

DEPARTMENT OF  
**SOCIOLOGY**



**CLARK UNIVERSITY**



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# STUDYING SOCIOLOGY AT CLARK

The Sociology Department has two principal missions for its undergraduate major. The first is disciplinary and involves introducing students to the theoretical and methodological content of sociology. The second addresses the general education goals of a liberal arts program of study. Sociology is a broad field unified by its theoretical attention to history, culture and social structure and their effects on human behavior. Although there is substantial variation in method and perspective, at Clark we offer an approach to the discipline that is largely grounded in empirical social science and classical theoretical traditions.

The American sociologist, C. Wright Mills, described the perspective of sociology as the “sociological imagination.” This point of view enables us to see how individual lives are shaped by larger social forces. Mills argued that we cannot fully understand ourselves without understanding the society in which we live.

*[People] do not usually define the troubles they endure in terms of historical change . . . The well being they enjoy, they do not impute to the big ups and downs of the society in which they live. Seldom aware of the intricate connection between the patterns of their own lives and the course of world history, ordinary people do not usually know what this connection means for the kind of people they are becoming and for the kinds of history-making in which they might take part. They do not process the quality of mind essential to grasp the interplay of individuals and society, of biography and history, of self and the world.*

At Clark, the sociology faculty is committed to developing such an analytic capacity in students. We are committed to developing your capacity to understand the relation between local situation and larger structures.

The skills and competencies we seek to develop in our majors include critical thinking, writing, quantitative literacy, comparative analysis, and logical reasoning.

# THE SOCIOLOGY MAJOR

## DEPARTMENTAL LEARNING OUTCOMES

Be able to explain or predict empirical phenomena with reference to a theoretical model.

Be able to identify, compare, and contrast basic theoretical orientations in the discipline.

Be able to identify, compare, and contrast basic methodological approaches.

Be able to design a research study in an area of choice and to explain why various methodological decisions were made.

Be able to critically assess the methodology of sociological research and to explain how the study could be improved/strengthened.

Be able to identify and explain the historical and cultural variation in defining categories such as race, class, gender, and age.

Be able to discuss the social processes that produce difference and inequality at different levels and scales. This includes the institutional, cultural and structural mechanisms that create and sustain inequality.

## YOUR FUTURE AFTER CLARK

One of the questions most frequently asked by students is, "What can I do with a degree in Sociology?" Because of the emphasis placed upon critical thinking, analytic and communicative skills, and methodological training, students majoring in Sociology are well equipped to enter a variety of occupations, as well as professional and graduate schools. Sociology majors have gone to law school, medical school, social work, and business school. Others have become marketing analysts, city planners, government policy analysts, university administrators and political consultants.

## **MAJOR REQUIREMENTS**

The Sociology major consists of 10 courses within the Department and a minor, concentration, or a program in the Social Sciences or closely related field. The 10 departmental courses are to be distributed as follows:

All majors must complete the following:

- SOC 10: Introduction to Sociology
- SOC 105: The Social Research Process
- SOC 107: Classical Sociological Theory
- SOC 200: Class, Status and Power

Majors must complete The Social Research Process (SOC 105) and Classical Sociological Theory (SOC 107) prior to their senior year. Classical Sociological Theory (SOC 107) is a prerequisite for Class, Status and Power (SOC 200). The Social Research Process (SOC 105) may be replaced by an equivalent methods course in Government, Psychology or Geography. Students may count this methods course towards their Sociology major (i.e., one of 10 courses required for the major). Please consult with your advisor. We advise students to take The Social Research Process course after taking several other social science courses.

All majors must also complete six additional Sociology credits, one of which must be a capstone. At least three of these six courses must be at the 200 level. These credits may be fulfilled through the completion of six regular courses or through a combination of coursework, internships (maximum of two credits), or Directed Research.

Of the four required courses for the major, three must be taken on campus. Of the ten total courses for the major, six must be taken on campus. COPACE courses are not counted for Sociology credit. To receive Sociology major credit, students must earn a course grade of C- or better.

## **CAPSTONE REQUIREMENT**

Sociology majors must take a capstone seminar. To enroll in a capstone seminar, students must have completed Introduction to Sociology (SOC 10), The Social Research Process (SOC 105), Classical Sociological Theory (SOC 107) and all course prerequisites in the subject area of your capstone seminar. The capstone seminar will build upon knowledge gained in previous courses and will include a serious research component. All courses between 271 and 296 are capstone seminars. Senior Honors Thesis (SOC 298) also fulfills the capstone requirement.

