

# Sociology (SO)

---

## 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 Deviant Behaviors: 3 semester hours**

This course examines various theories and explanations of deviant behavior, ranging from individual to societal-level instances of non-conformity, such as: crime, mental illness, and the way we label individuals - and behaviors - as such. In addition, the course provides a sociological understanding of crime: what we consider criminal, our responses to it, and its impacts on society. Prerequisite: SO 122 or SO 155.

### **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.

### **SO 202 Marriage & the Family: Intimate Relationships: 3 semester hours**

This course examines intimate partner relationships and families as expressed throughout time and place in contemporary American society. It provides an analysis of intimate partnerships and families over the life course as social institutions with changing functions and structures. Attention will be given to intimate partnerships and the dynamics of interpersonal relationships across diverse groups and social settings. Students will gain insight into the influences of religion, politics, culture, education, and economics on individual and family-level well-being.

### **SO 225 Aging in America: 3 semester hours**

This course constitutes an overview of gerontology, including the major theories used to explain the physiological, psychological, and sociological aspects of aging. As the one inequality all people face, the study of aging and ageism - known as social gerontology - examines the transformations in the life course of older adults and the impacts on those they encounter. Drawing from an historical perspective, the course explores current issues and trends related to finances and retirement, health, living environments, social justice, and politics. Prerequisite: SO 122.

### **SO 235 Social Inequalities: 3 semester hours**

This course provides an analysis of various forms of social stratification and inequality through an interdisciplinary approach, grounded in sociological theory. Examination of dimensions of inequality include: race, class, gender, status and political parties, and the way in which economic and political systems shape access to wealth and resources in the United States and abroad. Prerequisite: SO 122 or SO 155.

### **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 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 310 Human Sexuality: 3 semester hours**

This course examines cutting edge scholarship on the sociology of sex, gender, and sexuality. Because these are major organizing principles of contemporary social life, we will examine gender and sexuality from multiple levels of analysis including the meaning and experience of the body, self, and identity, social groups and networks, as well as social organization within our major social institutions. We also discuss how gender intersects with other social statuses, such as race, ethnicity, social class, sexuality, and nationality to reproduce inequalities and power relations. Prerequisites: SO 122, SO 155, SO 183, or SO 200.

**SO 315 Methods of Social Research: 3 semester hours**

Provides an understanding of a scientific approach to knowledge building with an emphasis on teaching students to be critical consumers of research. Examines quantitative and qualitative methods and applications used in social sciences research including data analysis, program evaluation, and ethics and diversity in social worlds. Prerequisite: junior status; recommended SO 122.

**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. Prerequisite: SO 122.

**SO 342 Sociology of Mental Health & Illness: 3 semester hours**

Sociology of Mental Health & Illness examines sociological theories and research pertaining to the definition, experience, and treatment of mental disorders. Sociological research on mental health and illness has a wide scope; therefore, this course will focus on three primary areas within sociological research: the definition and measurement of mental illness, social origins of mental health and illness, and personal, community, and societal-level responses to mental illness. Prerequisite: SO 240.

**SO 343 Global Health: 3 semester hours**

This course will explore the unequal distribution of health and illness around the world. It will focus on four major areas: global health issues; sociological perspectives on global health disparities; comparative healthcare systems; and professional approaches to national and cross-national health problems. Prerequisite: SO 240.

**SO 344 Gender & Health: 3 semester hours**

Gender & Health introduces students to various ways in which the social construction of health and illness - particularly surrounding gender and gendered assumptions about bodies - impacts an individual's health. Topics discussed include: the gendering of health issues, gendered hierarchies in healthcare, and issues of inequality and empowerment in health and medicine. This course is taught from a critical feminist perspective. Prerequisite: SO 240.

**SO 400 Special Topics in Sociology: 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: 3 semester hours**

The purpose of this course is to offer an introduction to social movement studies. We review the main approaches developed in this field, including collective behavior theory, resource mobilization theory, political process theory, new social movement theory, collective action framing and culture, and contentious politics. We will discuss the ways in which emotions, organizations, resources, politics, discourses, and symbols facilitate and/or hinder protests and social movements; as well as, apply these ideas to a number of domestic and global social movements and revolutions. Prerequisite: SO 122 or SO 155, offered alternate years.

**SO 430 Internship in Sociology: 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 or SO 155.

**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 or SO 155 and senior status.

**SO 445 Independent Study in Sociology: 3 semester hours**

With approval of their advisor and the department coordinator, juniors or seniors may schedule an independent study course in a sociological topic of their interest. No more than two independent study courses may be scheduled during the last two years of study. Credit is variable (1-3 semester hours), depending on the scope of the topic. Prerequisite: SO 251 and SO 315.