

# **SOCIOLOGY MAJOR HANDBOOK**

**2024-2025**

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## WELCOME TO THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

The Department of Sociology at the University of South Carolina Aiken offers the Bachelor of Arts Degree, Major in Sociology, with concentrations in criminology/criminal justice, human services, and general sociology. While there is a common core of courses which sociology majors must complete, other courses may be selected to reflect individual student interests and career goals.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide sociology majors with a reference to departmental opportunities and requirements. **Majors are expected to read this handbook in order to familiarize themselves with degree requirements and other responsibilities (e.g., meeting with academic advisors, applying for graduation) and to continue to refer to it as they continue to progress toward completion of the degree program.**

Efforts have been made to verify that all information in this handbook is accurate and current. In case there is a discrepancy between requirements or procedures presented here and those printed in the *USCA Bulletin* (the academic year on the cover of this handbook), the *USCA Bulletin* is the deciding document.

## THE MISSION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

The mission of the Department of Sociology is to provide students with an understanding of social science theories, concepts, and methods leading to an ability to collect social science data, integrate material from diverse sources, draw conclusions from data, appreciate other cultures, and to be aware of issues surrounding social change.

Students have the opportunity to earn the Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology in one of three concentrations: general, human services, or criminology/criminal justice. In addition, the Department provides general education courses in geography and anthropology. Departmental mission includes contributing to the overall enhancement of the academic and scholarly community. The Department also provides expertise to local community agencies when appropriate.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE BACHELOR OF ARTS DEGREE PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY**

A student who successfully completes the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology is expected to be able to:

1. Communicate effectively orally and in writing
2. Define and correctly use principal terms and concepts relevant to the discipline of sociology.
3. Recognize and explain major perspectives in sociology.
4. Exercise a sociological imagination:
  - An understanding of the interconnections between larger social forces and the individual
  - An understanding of the impact of history on biography
  - An understanding of social change, its causes and consequences
  - An ability to discuss other cultures without demonstrating ethnocentrism
5. Recognize and understand the sources and effects of inequities in society (e.g., social class, race/ethnicity, gender)
6. Understand the basic methodological approaches to building knowledge in sociology.
7. Develop informed hypotheses, analyze data, and draw accurate conclusions.

## **ASSESSING THE DEGREE PROGRAM**

In order to determine how successful the sociology program is at achieving the established objectives, several assessment measures have been included in each sociology major's requirements. Sociology majors must:

- a) earn a grade of C or better in both English 101 and 102
- b) earn a grade of C or better in three Writing Intensive classes
- c) earn a grade of C or better in one of the following applied speech courses:
  - COMM 201 - Interpersonal Communication
  - COMM 241 - Public Communication
- d) prepare and make an oral presentation on the project completed in the required SOCY 400 Internship course
- e) complete course-embedded assessments which are included in the requirements for SOCY 248, 348, 350, 353, 355, and 404.
- f) complete an exit survey immediately prior to graduation

## **BACHELOR OF ARTS SOCIOLOGY MAJOR DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

The following pages describe the requirements for the degree in sociology. Majors must maintain an advisement check sheet for the appropriate academic year (available on the Department of Sociology website) as he/she progresses through the program. **The check sheet should be updated regularly and is to be used to plan class schedules for new semesters before meeting with an academic advisor during priority or open registration periods. Even though, the student's academic advisor will also maintain a check sheet in the student's advisement file, the student is ultimately responsible for monitoring his/her progress toward the degree.**

**Transfer credit** for students coming into the USC System from other accredited colleges/universities will be evaluated by the USCA academic unit heads. The chair of the Sociology Department will review transcripts of sociology coursework completed at other institutions to determine transferability.

In the section which follows, more specific information is presented about the course selections in each of the General Education groups and the major.

### **GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS**

#### **A. KNOWLEDGE OF HUMAN CULTURES AND THE PHYSICAL & NATURAL WORLD**

(16 HOURS)

##### **1. Natural Sciences—at least one with lab (4 hours)**

One course from biology, chemistry, astronomy, physics, or geology. The course must include a lab.

##### **2. Social and Behavioral Sciences (3 hours)**

Students must successfully complete one course of the following Social/behavioral sciences: sociology; anthropology; geography; psychology; political science; and/or economics. SOCY 101 - Introductory Sociology and SOCY 240 - Social Problems are the only sociology courses that may be counted toward this requirement and only in exceptional circumstances.

