Sociology

Director of undergraduate studies: Rene Almeling, 493 College St., Room 309, 432-3340, rene.ameling@yale.edu
(rene.ameling@yale.edu); sociology.yale.edu

Sociology provides the theoretical and empirical foundation for understanding how societies function and how they change over time. Sociologists are interested in the causes and consequences of processes such as the social construction of groups and identity, the evolution of culture, intersubjective meanings, intergroup relations, and hierarchies and social norms. They conduct research on individual behavior and outcomes such as educational attainment, jobs and careers, religious commitment, and political involvement; interpersonal processes such as intimate relationships, sexuality, social interaction in groups, and social networks; the behaviors of organizations and institutions; the causes and consequences of group differences and social inequality; and social change at the societal and global level.

The Sociology major provides both a solid foundation for students interested in careers in the social sciences and a strong background for a variety of professions in which knowledge about social processes and how societies work is relevant. Many recent graduates have gone on to law school, medical school, or graduate programs in public health, business, education, urban planning, criminology, or sociology. Others work in finance, consulting, publishing, marketing, city planning, teaching, research, and advocacy.

The Sociology department offers four undergraduate programs leading to the B.A. degree: (1) the standard program focuses on sociological concepts, theories, and methods; (2) a combined program allows students to combine sociology with a concentration in another field; (3) a concentration in health and society emphasizes social processes as they affect health and medicine. Students interested in the major are encouraged to contact the director of undergraduate studies early in their academic careers to discuss potential options.

Course numbering

Courses in sociology are divided by level, with introductory courses numbered from 110 to 149, courses in sociological theory from 150 to 159, courses in sociological methods from 160 to 169, intermediate courses from 150 to 299, advanced courses in the 300s, and individual study and research courses in the 400s. Freshman seminars are numbered below 100 and count as introductory or intermediate courses.

Prerequisite

Students interested in the Sociology major should complete either a freshman seminar or at least one introductory course (numbered SOCY 110–149) by the end of the sophomore year. This course may be applied toward the requirements of the major. The DUS can waive the introductory course requirement for students who demonstrate adequate preparation for advanced course work in sociology.

Requirements of the major

Program I. The standard major The requirements for the standard major are:

1. Thirteen term courses in sociology (including the prerequisite and senior colloquium), of which normally no more than two may be drawn from outside the Sociology department. At least one must be an introductory Sociology course or a substitute approved by the DUS, but no more than two introductory courses may count toward the total.
2. Two courses in sociological theory and two in sociological methods, normally completed by the end of the junior year. SOCY 151 and 152 are the required courses for theory. SOCY 160 and one additional Sociology course numbered SOCY 161–169 are required for methods. Other methods courses from outside the department can be approved at the discretion of the DUS. Students planning to study abroad in their junior year are strongly encouraged to begin meeting the theory and methods requirements in their sophomore year. They should also discuss the options for their course of study with the DUS before finalizing their plans.
3. One advanced seminar in Sociology (SOCY 300–399).
4. The senior requirement.

Program II. Sociology with another subject The combined program allows students to unite the study of sociology with the study of another discipline or substantive area, and to design a program that satisfies their own interests and career plans. By the beginning of the junior year, participants in the combined program are expected to consult with the DUS in order to obtain approval for their course of study. The requirements for Program II are:

1. Thirteen term courses (including the prerequisite and senior colloquium), of which at least nine and no more than ten are selected from Sociology, the remainder being chosen from another department or program. At least one must be an introductory Sociology course or a substitute approved by the DUS, but no more than two introductory courses in any department or program may count toward the total. The courses outside Sociology must constitute a coherent unit alone and form a logical whole when combined with the Sociology courses.
2. Two courses in sociological theory and two in sociological methods, normally completed by the end of the junior year. SOCY 151 and 152 are the required courses for theory. SOCY 160 and one additional Sociology course numbered SOCY 161–169 are required for methods. Other methods courses from outside the department can be approved at the discretion of the DUS. Students planning to
study abroad in their junior year are strongly encouraged to begin meeting the theory and methods requirements in their sophomore year. They should also discuss the options for their course of study with the DUS before finalizing their plans.

