political implications will also be examined. Topics covered will include, the construction of sex and gender, the private and the public, transnational feminism, intersectionality, power, oppression, the body, identity, and queer theory. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 310 Sociology Of Sex And Gender: 3 semester hours

This course provides students with a historical and comparative approach to the sociology of sex/gender and gender inequality. Students will learn how sex/gender is socially constructed as well as its effect on the lives of individuals, on social institutions and society. Selected social institutions where sex/gender inequality is constructed, maintained and/or changed, such as family, education, work and the economy will also be studied. Because gender identities are constructed will be studied to reveal that variety of roles and their consequences for different societies. Prerequisites: SO 122 or PS 101 or SO 183 or permission of instructor.

SO 320 Sociology of Work: 3 semester hours

This course enables the student to analyze the social structure of work in the broadest sense. Topics include the study of major theoretical issues involved in the explanation of changes in the workplace, impact of technological changes, the global economy, the decline of labor unions, the feminized workplace, and the influence of economic values on leisure. Prerequisite: SO 122. (Offered alternate years).

SO 327 Social Change and Technology: 3 semester hours

The student will be exposed to the major theoretical issues regarding social change. Particular attention will be given to the transformation of societies by scientific and technological innovations, and the impact such changes have on enduring human arrangements, such as religion, the family, and the community. Prerequisite: SO 122. (Offered alternate years).

SO 330 Global Race Relations: 3 semester hours

This course includes an in-depth examination of major conceptual views and theoretical perspectives on race and ethnicity. Within a critical historical and comparative framework, the course will trace the roots of modern race relations in the United States as well as in other countries, including Canada, Brazil, Northern Ireland, Palestine, and Israel, and South Africa. Recent theories of race relations that link colonialism and capitalist development to racism, prejudice and discrimination also will be discussed.

SO 400 Topics: 3 semester hours

This course will expose students to a variety of topics of sociological significance which are not usually discussed in regular departmental course offerings. Topics may vary and include: sociology of war, peace, and justice; movies and society; popular culture; the political economy of modern architecture and planning; and sociology of development and underdevelopment. Students may complete more than one topics course in consultation with an academic advisor. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 420 Social Movements and Revolutions: 3 semester hours

This course presents a historical and comparative analysis of revolutionary movements and social change throughout the world by examining: socio-economic and political roots of the modern civil rights movement in the U.S., the breakup of the Soviet Union and the democracy movement in China; applying critical theories of revolution to revolutionary situations; and exploring the role of colonization in galvanizing nations and social classes and perpetuating social inequalities at the global level. Classic cases of revolutions in Germany, France, Russia, and China, as well as more contemporary examples, Cuba, Nicaragua, and Iran will be discussed. Prerequisite: SO 122. (Offered alternate years).

SO 430 Experiential Learning Internship: 3 semester hours

Majors who are juniors or seniors are required to fulfill the requirements for an experiential learning and field experience in sociology. In consultation with their faculty advisor, students shall assess their academic and vocational qualifications, develop a resume, and conduct a search for an internship position. Information on available internship sites will be available both at offices of career development and the sociology department chair. During the field experience, students will have a structured plan of reading, writing journals and reports, and a term paper. The objective of the term paper is to relate relevant sociological principles to the field experiences. Internships should be arranged in advance with a departmental faculty sponsor. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 441 Senior Seminar: 3 semester hours

A capstone course which allows students to do independent research and explore a topic of their choice, and also involves students in the examination of and discussion of cutting-edge issues in sociology. Open to non-majors with instructor consultation. Prerequisite: SO 122.

SO 445 Independent Study: 3 semester hours

With the approval of the academic advisor, students who have taken SO 122 and SO 251 may schedule an independent study course in a topic of their interest during the junior or senior years. No more than two independent study courses may be scheduled during the last two years of study. Prerequisite: SO 122.