##### **3. Global Cultures (3 hours)**

HIST 101 - Introduction to World Civilizations to 1750 *or* HIST 102 -Introduction to World Civilizations Since 1750

##### **4. Humanities (6 hours -at least two disciplines)**

Three humanities courses in at least two disciplines will satisfy this requirement. Courses may be selected from specified courses in the following disciplines: English literature; history; art history; music appreciation; philosophy (not PHIL 110); theater appreciation (ATHE 161); religion;

humanities (HSSI); honors (AHON), and designated communications (last two digits of course number in 50s or 60s) and languages courses.

A listing of courses that will satisfy the humanities requirement is included in the *USCA Bulletin*. Students are to refer to that publication when selecting coursework which will fulfill the humanities general education requirement.

## **B. INTELLECTUAL AND PRACTICAL SKILLS (12 HOURS)**

### **1. English (6 hours)**

ENGL 101 and 102 must be taken for this group. A grade of "C" or higher is required in each course. A student may not take ENGL 102 without first earning a C or better in ENGL 101.

### **2. Oral Communication (3 hours)** Grade of "C" or better is required. Choose from:

COMM 201 -Interpersonal Communications  
COMM 241 -Public Speaking

### **3. Math/Statistics/Logic (3 hours)**

Students can take MATH 102 or higher to fulfill this General Education requirement. (MATH 102 or higher is the prerequisite for HSSI 220, Statistics for Social Science.)

or

Students can complete MATH 108 to fulfill this General Education requirement. (Completing MATH 108 with a C or better is the prerequisite for PSYC 325 Quantitative Analysis in the Behavioral Sciences or STAT 201 Elementary Statistics.)

MATH 221 or MATH 222 may not be used by sociology majors to fulfill the General Education math credit.

Sociology students are required to complete HSSI 220, Statistics for Social Science, PSYC 325, Quantitative Analysis in the Behavioral Sciences, or STAT 201, Elementary Statistics as part of the School/College requirements.

### **4. Writing Intensive Coursework**

Satisfactory completion of three courses designated as Writing Intensive. There is one required course for sociology majors which is Writing Intensive SOCY 248.

Courses offered as writing intensive are designated with WI behind the course title as posted in the schedule of classes in Self Service Carolina (SSC).

## **C. PERSONAL AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (3 HOURS)**

### **1. American Political Institutions (3 hours)**

Choose from: POLI 201 - American National Government, HIST 201 - History of the United States from Discovery to 1865, or HIST 202 -History of the United States from 1865 to the Present.

### **2. Academic Curricular Enrichment (ACE) Program**

Student participation in the ACE Program is among the requirements for graduation from USC Aiken. Students are required to attend approved events that include lectures, performances, films, concerts, and exhibits. The ACE Program is designed to support USC Aiken's goal to produce "engaged learners and principled citizens" by broadening students' cultural and intellectual perspectives.

Requirement: Students will not be approved to receive their degree until they have met the ACE requirement. Track your progress on Blackboard.

## **D. INTEGRATIVE LEARNING**

While there are no specific course requirements in this category, students are strongly encouraged to include one or more integrative learning experiences in their academic programs, such as linked courses, study abroad, internship, service learning, faculty-mentored research, capstone.

## **SCHOOL/COLLEGE SPECIFIC REQUIREMENTS** (15 hours minimum)

In addition to the General Education core of required credit hours, students must complete the required credit hours designated by the College or School of their major program. These courses offer further breadth within the academic curriculum while also preparing students for coursework in their chosen major.

Students can select a minimum of 15 credit hours from at least three of the following areas: Humanities, Fine Arts, Math/Stats/Logic, Natural Sciences, Social/Behavioral Sciences, and Foreign Languages. Courses in this section may also count towards Program Requirements hours.

Sociology students are required to complete HSSI 220, Statistics for Social Science, PSYC 325, Quantitative Analysis in the Behavioral Sciences, or STAT 201, Elementary Statistics as part of the School/College requirements.

## **Cognate, Minor, Double Major, or Second Degree**

### **The Cognate** (12 hours)

The cognate is a minimum of 12 semester hours of coursework designed to support the major. Cognate courses may be selected from upper-level (300+) humanities, social and behavioral sciences, natural/physical sciences, mathematics, and/or business disciplines and must be approved by the student's advisor (nursing and education courses cannot be used for the cognate).

The cognate may be comprised of coursework in as many as four disciplines or only one discipline.

Each cognate course must be completed with a grade of "C" or better.

### **The Minor** (usually 18 hours)

In place of a cognate a student may elect to complete a minor consisting of 18 hours (usually) of credit in prescribed coursework. The minor is intended to develop a coherent core of basic preparation in a second area of study. It is different from the cognate in that the courses must be concentrated in one area. A list of the minors available at USC Aiken are listed in the *USCA Bulletin* and the specific requirements each minor are listed in that publication under the School or Department that offers it.

