

SOCIOLOGY MAJOR

MAJOR DESCRIPTION

The Major in Sociology enables students to develop new frameworks for analyzing social behavior and human relationships. From everyday life interactions to large-scale historical and structural transformations, sociology concerns itself with traditional and emergent social formations and institutions, seeking insight into intersecting cultures and subcultures.

Students of sociology study a panoply of topics including social theory, social movements, critical media studies, sexualities, family, gender, race & ethnicity, education, inequality, work, leisure, healthcare, urban sociology, religious movements, philanthropy, political sociology, and sociological methods of knowledge production.

The Sociology major is animated by a commitment to critical consciousness that prepares students for a life of self-reflexivity and social awareness. It yields opportunities for creative work in many significant spaces of cultural production and a wide variety of contemporary media platforms. Students often find innovative ways to apply sociological modes of analysis to transformative work in fields as diverse as fashion, education, social policy, journalism, health care and law.

ADMISSION TO THE MAJOR

Students who wish to declare the major must have completed or be currently enrolled in SOC151 and have completed or be currently enrolled in one additional course:

- any Sociology Department course, or
- a sociologically relevant course approved by petition to the department

MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

Majors must complete a total of 10 courses in fulfillment of the major requirements.

- Three sociology department foundations courses
 - SOC151
 - SOC202
 - SOC212
- Four sociology department topical courses, including independent and group tutorials (**SOC220-SOC 402, SOC 411-412**)
 - Note: students who write sociology theses are only required to take three sociology department topical courses.
- Three additional topical courses from any combination of:
 - **SOC220-SOC402**
 - **SOC 411-412**
 - **SOC 465-SOC466** (education in the field)
 - Advisor-approved courses taken outside the Wesleyan Department of Sociology, including study-abroad credit, sociology-relevant courses at Wesleyan, and sociology courses taken at other institutions.

All sociology majors must enter their senior year having taken a minimum of three courses within the Wesleyan Department of Sociology. This includes at least one of the two required courses (SOC202 or SOC212).

Non-Department Major Credit

Three of the seven topical courses needed to complete the major can be completed outside the Sociology Department. These courses include study abroad courses, transfer credit, and courses taken in other departments at Wesleyan. The courses must be sociology-related and require approval from your major advisor. Majors can request a **maximum of three courses (or three credits)** from outside the department.

STUDY ABROAD

Study abroad is fully compatible with completing the major, but students who plan to go abroad for a semester are expected to discuss with their major advisors how such studies will fit into their overall academic program before finalizing their plans. Pre-approved study abroad courses can be transferred to the major as non-departmental major credit (up to 3 credits; see details in Major Requirements and Transfer Credit).

TRANSFER CREDIT

The Sociology Department will consider requests to transfer credit for graded sociology courses taken at other U.S. academic institutions. For currently enrolled Wesleyan students, these requests must be made during the first two weeks of the course the student is requesting a transfer credit. In the event that a course is no longer available or some other circumstance bars a student from enrolling in the pre-approved course, students must contact their major advisor to get permission to have credit for a different course transferred instead.

Along with the transfer credit form (available at <https://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/forms.html>), a course syllabus must be provided showing that the proposed course is equivalent to Wesleyan courses.

Students who began their studies at other U.S. academic institutions can have their credits transferred upon admission to Wesleyan, and these credits can apply to the major. Already enrolled students who began their studies at Wesleyan can only request to have topical or upper division transfer credit applied to the major, which can count toward the maximum of three sociology-related credits taken outside the Department to fulfill the major requirements.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Major advising.** Each major is assigned a faculty advisor with whom the student works out a program of study
- **Education-in-the-field credit.** Students, whether majors or non-majors, seeking education-in-the-field credit must provide the department, in advance, with an acceptable prospectus of their work and assurance of professional guidance during the field experience. Students must submit research papers based on this experience. These papers should refer substantially to sociological literature pertinent to their field experience.

In planning their programs, students should examine the full list of WesMaps (<http://www.wesleyan.edu/wesmaps/>) course offerings. Other information about the sociology major is available in the department office, 212 College St.

HONORS

The Department of Sociology offers a two-semester Honors Thesis Seminar (SOC 405-406) supervised by a member of the sociology department faculty who serves as thesis advisor for students enrolled in the seminar. Students selected for participation in the seminar work individually with the seminar advisor and meet weekly with other thesis writers in a process directed toward the formulation and production of an original piece of imaginative and sophisticated scholarship. Consideration focuses on the potential for successful completion of a project that is both creative and well-formulated.

The Sociology Department's yearlong Thesis Seminar proceeds in three stages:

Stage 1. To apply to write a Sociology Honors project, students will submit a brief proposal and a writing sample that will be used to evaluate a candidate's potential for successful completion of an Honors project.

- The proposal should present a topic for the thesis alongside a discussion of how the student intends to approach their study, what compels them to take on the study, and what kinds of knowledge of/or experience they bring to the work. This should include a discussion of scholarly texts relevant to the project but may also include other ways the student has come to be interested in the topic through experiences or creative texts. Proposals are understood to be preliminary and provisional. It is expected that the shape and topic of the project will change substantially over the course of the thesis writing process.
- The writing sample should be a completed work, selected by the student to reflect the student's best work, i.e., the work of which the student is most proud. The central considerations for evaluation of the sample are formal, not substantive and, as a result, the student writing can be drawn from any creative context, including but not limited to, coursework completed in Sociology or elsewhere. There is no prescribed number of pages required for the submission.

Students who wish to be considered for enrollment in the Honors Thesis Seminar will submit a PDF file of the writing sample by the end of the first week of April (5pm 4/7).

Applications should be emailed to Professor Abigail Boggs, aboggs@wesleyan.edu. Please include THESIS SEMINAR APPLICATION—all caps—in the subject line of the email.

Stage 2. In some instances, the petition process includes an interview, either on-campus or virtual, with the professor leading the seminar in order to explore tentative ideas for thesis topics and discuss the nature of the commitment required for completion of an independent Honors Thesis. Candidates will be contacted directly in order to schedule an interview.

Stage 3. Enrollment in the two-semester Thesis Seminar is managed as a POI course. Successful candidates will be formally enrolled in the seminar (and, thus, in the university-managed Honors College administrative system) during add/drop at the start of senior year.

Department faculty may also elect to work with a senior major toward completion of an honors thesis outside of the context of the Thesis Seminar. Independent thesis tutorials are established at the discretion of members of the sociology department faculty.

Double-filing theses

Double-majors who are completing honors theses/projects for another department on campus can request to have their thesis considered for honors

in Sociology. In this case, the student must complete a thesis tutorial with a member of the Sociology Department for at least one semester their senior year.

CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

Capstone (optional)

Students who qualify for the honors program may apply to write an honors thesis during the seventh and eighth semesters. See section entitled "Qualifying for Honors" for full information on the honors program.