

Career

Paths

SOCIOLOGY

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 prepares 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 are to 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.

General Sociology

Example Career Paths: Higher education research, teaching | Education, K-12 | Research | Advocacy, organizing | Social statistics | Program analysis | Demography | Public administration | Policy analysis | Program development | Urban/City planning | Federal Government: | State and local governments | Social science research firms

Potential Employers: Federal government | Local and state government | Universities | Research institutes | Non-profit agencies | Advocacy organizations | Labor unions | Private industries | Advertising and marketing firms | Consulting firms | Newspapers, magazines, news agencies | Public opinion research polls | Political campaigns | Polling firms

Professional Associations: [American Sociological Association Resources for Students](#) | [Society for the Study of Social Problems](#)

Related Occupations: [Labor Relations Specialist](#) | [Urban & Regional Planners](#) | [Sociologists](#) | [Sociology Instructors, Postsecondary](#) | [Social Work Instructors, Postsecondary](#) | [Child, Family, & School Social Workers](#) | [Mental Health Counselors](#) | [Healthcare Social Workers](#) | [Social & Community Service Managers](#)

Environmental Sociology

Example Career Paths: Soil and water conservation | Land use, recreation, and community planning | Environmental law | Wildlife preserve management | Natural resource management and planning | Land and green space acquisitions | Parks and outdoor recreation | Environmental education/Teacher | Environmental and social justice advocacy/Lobbying | Local, state, and federal environmental administration and management | Environmental communications-media | Business-green product and energy efficiency program development | Research | Site operations and maintenance | Ecotourism

Potential Employers: 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 business and 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

Professional Associations: [Society for Human Ecology](#) | [Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences](#)

Related Occupations: [Environmental Compliance Inspectors](#) | [Surveyors](#) | [Brownfield Redevelopment Specialists](#) | [Foresters](#) | [Climate Change Policy Analyst](#) | [Chief Sustainability Officers](#) | [Sustainability Specialists](#)

Globalization & Political Economy

Example Career Paths: Non-government organization | Non-profit organization | Political organizing, campaign management and support | Policy analysis | Social scientific research | Government research | Private research | University positions involving study abroad, international learning, etc. | Human resources

Potential Employers: Government, federal, local | Political campaigns | Labor unions | Nonprofit organizations | Global oriented associations and groups | Corporate social responsibility units in businesses

Professional Associations: [Global Studies Association of North America](#) | [International Sociological Association](#)

Related Occupations: [Labor Relations Specialists](#) | [Arbitrators, Mediators and Conciliators](#) | [Equal Opportunity Representatives and Officers](#) | [Human Resources Specialists/ Managers](#) | [Compensation, Benefits, and Job Analysis Specialists](#)

Critical Race and Ethnic Studies

Example Career Paths: Research racial and ethnicity related topics for government offices | Community expert and liaison in government offices | Advocate for equity and inclusion with organizations | Diversity, equity, and inclusion positions in universities, businesses, organizations | Community organizing | Civil rights leading | Multicultural teaching | Immigrant rights organizing | Culturally competent teaching | Journalism and media centered on racial equality | Law and legislation | Group facilitation, moderation

Potential Employers: Government, federal, local | Non-profit organizations | Racial justice national groups, like NAACP, Movement for Black Lives, Color of Change, national immigrant rights | Racial justice groups within states | Community organizations | Law firm, legal services | Businesses that have a DEI focus

Professional Associations: [Association of Black Sociologists](#) | [Critical Ethnic Studies Association](#)

Related Occupations: [Area, Ethnic, and Cultural Studies Instructors, Postsecondary](#) | [Social Workers](#) | [Social and Community Service Managers](#) | [Urban & Regional Planners](#) | [Child, Family, and School Social Workers](#)

Criminology/Criminal Justice

Example Career Paths: Advocacy | Counseling | Community organizing | Case management | City planning/Budgeting/Urban planning | Environment advocacy (green criminology; forestry; climate change) | Government | Immigration advocacy and services | Journalism and media studies focused on crime and justice policy | Programming coordinator | Public health | Teaching | Law and legislation | Research | Entry-level justice, counseling, and community service

Potential Employers: Law firms | Federal, state and local government | International and human rights law | Community organizations | Advocacy organizations | State, federal government offices | Nonprofit and public interest organizations, e.g., ACLU, NAACP legal defense fund, and legal services corporation | Legal aid societies | Private practice | Colleges and universities | Grassroots organizations, NGOs

Professional Associations: [American Society of Criminology](#) | [Justice Studies Association](#)

Related Occupations: [Correctional Officers and Jailers](#) | [Probation Officers and Correctional Treatment Specialists](#) | [Substance Abuse & Behavioral Disorder Counselor](#) | [Court, Municipal, and License Clerks](#) | [Lawyers](#) | [Police and Sheriff's Patrol Officers](#)

Preparing for your Career

- Concentrate coursework 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 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.
- Many states require licensure or certification for positions involving the direct provision of therapeutic services to clients.
- Coursework 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.

This resource was adapted from What Can I Do With My Major.

For more, visit <https://web.uri.edu/career/wcidwmm/>

WCIDWMM

What Can I Do With This Major? features 100 major profiles with information on common career paths, types of employers that hire in the field, and strategies to maximize opportunities. Scroll to the...

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