Courses applied toward general education requirements cannot be applied to the minor. No course may satisfy both major and minor requirements. A grade of "C" or higher is required in each minor course.



## **Double Major**

A number of sociology majors will opt to complete a double major. A double major consists of the complete fulfillment of all requirements for one degree and all the major course requirements of a second. For double majors, the cognate or minor requirement for the degree in sociology is satisfied by the second major. Depending on the second discipline selected, it may be possible to complete all requirements both majors within the 120 credit hour graduation requirement. The *USCA Bulletin* or an academic advisor should be consulted for additional information.

Students who wish to pursue a double major must complete a change of program at the Office of Advisement in order that he/she may be assigned an academic advisor in each major area

Note that a double major is not the same as a "second degree" or a "dual degree." See below.

## **Second Undergraduate Degree**

A minimum of 24 hours of coursework beyond the degree requirements for the first degree are required for a second baccalaureate degree. In all cases, the student must complete all requirements for both degrees. In most cases, students wanting to major in two areas, it is advisable to opt for the "second major" (discussed above), not a second undergraduate degree. The *USCA Bulletin* and an academic advisor should be contacted additional information.

## **Free Electives (11-25 hours)\***

\*120 - (gen. ed. credit hrs. + non program requirement hours with ^indicators + minor or cognate credit hrs. + major credit hrs.) = free elective hrs. needed

Sociology majors are limited to using no more than six hours of sociology course credit as elective credit. No more than six hours of activities courses and no more than four hours for performing in University ensembles may be counted toward the degree.

Students may elect to take up to eight free elective courses on the Pass/Fail grading program. The only grades assigned on courses taken under the Pass/Fail option are "S" for satisfactory and unsatisfactory. The student will be given the hour credit for courses in which an "S" is earned, but it will not be computed into the GPA.

Students have until the last day to withdraw from a course to elect the Pass/Fail option. Those who are interested in taking course on this grading system should ask the professor teaching the course what numerical value (or other criteria) will be used to assign a satisfactory grade. For example, some professors may consider 65 percent satisfactory performance while other professors, at their discretion, may require a 70 percent or higher to be "satisfactory."

Approval to elect the Pass/Fail option must be obtained from the student's academic advisor and department chair. Students whose semester or cumulative GPA is less than 2.0 are not eligible to elect the Pass/Fail option. Other specific information about this grading option can be found in the *USCA Bulletin*.

## MAJOR REQUIREMENTS (35 hours)

All major courses must be completed with a grade of "C" or higher. A "C" or better in SOCY 101 is a prerequisite for all upper-level sociology courses. Sociology majors are required to choose one of three options: Criminology and Criminal Justice, Human Services, or General.

Sociology core requirements for all majors include SOCY A101-Introduction to Sociology (offered every major semester and usually in the summer), SOCY A248 – Sociological Inquiry and Measurement (offered every Fall semester and occasionally in the Spring), SOCY A348 - Sociological Research Design and Analysis (offered every spring semester and occasionally in the fall), SOCY A496 – Sociological Theory (offered every Spring semester), and SOCY A400 – Internship (offered every semester and over the summer). It is important that students recognize when these courses are typically offered when developing their degree plan:

		<b><u>Semester Offered</u></b>		
		<b><u>Fall</u></b>	<b><u>Spring</u></b>	<b><u>Summer</u></b>
SOCY A101	Introduction to Sociology	Yes	Yes	Usually
SOCY A248	Sociological Inquiry & Measurement	Yes	Occasionally	No
SOCY A348	Sociological Research Design	Occasionally	Yes	No
SOCY A496	Sociological Theory	No	Yes	No
SOCY A400	Internship	Yes	Yes	Yes

## **Criminology and Criminal Justice Option** (35 hours)

### **Core Requirements**

SOCY A101 -Introductory Sociology  
SOCY A248 –Sociological Inquiry and Measurement  
SOCY A348 -Sociological Research Design and Analysis  
SOCY A496 -Sociological Theory  
SOCY A400- Internship

### **Concentration Requirements**

- a) CRJU 171 Introduction to Criminal Justice
- b) Four of the following sociology courses, including at least one 500-level seminar course and SOCY 350 or SOCY 353 or both.

