

SOCIOLOGY

What can I do with this major?

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

HUMAN SERVICES

Direct Care:

Counseling
Case Management
Mental Health Services
Crisis Work
Testing/Assessment
Behavioral Analysis
Rehabilitation Services
Prevention Education

Administration:

Advocacy
Programming
Community Relations
Development/FundRaising
Grant Writing
Non-Profit Management
Volunteer Coordination

Federal, state, and local government
Advocacy groups
Religiously-affiliated organizations
Non-profit/social service agencies
Private foundations
Adoption and child care agencies
Nursing homes and retirement communities
Senior citizens' centers
Residential treatment facilities
Hospitals and wellness centers
Halfway houses
Correctional facilities
Vocational services
Educational information services
Hospice agencies

Concentrate course work or earn a minor in an area of interest such as youth, gerontology, or poverty.
Develop helping and communication skills through volunteer positions.
Obtain essential practical experience through an internship, part-time or summer job with a non-profit or social service organization.
Serve as a Peer Mentor, Resident Assistant, or other student leader.
Gain experience working with diverse populations.
Learn a second language in order to interact with non-English speakers and increase marketability.
Many entry level positions require some related experience. Volunteering, part-time jobs, and internships can typically fulfill this requirement.
Obtain a graduate degree in a social service discipline such as social work, counseling, or psychology to increase employment opportunities.
Most states require licensure or certification for positions involving the direct provision of therapeutic services to clients.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE

See also What Can I Do With This Major in Criminal Justice?

Court Reporting
Court Administration
Law Enforcement
Corrections
Probation and Parole
Rehabilitation
Prevention Programming
Victim Services
Forensics/Investigation
Security
Loss Prevention/Asset Protection
Juvenile Justice

City/County Government Organizations including:
Police departments
Correction facilities
County sheriff departments
Liquor Control Commission
Animal control offices
State Government Organizations including:
State troopers
Crime labs
Penitentiaries
Federal Government Organizations including:
U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)
Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

Choose criminal justice/criminology courses or a concentration in sociology.
Volunteer to work with at-risk youth and families.
Gain experience working with diverse populations.
Complete a formal police academy program upon graduation for careers in law enforcement.
Consider obtaining experience in a branch of the military.
Attend a post-secondary vocational or technical college for court reporting certification programs.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

CRIMINAL JUSTICE CONTINUED

Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
Department of Homeland Security
Postal Service
U.S. Marshals Service
National Security Agency (NSA)
United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)
National Parks Service
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF)
Armed services
Prisons/Jails
Detention centers
Youth corrections facilities
Airports and other transportation facilities
Crime laboratories
Colleges and universities
Banks

Course work related to the hard sciences (biology, chemistry, biochemistry) is often necessary for career opportunities in forensics. Additionally, earning a graduate degree in forensic science or a related discipline may be necessary.

Become familiar with the government application process and seek assistance from the campus career center.

Learn a second language for increased marketability. Be prepared to complete physical and psychological testing, fitness evaluations, and other evaluations for entry into law enforcement and military careers.

For Federal government positions with organizations such as the FBI, CIA, DEA, etc. additional work experience is often required before becoming an agent.

LAW

See also What Can I Do With This Major in Law?

Prosecution

Defense

Contractual

Corporate

Nonprofit or Public Interest

Government

Mediation

Lobbying

Law Assistance

Law firms
Federal, state and local government
Corporations
Nonprofit and public interest organizations, e.g.
 ACLU, NAACP Legal Defense Fund, and Legal Services Corporation
Legal aid societies
Private practice
Colleges and universities

Supplement curriculum with classes that help prepare students for the rigors of law school.

Participate in a debate teams to hone communication skills.

Develop strong research skills and attention to detail. Gain experience with mediation and conflict resolution.

Get involved with pre-law organizations. Obtain a summer or part-time job in a law firm. Plan to shadow an attorney to learn more about the field and various specialties.

Look for ways to get experience in field of interest, e.g. sports, juvenile justice, environment, etc.

Plan to attend law school and earn a JD from a school accredited by the American Bar Association. Maintain an excellent GPA and secure strong faculty recommendations. Plan to take the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test).

Complete a certificate program to prepare for paralegal positions.

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EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

EDUCATION

K-12:
Teaching (Elementary, Middle, Secondary)
School Counseling
Administration
Higher Education:
Teaching
Research
Administration
Student Affairs
Information/Library Services
Adult Learning/Community Instruction, e.g. GED classes, life skills, parenting, etc.

K-12 schools, public and private
Boards of education
Four-year colleges and universities
Two-year and community colleges
Technical schools
Medical and professional schools
Federal Trio programs, e.g. Upward Bound, Talent Search
Non-profit organizations, e.g. Project Grad, Teach for America

Obtain teaching licensure for desired subject area and/or grade level for public school positions. Requirements for certification/licensure vary by state. Seek guidance from the education department of your college.
Gain multiple certifications to increase employability. Private schools may not require certification or licensure. Obtain a master's degree in subject area for increased employability.
Earn a Ph.D. to teach and research at four-year institutions. A master's degree or Ph.D. is required to teach at two-year schools.
Participate in research as an undergraduate. Take research coursework, become involved with faculty research, get to know graduate students. Join appropriate professional organization and attend conferences as a student.
Obtain a master's degree in college student personnel, student development, or counseling for student affairs or administrative positions.
Obtain a master's degree in school counseling to become a professional school counselor.
Obtain a master's degree in information or library science for library positions.
Gain related experience on campus through student leadership opportunities such as Peer Mentors, Resident Assistants, or Orientation Leaders.