## RELATED COURSE REQUIREMENTS

In consultation with their faculty advisor, students must choose a minor, concentration, or major from a list of those related to social science. Students may fulfill this requirement with a language major as well. This list includes the following:

### Minors

Communication and Culture  
Economics  
Education  
Foreign Languages and Literature  
Geography  
Government  
History  
International Development  
Management  
Philosophy  
Psychology

### Concentrations

Asian Studies  
Environmental Studies  
Holocaust and Genocide Studies  
Jewish Studies  
Law and Society  
Peace Studies  
Race and Ethnic Relations  
Women's and Gender Studies  
Urban Development & Social Change

## THE SOCIOLOGY MINOR

A Sociology minor consists of six courses with the following provisions:  
Complete three out of four of the following courses:

SOC 10: Introduction to Sociology  
SOC 105: The Social Research Process  
SOC 107: Classical Sociological Theory\*  
SOC 200: Class, Status and Power

*\* SOC 107 is a pre-requisite for SOC 200.*

Three additional sociology courses, at least two of which must be at the 200 level.  
Four of the six courses must be taken on campus.  
Students must earn a grade of C- or better to receive Sociology credit.

## DECLARATION OF THE MAJOR OR MINOR

Students must complete a Major Declaration form that can be obtained in the Academic Advising Office or Sociology Department and have it signed by a Departmental faculty member.

## **TRANSFER OF MAJOR CREDITS FROM OFF-CAMPUS**

Sometimes Sociology majors take courses at other colleges and universities (for example, summer school or study abroad). All courses taken elsewhere must be approved for major credit by your advisor. There are limits to the number of Sociology major credits that may be transferred from off-campus. Specifically, three of the four mandatory courses (SOC 10, SOC 105, SOC 107, SOC 200) must be taken at Clark. Overall, six of the ten total major credits must be taken at Clark.

## **CHOOSING A DEPARTMENTAL ADVISOR**

All faculty members within the Department serve as advisors, and students are welcome to choose whom they would like to serve in that capacity. Students who are not familiar with our faculty may wish to have an advisor assigned to them. In general, it is best to select a faculty person with expertise in your areas of interest. The forms necessary for this process are in the Academic Advising Center (Corner House, 142 Woodland Street). You may change your faculty advisor at any time.

## **SOCIOLOGY INTERSHIPS GUIDELINES**

Part of the heritage of sociology has involved bringing academic knowledge into the community to understand and respond to social concerns. Through systemic fieldwork sociologists show, following C. Wright Mills, how people's "private problems" are "public issues." In the process we also critically evaluate our knowledge in light of this process of observation and participation. The department encourages students to consider such a course of study through a directed internship. An internship is the academically informed study of social issues through structured field work in the community. Its goals are (1) to deepen the understanding of a social issue provided by the formal learning, (2) to provide the student with an in-depth field experience, and (3) to make a contribution to the community in the process of learning. As detailed below, an internship requires a significant semester-long commitment to a supervised placement and related academic study. Students are encouraged to select placements for the next term by the end of the previous term. They are expected to complete an Internship Application, available from the Internship Office in Career Services, by the due date.

## **TIME COMMITMENT**

While majors are not required to pursue internship credit, all majors may choose to fulfill one or two major credits through internships. In no case should an internship be less than one full course. It is expected that a course unit requires from 10-12 hours of work per week that includes 8-10 hours at the placement, supervisory conferences, and research. The remaining hours will consist of completing readings and written assignments connected with the internship. Internships are in a variety of settings.

Internship placements for Sociology students can be found in a variety of areas, some of which include Criminal Justice, Elderly Services, Health Related Services, Media, and Women's Services and Programs. Some specific programs and agencies that sponsor student internships are the Public Defender's Office, Worcester Juvenile Probation Office, The Age Center of Worcester, St. Francis Adult Day Health Center, American Civil Liberties Union, Abby's House (shelter for homeless women), Daybreak (battered women's services), Planned Parenthood, legislator's offices and the City Planning Department. For a more extensive list of agencies that offer student internships, please consult the Internship Office in the Career Services Office, 122 Woodland Street. Students must also have a faculty supervisor from the department.

## **SUPERVISION**

Each intern must have at least one person at the field placement to whom the intern is responsible and who agrees to evaluate the intern's work. The department requires that potential supervisors offer regular supervision to the student in the placement.

When faculty supervision is available, internships may be undertaken during the summer for credit by registering through COPACE. However, as with all summer credits, permission must be obtained first through Academic Advising. See your advisor.

## **RELATIONSHIP TO TRADITIONAL ACADEMIC WORK**

There is an assumption on the part of the Department faculty that an intern will either (a) work on a bibliography with the supervising faculty member as part of the internship agreement; or (b) pursue such bibliographical material as the faculty member suggests in the course of an on-going faculty-student learning contract.

Regular conferences with faculty members will include discussion of problems the student is encountering at work and of relevant literature. Some examples of written work that may be required (depending upon the placement) are: a journal of work and supervisory experience, interim or final project reports, or research papers.