SOCY 350 - Sociology of Delinquent Youth Behavior  
SOCY 351- Urban Sociology  
SOCY 353 - Sociology of Crime  
SOCY 354 - Crime: Myths and Misconceptions  
SOCY 355 - Minority Group Relations  
SOCY 356 - Sociology of Law  
SOCY 358 - Sociology of Corrections  
SOCY 359 - Police and Society  
SOCY 365 - Sociology of the Black Experience  
SOCY 400 - Internship in a Criminal Justice Agency  
SOCY 404 - Social Stratification  
SOCY 405 - Drugs and Society  
SOCY 430 - Youth and Society  
SOCY 490 - Special Topics (as designated for the concentration)  
SOCY 496 - Sociological Theory  
SOCY 523 - Sociology of Deviance  
SOCY 525 - Race, Class, Gender, Crime and Justice  
SOCY 535 – Girls’ Delinquency  
SOCY 540 - Criminological Theory  
SOCY 598 - Special Topics (as designated for the concentration)

- c) One additional 300,400 or 500 level sociology course.
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### **Human Services Option** (35 hours)

#### Core Requirements

SOCY A101 -Introductory Sociology  
SOCY A248 –Sociological Inquiry and Measurement  
SOCY A348 -Sociological Research Design and Analysis  
SOCY A496 -Sociological Theory  
SOCY A400- Internship

#### Concentration Requirements

- a) HMSV 201 -Introduction to Human Services
- b) Four of the following sociology courses, at least one 500-level seminar course  
Must include at least one from SOCY 301, 355, and 404

SOCY 301 - Sociology of Gender Roles  
SOCY 305 - Sociology of the Family  
SOCY 341 - Sociology of Death and Dying  
SOCY 351 - Urban Sociology  
SOCY 355 - Minority Group Relations  
SOCY 360 - Sociology of Medicine and Health  
SOCY 365 - Sociology of the Black Experience  
SOCY 370 - Sociology of Mental Health  
SOCY 400 - Internship in a Human Services agency  
SOCY 404 - Social Stratification  
SOCY 405 - Drugs and Society  
SOCY 430 - Youth and Society  
SOCY 468 - Sex and Society  
SOCY 490 - Special Topics (as designated for the concentration)  
SOCY 496 - Sociological Theory  
SOCY 510 - Global Social Issues  
SOCY 523 - Sociology of Deviance  
SOCY 528 - Family Diversity  
SOCY 535 – Girls' Delinquency  
SOCY 598 - Special Topics (as designated for the concentration)

- c) One additional 300, 400, or 500 level sociology course.

**The General Sociology Option** (35 hours)

Core Requirements

SOCY A101 -Introductory Sociology  
SOCY A248 –Sociological Inquiry and Measurement  
SOCY A348 -Sociological Research Design and Analysis  
SOCY A496 -Sociological Theory  
SOCY A400- Internship

Concentration Requirements

Six additional sociology courses, 300-level or above, including at least one 500-level seminar course. Must include at least one from SOCY 301, 350, 353, 355, and 404

## ADVISEMENT AND REGISTRATION

Each semester students must be advised and register for a set of courses required to complete the degree (see degree requirements in this Handbook or *USCA Bulletin*). A student will register just before classes begin in his/her first semester at USCA. Subsequently, the student should be advised and register for courses during the priority registration period (early November for Spring semesters and early April for Summer and Fall terms). It is important that students take advantage of priority registration. Often times, classes are full by the time open registration occurs which is just before classes begin.

### **Advisement**

Sociology majors will be assigned to an academic advisor who, typically, is a faculty member in the Department of Sociology. The advisor is familiar with the requirements for the degree and is available to answer questions and provide guidance. Advisors post office hours on their office doors and students should feel free to stop by during those hours. If the announced office hours do not fit your schedule, call or email your advisor or leave a message for him/her and ask for an appointment at a mutually convenient time.

#### **STEP 1. Make an appointment to see your academic advisor.**

Before registering for courses, students must see their academic advisors for approval of their course selections. Advisors usually post appointment sheets on their office doors several days or a week in advance of the beginning of the advisement period. Students are to sign up for a time on their assigned advisor's appointment sheet. Students are obliged to keep the appointment time with their advisor, if an unforeseen event prevents a student from keeping his/her appointment time, it is expected that the student will extend the courtesy of informing the advisor as soon as possible before the appointment time.

#### **STEP 2. Plan your schedule for the next semester.**

Students are expected to be aware of degree requirements and their progress toward the degree and, prior to seeing their academic advisor, plan a tentative class schedule of classes they plan to take during the next semester. The course acronym, 3-digit course number, meeting days and times, and course reference number (CRN) for each course need to be included in the tentative schedule. Also two or three alternate courses should be determined in the event that first choices are full. Students are to use the **Advisement Check Sheet** to keep track of the courses completed and courses in which the student is currently enrolled. The academic advisor will also maintain a record of this, but it is the student's responsibility to keep track of his/her progress.