3. One advanced seminar in Sociology (SOCY 300–399).

4. The senior requirement, integrating sociology and the other subject chosen.

Program III. Concentration in markets and society  Students in the markets and society concentration gain a broad understanding of markets and their relationship to social networks, religion, the state, and culture. Students explore the field of economic sociology, develop insights into market logics and economic outcomes, and develop skills in network analysis. Application is required to the markets and society concentration, using a form downloaded from the Sociology department website. Requirements for the concentration are:

1. Thirteen term courses in sociology (including the prerequisite and senior colloquium). At least one must be an introductory Sociology course or a substitute approved by the DUS, but no more than two introductory courses in any department or program may count toward the total. Up to four courses may be drawn from outside the Sociology department, with approval from the DUS.
2. Two courses in sociological methods, one in network analysis (e.g., SOCY 167) and another in statistics (e.g., SOCY 162).
3. Two additional intermediate or advanced courses in economic sociology. Suitable courses include SOCY 219 and SOCY 395; other courses may fulfill this requirement with approval from the DUS.
4. At least one intermediate or advanced course in microeconomics (e.g., ECON 121 or 125).
5. The senior requirement, integrating sociology with business, markets, or economic behavior.

Program IV. Concentration in health and society  Students in the health and society concentration gain a broad understanding of how supraindividual factors such as socioeconomic inequality, demographic processes, neighborhood environments, cultural norms, and social networks affect health and medical care. Students explore the fields of medical sociology, stratification, demography, and network science. The core courses in the concentration satisfy the social science requirements of premedical programs while also providing a solid foundation for students interested in public health, health policy, and global health. Application is required to the health and society concentration, using a form downloaded from the Sociology department website. Requirements for the concentration are:

1. Thirteen term courses in Sociology (including the prerequisite and senior colloquium). Up to five course credits may be drawn from outside the Sociology department, with approval from the DUS.
2. SOCY 126, the gateway course for the concentration (or other similar course, with approval of DUS).
3. SOCY 151, is highly recommended.
4. A course in statistics: SOCY 162, S&DS 103, GLBL 121, or a higher-level statistics course approved by the DUS.
5. SOCY 160 or a comparable course approved by the DUS.
6. In order to build a broad base of interdisciplinary knowledge on health, students may take up to five course credits from outside the Sociology department. It is recommended that students select at least one course credit from the following: BIOL 101, BIOL 102, BIOL 103, BIOL 104; MATH 112 or higher-level MATH course; ECON 170.
7. Two upper-level Sociology seminars selected from the following: SOCY 341, SOCY 314, SOCY 361, SOCY 390, or other courses approved by the DUS.
8. The senior requirement, integrating sociology with health and medicine.

Credit/D/Fail courses  A maximum of two courses taken Credit/D/Fail may be counted toward the requirements of the major.

SENIOR REQUIREMENTS

For the nonintensive major  Students electing the nonintensive major take one additional seminar in Sociology (SOCY 300–399) and write a one-credit senior essay during the senior year (SOCY 491). The senior essay for nonintensive majors is intended to be an in-depth scholarly review and critical analysis based on secondary sources. Students select an important topic in any sociological field and write a literature review that evaluates what is known about the topic. All nonintensive majors are required to enroll in SOCY 491 to receive credit for the senior essay. To register for this course, students must submit a written plan of study approved by a faculty adviser to the DUS no later than the end of registration period in the term in which the senior essay is to be written. Nonintensive majors are not eligible to graduate with Distinction in the Major.

For the intensive major  The intensive major gives students an opportunity to undertake a yearlong program of original research resulting in a contribution to sociological knowledge. The yearlong project requires substantial independent research and knowledge of a sociological subfield. Students use research methods such as data gathering through participant observation, in-depth interviewing, administration of small-scale surveys, or secondary analysis of existing data. They may present findings in a variety of forms, from ethnographic narratives to analytical statistics. Students select primary and secondary advisers from the faculty. Students in the intensive major enroll in SOCY 493, 494 during their senior year. The colloquium provides a forum for discussing the research process and for presenting students’ research at various stages. Intensive majors are eligible to graduate with Distinction in the Major if they meet the grade standards for Distinction – see under Honors in the Undergraduate Curriculum section – and submit a senior essay written in SOCY 493, 494.

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ADVISING

All students interested in the Sociology major should meet with the DUS no later than the beginning of the junior year to elect a program of study. Qualified students may petition to enroll in graduate courses, with permission of the instructor and the director of graduate studies. A list of graduate courses and descriptions is available from the DUS.

Admission to the intensive major Candidates for the intensive major should apply to the DUS by the last day of classes in the spring term of their junior year. The intensive major is especially recommended for students considering graduate school or social research. In special circumstances, applications may be accepted through the end of registration period in the first term of the senior year. Applications should include a one-page statement of interest that includes a list of relevant courses taken and identifies a prospective senior essay adviser. Admission is based on performance and promise. The DUS and the senior essay adviser serve as advisers to seniors in the intensive major.