## **EVALUATION**

University regulations require that all internships be taken CR/NR. In extraordinary circumstances, students may petition the Dean of the College for a grade.

## **LIMIT**

No more than two credits of internship may be counted towards the major.

# **READINGS AND PROJECTS**

Students may take up to two full course credits in Directed Readings or Special Projects or some combination of the two in any given semester. There is no limit to the total number of such courses that may be counted toward the BA degree.

# **DEPARTMENT HONORS AND AWARDS**

## **ADDAMS-MILLS AWARD**

In 1983-84, the Sociology Department established the Addams-Mills Award. This award is given annually to honor one or two graduating sociology majors who exemplify the community service ideas of Jane Addams, a founder of community-based social work and a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, and the intellectual tradition of C. Wright Mills, an outspoken sociologist and critic of American power structures. In order to be considered for this award, a student must have a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Students who wish to apply must submit a one-page description of their community service since coming to Clark. This award is given at Commencement.

## **PAST ADDAMS-MILLS AWARD WINNERS**

2009: Carolyn Spitz  
2008: Erin Burns-Maine  
Sarah Milardo  
2007: Julianne Siegfriedt  
2006: Timothy Newman

2005: Emily Stein  
2004: Sasha Hnatkovich  
2003: Sarah Krajcik  
Michael Metivier

## **ALPHA KAPPA DELTA HONOR SOCIETY**

The Department of Sociology has been accepted as a charter member of Alpha Kappa Delta, the International Sociology Honor Society. The purpose of Alpha Kappa Delta is to promote human welfare through the association of a fellowship group interested in developing scientific knowledge that may be applied to the solution of social problems. Student scholarship is recognized by Alpha Kappa Delta in several ways. The Society sponsors student travel to regional meetings, supporting those who want to present their own work and learn from the scholarly presentations of others. One of our past graduates received such an award to travel to the American Sociological Society meeting. The Society sponsors annual student paper contests, presenting awards which include monetary prizes, travel support, and scholarships. In addition, by funding research symposia and honoraria for guest speakers, the Society supports chapter activities which further education. Students who are Sociology majors in their junior and senior year with an average GPA of 3.0 and who are in the top 35% of their entire class are eligible for lifetime membership in Alpha Kappa Delta.

## **SENIOR HONORS THESIS**

The senior thesis is intended to give the exceptional student an opportunity to pursue an intensive course of independent study under the direction of a Department faculty member. The course culminates in a thesis completed during the senior year. Students enrolled in the Senior Thesis (SOC 298) may be eligible to be considered for graduation with honors in Sociology. Those who wish to have their thesis considered for honors should have the approval of their thesis advisor and must submit their thesis to three Sociology professors for evaluation (one thesis advisor/supervisor and two readers). A file of theses which have in the past been considered or awarded honors in the Department are on file in room 401.

The Senior Honors Thesis is an intensive course of study conducted under the direction of a departmental advisor. It is designed to be a major undertaking during the senior year in which a student pursues an original research question developed in consultation with faculty. Thesis projects vary from highly theoretical to heavily empirical, but all theses are expected to provide a critical overview of the relevant literature in the discipline, provide a well-defined problem raised by this literature, and engage in the rigorous analysis of the question. Through the research process students demonstrate a mastery of the discipline by exceeding the expectations of regular course work and directed readings.

In order to graduate with Honors (or High Honors or Highest Honors) in Sociology, an acceptable Senior Honors Thesis must be completed. Majors who have maintained at least a 3.2 average in sociology major courses are eligible for admission to the Honors program. Others can be admitted only through a special petition process. Admission to the Honors program does not automatically guarantee the awarding of honors. Students must first pass a number of requirements; these include:

- *application to the Sociology Department by March 1 of the junior year.*
- *presentation of a chapter and detailed outline of the entire thesis to the Thesis Committee at the end of the fall semester of the senior year.*
- *completion of the thesis during the spring semester.*
- *review by the Thesis Committee and an oral defense.*

Students who are accepted into the program but whose work does not ultimately meet the criteria for an Honors designation will still be eligible for credit either for a semester of Special Projects or for a Senior Thesis Without Honors, depending on the level of progress. There are also certain junctures at which the student may elect to withdraw from the program.

## **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

Students interested in the possibility of doing a Senior Honors Thesis should make every effort to take the Research Methods course (SOC 105) by the fall of their junior year. During the fall of the junior year, the prospective candidate should approach a thesis advisor and discuss potential research topics. In consultation with the thesis advisor, the candidate should select a thesis committee. This committee will consist of three people: the thesis advisor, one other member of the Sociology Department, and a third member either from the Sociology Department or from a department that is particularly relevant to the thesis topic. By March 1 of that semester, an application for admission to the Program must be submitted to the Sociology Department.