#### **STEP 3. See your advisor.**

For the advisement appointment, students are expected to:

- a) Be on time.
- b) Bring a pen.
- c) Bring the tentative schedule worked out in Step #2 above.

## **Answers To Commonly Asked Questions Concerning Advisement**

**Q:** If I'm supposed to know what I need to take, why should I see my advisor at all?

**A:** Your advisor will serve as a "double check" to your interpretation of which courses remain to be taken. Also, your advisor is likely to be aware of specific points which you may not know about, but which could affect your progress toward graduation. For example, your advisor may know that a course you must take is only offered every other or every third semester and if you don't take that course in a semester when it is offered, you may have to wait a year or year and half before that course is offered again. This could delay your graduation. Also, courses and academic regulations may change, and these changes may not show up in the *USCA Bulletin* in time for you to make decisions.

**Q:** My schedule and my advisor's schedule are in conflict and I can never get an appointment to see my advisor at a time that meets my needs. What am I supposed to do?

**A:** If you have made a serious effort to see your advisor, but have been unsuccessful, see the chair of the Sociology Department for help. If finding a mutually agreeable time continues to be a problem for more than one semester, you may request a new advisor. This is done through the Academic Success Center in Room 108 of the Penland Administration Building or by going directly to the Sociology Department faculty member who you would like to have as your new advisor. The option of changing advisors is also available for other reasons. No advisor in the Sociology Department is going to be upset with a student who changes to another advisor whatever the reason. It is not a good idea, however, to change frequently, since continuity with the same advisor provides the opportunity for the advisor to get to know your goals and plans and to provide better advice as a result.

## **Registration**

Following the meeting with the academic advisor and completion of the Advisement Form which indicates his/her approval of course selections, students will register on their own through the Self Service Carolina (SSC) system.

## **What To Do If a Class is Full (Closed) or Has Been Cancelled?**

- a) If there are multiple sections of the course offered, meaning that the course is offered at several different times, students may choose a section which is still open. It is not necessary to obtain the academic advisor's permission to do this.
- b) If there are no other open sections of the course, the student may enroll in one of the alternate courses which were approved by the academic advisor.
- c) If neither of the above is available, the student may contact the Chair or Dean of the Department or School that offers the closed class to see whether an "override" is possible or see the academic advisor for approval of some other course.

**It is very important that the student does not enroll in a course without advisor approval.** Students who have done this have, on occasion, made serious mistakes which delayed their graduation.

## **Dropping and Adding Classes**

### **Dropping Classes**

If a student decides that he/she registered for too many classes for the semester or sees that he/she is headed for failure in a particular class, he/she should see an academic advisor and drop one or more of the classes.

During the first week of classes, a student may drop a course without having the course appear on the student's transcript. After the first week of classes, a student may still drop a course without a grade penalty up through the final withdrawal date. The final withdrawal date is included on the Academic Calendar which is available on the USCA website.

Dropping or withdrawing from a course requires an advisement form and the signature of the academic advisor. Student then may use SSC to drop the course(s) on their own.

### **Adding Classes**

Students must see their academic advisor to add a course or replace a course that is being dropped. Classes can be added during the first week of classes, but not after that time.



## Nearing Graduation

### **Graduation Application**

During the student's penultimate (second to last) semester, he/she must apply for graduation. Graduation applications are obtained and filled out by the student online or in the Records Office (109 Penland Administration Building). The Records Office will retain one copy of the application. The student will deliver the application package which will include an academic transcript generated by the Records Office to his/her academic advisor for further processing.

The graduation application deadline for each semester is included on the Academic Calendar. **Students are to assume full responsibility for remembering to apply for graduation and completing the process. Advisors are not obligated to remind students about this requirement.**

### **Senior Exit Survey**

Near the end of the student's final semester before graduation, he/she will receive a letter from the Chair of the Department and a Sociology Major Exit Survey. Survey information is used by Department Faculty to assess and further develop the program. Majors are required to complete the survey as a part of their graduation requirements.

### **Grade Point Average (GPA)**

A USCA System GPA of 2.0 or higher is required for graduation. If a student's System GPA is lower than 2.0, he/she will not graduate even though all course work has been completed for the degree. Also, depending on how many grade hours have been accumulated, the student may be subject to suspension from the university. See the *USCA Bulletin* for more information on suspension and probation levels.