STUDY ABROAD

Students planning to study abroad in their junior year are strongly encouraged to begin meeting specific requirements in their sophomore year. They should also discuss the options for their course of study with the DUS before finalizing their plans.

REQUIREMENTS OF THE MAJOR

Prerequisite 1 freshman sem or intro course (SOCY 110–149) or equivalent
Number of courses 13 term courses (incl prereq and senior essay)
Specific courses required Programs I and II — SOCY 151, 152, 160, 1 addtl course from SOCY 161–169; Program IV — SOCY 126, SOCY 160, or a comparable course approved by the DUS
Distribution of courses All programs — no more than 2 intro courses; Program I — 1 sem from SOCY 300–399; Program II — 9 or 10 courses in Sociology; 3 or 4 courses from another dept; 1 sem from SOCY 300–399; Program III — 2 courses in sociological methods; 1 course in network analysis; 1 course in statistics, as specified; 2 intermed or adv course in economic sociology; 1 intermed or adv course in economic anthropology; 1 intermed or adv course in microcom; Program IV — 1 course in stat, as specified; 2 upper-level sems, as specified
Substitution permitted Program I — up to 2 courses from other depts; Program III — up to 4 courses from other depts, with DUS approval; Program IV — up to 5 courses from other depts, with DUS approval
Senior requirement Nonintensive major — 1 addtl 300-level Sociology sem and senior essay (SOCY 491); Intensive major — two-term senior essay (SOCY 493, 494)

FACULTY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Professors Julia Adams, Jeffrey Alexander, Elijah Anderson, †James Baron, Scott Boorman, Nicholas Christakis, †Paul Cleary, Deborah Davis, Ron Eyerman, Philip Gorski, Grace Kao, Andrew Papachristos, †Peter Salovey, †Vicki Schultz, Philip Smith (Chair), †Olav Sorensen, Frederick Wherry
Associate Professors Rene Almeling, Emily Erikson, †Marissa King, †Issa Kohler-Hausmann, Jonathan Wyrtzen
Assistant Professors †Justin Farrell, Lloyd Grieger, Joscha Legewie
Lecturer Matthew Mahler
†A joint appointment with primary affiliation in another department or school.

Introductory Courses

* SOCY 018b, The Sociological Imagination Julia Adams
Introduction to the linked study of sociology and modernity. Topics include the dramatic rise of capitalism; colonialism and empire; the advent of democracy and bureaucracy; the world-historical invention of the individual; and the contested role of religion in modernity. Readings from classical and contemporary authors. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. So

* SOCY 086a, China in the Age of Xi Jinping Deborah Davis
An overview of the major social institutions in contemporary China, with a focus on the changing relationship between individual and society. Use of print and visual sources to explore the social consequences of China’s recent retreat from socialism and its rapid integration into the global economy. May count toward the Sociology major as an intermediate course. Enrollment limited to freshmen. Preregistration required; see under Freshman Seminar Program. So

SOCY 133a, Computers, Networks, and Society Scott Boorman
Comparison of major algorithm-centered approaches to the analysis of complex social network and organizational data. Fundamental principles for developing a disciplined and coherent perspective on the effects of modern information technology on societies worldwide.
Software warfare and algorithm sabotage; blockmodeling and privacy; legal, ethical, and policy issues. No prior experience with computers required. SO RP

SOCY 134a / AMST 134 / ER&M 264a / WGSS 110a, Sex and Gender in Society Rene Almeling
Introduction to the social processes through which people are categorized in terms of sex and gender, and how these social processes shape individual experiences of the world. Sex and gender in relation to race/ethnicity, class, sexuality, nationality, education, work, family, reproduction, and health. SO

SOCY 147b, Introduction to Social Policy Analysis Scott Boorman
The capabilities and limitations of four fundamental tools of policy: markets, networks, bureaucracy, and legislation. Examples from the policy history of the United States since the 1930s and from formal models of social structure and process. SO

SOCY 149a / AMST 198a / ARCH 385a / HIST 152a / PLSC 279a, New Haven and the American City Elihu Rubin and Alan Plattus
Introduction to urban studies using New Haven as a model for the American city. Emphasis on historical development; urban planning; the built environment; transportation and infrastructure; reform and redevelopment; architecture and urban design; sustainability and equity. SO

Courses in Sociological Theory
Open to all students without prerequisite.