GOVERNMENT

See also What Can I Do With This Major in Public Administration?
Social Statistics
Program Analysis
Demography
Public Administration
Policy Analysis
Research
Program Development
Urban/City Planning

Federal government:
There are over 170 federal departments and agencies. See <http://gogovernment.org>
State and local governments

Earn a minor or supplement curriculum with coursework in statistics and social research.
Develop exceptional computer, communication, and research skills.
Gain practical experience through government internships, part-time jobs, or summer work.
Develop a specialty such as aging, family, criminal justice, or healthcare.
Seek leadership roles in relevant student groups.

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STRATEGIES

GOVERNMENT CONTINUED

Become involved in student government.
Participate in cross-cultural organizations. Interact with the international community on campus.
Maintain a strong grade point average.
Consider earning a graduate degree for advanced positions, e.g. public administration (MPA), public policy (MPP).
Research government agencies and identify federal job titles that are right for your combination of education and experience.
Become familiar with the government application process. Utilize applicable websites and seek assistance from your campus career center.
Consider beginning a career with the government by joining the military or Peace Corps. Such experiences can open doors to government positions.

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Research
Data Analysis
Policy or Program Analysis
Demographics
Market Research
Information Sourcing
Statistics

Federal Government Organizations including:
Bureau of Labor Statistics
Bureau of Justice Statistics
Bureau of Economic Analysis
Bureau of Transportation Statistics
National Center for Health Statistics
National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Census Bureau
Center for Disease Control
Local and state government agencies
Universities
Research institutes
Non-profit agencies
Private industries
Advertising and marketing firms
Consulting firms
Information brokers
Newspapers, magazines, news agencies
Public opinion research polls
Political campaigns
Polling firms

Earn a minor or supplement curriculum with coursework in statistics, research methods, and/or analysis.
Develop exceptional quantitative, statistical, writing, and organizational skills.
Learn to use statistical software packages as well as database, spreadsheet, and presentation programs.
Volunteer to help a professor with a research project or complete original research through an independent study class.
Develop an area of expertise through relevant experience, coursework, or advanced degree.
Obtain an advanced degree in sociology for research administration positions.
Earn certification in applied social research by The American Sociological Association.
Network with professionals working in areas of interest.
Gain experience working on teams and communicating ideas with others from varying disciplines.

AREAS

EMPLOYERS

STRATEGIES

BUSINESS

Human Resources:
 Training and Development
 Recruiting
Management
Sales
Marketing
Public Relations
Office Administration
Consulting
Market and Consumer Research

Insurance firms
Retail stores
Banks
Staffing agencies
Manufacturing companies
Service industries
Non-profit organizations
Healthcare organizations
Government
Education

Supplement curriculum with appropriate coursework (accounting, finance, management, etc.) or earn a minor in business or communications.
Gain relevant experience through part-time jobs, summer work, and internships.
Learn to use software applications such as spreadsheets, databases, and presentations.
Hone written and oral communication skills.
Join related professional associations.
Seek leadership roles on campus.
Be willing to start in a management-trainee program or other entry-level positions.
When job searching, seek employers interested in hiring "any major."
Understand the top skills employers desire and be prepared to demonstrate them, such as communication (oral and written), computer, interpersonal, leadership and teamwork, etc.

ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY

Land and Water Conservation
Planning
Law
Preserve Management
Natural Resource Management
Land Acquisition
Parks and Outdoor Recreation
Environmental Education
Advocacy/Lobbying
Administration and Management
Recreation Planning
Research
Site Operations and Maintenance
Ecotourism

Waste management firms
Health agencies
Local planning agencies
Environmental advocacy groups
Non-profit organizations
Local, state, and federal government agencies
National Park Service
State, county, or city parks
Consulting firms
Private industry
Media companies
Environmental periodicals
Resorts and marinas
Privately owned facilities
Tourism agencies
Land trust organizations such as The Nature Conservancy or Trust for Public Land

Enhance curriculum with coursework in ecology, environmental science, and statistics.
Earn a minor or concentration in environmental studies or issues.
Obtain a graduate degree in environmental sociology or environmental studies for advancement into administrative/supervisory positions.
Join environment-related student organizations.
Join professional associations and environmental groups as ways to network with professionals.
Volunteer to work on environmental clean-up projects with an organization such as Student Conservation Association (SCA).
Gain practical related experience through an internship, part-time, or summer job.
Obtain a law degree for environmental law.
Participate in travel and/or recreation programs.
Learn environmental laws and regulations.

GENERAL INFORMATION

- Many transferable skills such as analytical, organizational, research, interpersonal, computer, leadership, teamwork, and oral/written communication are associated with the sociology degree.
- Internships, part-time jobs, summer jobs, and/or volunteer experiences are critical to reaching career goals. Research fields of interests and gain the right skills, experiences, and advanced degrees (if necessary).
- An undergraduate degree is sufficient for many entry-level positions in non-profit organizations, business, and government.
- A bachelor's in sociology can prepare students for graduate or professional education in sociology, law, counseling, psychology, social work, medicine, education, college student personnel, higher education administration, planning, and other related fields. Research pre-requisites for graduate or professional programs of interest.
- There are two main types of master's degree programs in sociology including: traditional programs and programs with an applied, clinical, or professional track. Traditional programs prepare students to enter academia and a Ph.D. program. Applied, clinical, and professional programs are vocationally oriented and prepare students to enter the workforce by teaching job skills.
- To enhance graduate or professional school opportunities, maintain a high grade point average, secure strong faculty recommendations, join student or professional organizations, and gain relevant experience outside of the classroom through work, internship, volunteer, and research opportunities.
- Get involved with a population of interest (i.e., children, college students, elderly adults) and develop multicultural sensitivity and understanding.
- Talk with professionals working in areas of interest and build a network of contacts.