This application should include:

- *a transcript.*
- *approximately a five-page proposal.*

The research proposal should contain:

- *a clear statement of the central research question to be explored.*
- *a description of the principal methods that will be used in the study.*
- *a brief review of relevant scholarly work on the topic.*
- *a preliminary bibliography indicating studies and documents that the student plans to review as well as the materials she/he has already consulted.*

By March 15, the department will let students know whether their applications have been approved or denied. In some cases, the Committee may suggest that an applicant revise the proposal and resubmit it by April 15. Students must submit a copy of their approved proposal to the Department Office.

## **FALL SEMESTER OF SENIOR YEAR: EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS IN RESEARCH AND WRITING**

Students who are accepted into the Honors program register for Special Projects (Sociology 299.5) during the fall semester of the senior year. This Special Projects counts for one (1.00) credit. During the course of the fall semester, most of the research should be completed, with periodic reviews of data sources and bibliographic materials by the Thesis Committee. By December 1, a chapter and a detailed outline of the entire thesis must be submitted to the committee. On this basis, the committee determines whether or not the student has a reasonable prospect of completing the thesis during the spring semester. The committee members may recommend either continuation or withdrawal. At this point, the student may independently decide to withdraw from the program and still receive credit for Special Projects. Under very special circumstances, a student who has been advised to withdraw can petition the Department for reconsideration.

## **SPRING SEMESTER OF SENIOR YEAR: COMPLETION AND EVALUATION OF THESIS**

During the spring semester of the senior year, the prospective honors student registers for Senior Thesis (Sociology 298) for two (2.00) credits. Chapters or sections of the thesis must be presented to the committee members according to a defined schedule, worked out between student and advisor. By March 10, a first draft of the entire thesis must be completed and handed to the thesis advisor. The student will be expected to act upon the recommendations of the advisor in terms of revisions to the thesis or additional research. A final draft of the thesis must be completed by April 1. Failure to meet the deadline or to make the required revisions means the student forfeits the opportunity to receive honors. The student, at this point, may also elect to withdraw from further consideration for honors. In either event, the student must still complete an extensive written project in order to receive course credit and a grade.

Once the thesis is reviewed and approved by the advisor, it is submitted to the Thesis Committee. The Committee will meet to hear an oral "defense" of the thesis by April 15. The Thesis Committee will make the final determination of

the awarding of honors. The Committee may grant honors/high honors/highest honors or may decide not to award honors. Two votes from the Committee are needed for granting honors. The thesis advisor is responsible for notifying the Office of Student Records of the outcome of the oral defense. The Sociology Department requires one copy of the final thesis.

## **SCHEDULE FOR HONORS/SENIOR THESIS PROGRAM**

By the end of Fall Semester Junior Year: Student completes SOC 105, The Social Research Process.

March 1 Junior Year: Submission of application, including research proposal to the Sociology Department.

March 15 Junior Year: The department notifies student of acceptance or of need for revisions and resubmission by April 15, or of denial of application. Student submits copy of approved proposal to the Sociology Department Office.

Fall Semester Senior Year: Student registers for Directed Studies (Soc 299).

December 1 Senior Year: A chapter, a detailed outline, and a full bibliography are presented to the Thesis Committee, who in turn recommends continuation or withdrawal.

Spring Semester Senior Year: Student registers for Senior Honors (Soc 297)

March 10 Senior Year: Student presents a first draft of entire thesis to advisor.

April 1 Senior Year: Student submits final draft of thesis, including any revisions suggested by advisor, to designated Thesis Committee members.

April 15 Senior Year: Oral defense and final decision by Thesis Committee. Student submits bound copy of approved thesis within one week of the defense to the Sociology Department Office.

Graduation Senior Year: Recognition granted to honors recipient.

# SOCIOLOGY MAJOR COURSE ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor \_\_\_\_\_

The major consists of ten Sociology courses and an approved minor or concentration.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Check when completed.

I. Four core courses (offered every semester)

\_\_\_\_\_SOC 10 Introduction to Sociology

\_\_\_\_\_SOC 105 The Social Research Process

\_\_\_\_\_SOC 107 Classical Sociological Theory

\_\_\_\_\_SOC 200 Class, Status and Power

II. Six additional courses, one of which must be a capstone and at least three must be at the 200 level (list titles of courses):

\_\_\_\_\_ 5.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Capstone Seminar

III. Minor or Concentration

\_\_\_\_\_

# NOTES

*"[People] do not usually define the troubles they **endure** in terms of historical **change** ... The well being they enjoy, they do not impute to the big ups and downs of the **society** in which they live. Seldom aware of the **intricate** connection between the **patterns** of their own lives and the course of world history, **ordinary people** do not usually know what this connection means for the kind of people they are **becoming** and for the kinds of history-making in which they might take part. They do not process the quality of mind essential to grasp the **interplay** of individuals and society, of biography and **history**, of self and the **world**."*

*-C. Wright Mills*



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