SOCY 151a / PLSC 290a, Foundations of Modern Social Theory Emily Erikson
Major works of social thought from the beginning of the modern era through the 1900s. Attention to social and intellectual concepts, conceptual frameworks and methods, and contributions to contemporary social analysis. Writers include W.E.B. Du Bois, Simone De Beauvoir, Adam Smith, Thomas Hobbes, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Immanuel Kant, Emile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx. SO

* SOCY 152b, Topics in Contemporary Social Theory Ron Eyerman
In-depth introduction to recent developments in social theory, with particular emphasis on the last twenty years. Focus on three distinct areas of study: the building blocks and contrasting understandings of human persons and social action; the competing theories of the social structure of markets, institutions, cultures, social fields, and actor-networks; and the theoretical controversies concerning nations, states and empires, ethnic and racial identity, and the relation between facts and values in social research. Authors include Judith Butler, Michel Foucault, Jurgen Habermas, Pierre Bourdieu and Bruno Latour. None. Though "Foundations of Modern Social Theory" or equivalent is strongly recommended. WR, SO

Courses in Sociological Methods

* SOCY 160b, Methods of Inquiry Kazuko Suzuki
The theory and practice of social inquiry. How social scientists—and aspiring social scientists—actually do their work, including designing research, sampling and measuring, and interpreting results. Examination of thesis proposal writing; ethical quandaries involved in social research. No background in social research assumed. SO

* SOCY 162a / EDST 162a, Methods in Quantitative Sociology Lloyd Grieger
Introduction to methods in quantitative sociological research. Topics include: data description; graphical approaches; elementary probability theory; bivariate and multivariate linear regression; regression diagnostics. Students use Stata for hands-on data analysis. Q8, SO

* SOCY 169a, Visual Sociology Philip Smith
Introduction to themes and methods in visual sociology. The role and use of visual information in social life, including images, objects, settings, and human interactions. Ethnographic photography, the study of media images, maps and diagrams, observation and coding of public settings, unobtrusive measures, and the use of internet resources. SO

Intermediate Courses
The prerequisite for intermediate courses is one introductory Sociology course or permission of the instructor.

* SOCY 172b / PLSC 415b, Religion and Politics in the World Katharine Baldwin
A broad overview of the relationship between religion and politics around the world, especially Christianity and Islam. Religions are considered to constitute not just theologies but also sets of institutions, networks, interests, and sub-cultures. The course’s principal aim is to understand how religion affects politics as an empirical matter, rather than to explore moral dimensions of this relationship. SO

SOCY 190a / AFAM 196a / AMST 196a / ER&M 226a / EVST 196a, Race, Class, and Gender in American Cities Laura Barraclough
Examination of how racial, gender, and class inequalities have been built, sustained, and challenged in American cities. Focus on the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Topics include industrialization and deindustrialization, segregation, gendered public/private split, gentrification, transit equity, environmental justice, food access, and the relationships between public space, democracy, and community wellbeing. Includes field projects in New Haven. SO

* SOCY 202a, Cultural Sociology Jeffrey Alexander
Study of “irrational” meanings in supposedly rational, modern societies. Social meanings are symbolic, sensual, emotional, and moral. They affect every dimension of social life, from politics and markets to race and gender relations, class conflict, and war. Examination of
century old counter-intuitive writings of Durkheim and Weber, breakthroughs of semiotics and anthropology in mid-century, creation of modern cultural sociology in the 1980s, and new thinking about social performance and material icons today. Topics include: ancient and modern religion, contemporary capitalism, professional wrestling, the Iraq War, impeachment of Bill Clinton, Barack Obama’s first presidential campaign, and the new cult of vinyl records.

* SOCY 216a / EP&E 267a / WGSS 314a, Social Movements  Ron Eyerman
An introduction to sociological perspectives on social movements and collective action, exploring civil rights, student movements, global justice, nationalism, and radical fundamentalism.

* SOCY 221a / MGRK 326a / PLSC 138a, The Euro Crisis  Paris Aslanidis
Examination of how Europe continues to struggle with repercussions of the Great Recession and the impact of the Eurozone crisis in countries such as Portugal, Ireland, Spain, and, especially, Greece. Topics include the euro as a viable common currency; why and how the Eurozone crisis erupted and spread; and whether this catastrophe could have been averted.

* SOCY 228b, Norms and Deviance  Elijah Anderson
A sociological analysis of the origins, development, and reactions surrounding deviance in contemporary society. Group labeling, stigma, power, and competing notions of propriety.

* SOCY 232b / AFST 348b / MMES 291b, Islamic Social Movements  Jonathan Wyrtzen
Social movement theory used to analyze the emergence and evolution of Islamic movements from the early twentieth century to the present. Organization, mobilization, political process, and framing of political, nonpolitical, militant, and nonmilitant movements; transnational dimensions of Islamic activism. Case studies include the Muslim Brotherhood, Hamas, Hizbollah, Al-Qaeda, Gulen, Al-Adl wa-Ihsann, Islamic State, and others.

Advanced Courses

Courses in this category are open to students who have completed one intermediate course and any other specified requirement, or by permission of the instructor. Preference is given to Sociology majors in their junior and senior years.

* SOCY 305b / EAST 401b, State and Society Relations in Post-Socialist China  Abigail Coplin
Focus on the interplay of state, market, and society in contemporary China. How institutions of the market reform era have redistributed material assets, political power, and social capital among different groups of social actors and how to use contemporary China as a case with which to engage social and political theory.

* SOCY 307b / ER&M 376b / MGRK 304b / PLSC 376b, Extreme and Radical Right Movements  Paris Aslanidis
Extreme and radical right movements and political parties are a recurrent phenomenon found in most parts of the world. Discussion of their foundational values and the causes of their continuous, even increasing, support among citizens and voters.

* SOCY 310a / AFAM 390a / ER&M 419a, Ethnography of the African American Community  Elijah Anderson
An ethnographic study of the African American community. Analysis of ethnographic and historical literature, with attention to substantive, conceptual, and methodological issues. Topics include the significance of slavery, the racial ghetto, structural poverty, the middle class, the color line, racial etiquette, and social identity.

* SOCY 321b / EP&E 477b, Sociology of Markets  Staff
The role of culture and politics in shaping markets. Links between social networks and employment discrimination, religion and wealth, social relationships and financial troubles, and culture and industry. The moral dimensions of selling organs and intimacy.

* SOCY 327a / ER&M 374a / HSHM 404, Race, Medicine, and the Body  Airin Martinez
Historical and contemporary analysis of how race and ethnicity are constructed by and within biomedical sciences and public health. Exploration of the physiological embodiment of racism and the continued significance of race in contemporary biomedical research.

* SOCY 339b / AFST 373b / GLBL 362b / MMES 282b, Imperialism, Insurgency, and State Building in the Middle East and North Africa  Jonathan Wyrtzen
The historical evolution of political order from Morocco to Central Asia in the past two centuries. Focus on relationships between imperialism, insurgency, and state building; Ottoman, European, and nationalist strategies for state building; modes of local resistance; recent transnational developments; American counterinsurgency and nation-building initiatives in the region.

* SOCY 357a, Neighborhoods and Crime  Andrew Papachristos
The “city problem” of crime contrasted in a variety of neighborhoods; reasons why some neighborhoods have higher rates of crime than others. Topics include street gangs, the underground economy, immigration, and mass incarceration. Attention to ecological, social structural, and cultural aspects of city life.

* SOCY 362a / PLSC 241a, The Making of Political News  Matthew Mahler
The processes through which political news gets made. How the form and content of political news are shaped and through the ongoing relationships between political operatives and journalists; ways in which these actors attempt to structure and restructure such relationships to their benefit.
* **SOCY 389a / GLBL 215a / LAST 386a / MGRK 237a / PLSC 375a, Populism from Chavez to Trump**  Paris Aslanidis
Investigation of the nature of the populist phenomenon and its impact on politics, society, and the economy in various regions of the world. Conceptual and methodological analyses are supported by comparative assessments of various empirical instances, from populist politicians such as Hugo Chavez and Donald Trump, to populist social movements such as the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street.

* **SOCY 395a / EAST 408a / EP&E 269a, Wealth and Poverty in Modern China**  Deborah Davis
The underlying causes and consequences of the changing distribution of income, material assets, and political power in contemporary China. Substantive focus on inequality and stratification. Instruction in the use of online Chinese resources relevant to research. Optional weekly Chinese language discussions. Prerequisite: a previous course on China since 1949.

Individual Study and Research Courses

* **SOCY 471a and SOCY 472b, Individual Study**  Rene Almeling
Individual study for qualified juniors and seniors under faculty supervision. To register for this course, each student must submit to the director of undergraduate studies a written plan of study that has been approved by a faculty adviser.

* **SOCY 491a and SOCY 492b, Senior Essay and Colloquium for Nonintensive Majors**  Philip Smith
Independent library-based research under faculty supervision. To register for this course, students must submit a written plan of study approved by a faculty adviser to the director of undergraduate studies no later than the end of registration period in the term in which the senior essay is to be written. The course meets biweekly, beginning in the first week of the term.

* **SOCY 493a and SOCY 494b, Senior Essay and Colloquium for Intensive Majors**  Rene Almeling
Independent research under faculty direction, involving empirical research and resulting in a substantial paper. Workshop meets biweekly to discuss various stages of the research process and to share experiences in gathering and analyzing data. The first meeting is in the second week of the term.