

*The Sociology Department of
Boston College*

The Undergraduate Handbook

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Boston College Sociology Department Undergraduate Handbook

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For more information see the BC Sociology Department website at <http://www.bc.edu/sociology>.

Introduction

Sociology examines the organization, structure, and change of societal groups. It combines rigorous methods of inquiry and analysis with a remarkable freedom of choice in research topics: mass media, the American Dream, intimacy and sexuality, racism, gender issues, technology, the family, war and peace, and deviance and social control, to name just a few of the subjects referenced on one of our typical course lists. At Boston College, sociologists also take a transformative, activist approach toward issues of social injustice and inequality, making the sociological experience here not only rigorous and creative but socially relevant and engaged. This training prepares students for graduate study in several fields (sociology, social work, urban affairs, governmental administration, criminal justice, law, education, etc.) and is also useful in a broad range of occupations (social science research and analysis, advocacy, human resources, criminal justice, environmental agencies, etc.).

Sociology students learn many ways of acquiring knowledge: interviews, examination of historical and personal documents, official records, careful observation of groups in which we participate, experiments, surveys, and the collection and analysis of quantitative data. These techniques are taught in our required methods courses (SC215 Social Theory and SC210 Research Methods) and statistics courses (SC200 Statistics), which are sought out by students from departments all over the university. We also offer many Social Science Core courses, as well two types of internship courses: one focusing on sociology in general, and one on criminology. As indicated above, our courses at every level reflect the diversity of sociology, ranging from anthropology, to the sociology of mental health and illness, to corporate social responsibility.

We invite you to review the following information to see whether the study of Sociology at Boston College seems right for you. Our website (<http://www.bc.edu/sociology>) provides more information, along with useful links. Be sure to note our newsletter, *Sociology Speaks*, and our Distinguished Visiting Scholar Series, which brings prominent scholars to the BC campus for public lectures. You can also check out any open sociology courses that look interesting to you during drop/add week (although the Core courses in particular tend to fill up before then).

If you are interested in majoring in Sociology, you should come to our office in 426 McGuinn and request to be a Sociology major. We also offer a minor in Sociology (which currently must be requested at Student Services in Lyons Hall). If you have any questions about our program, feel free to email us at sociology@bc.edu, call 617-552-4130, or drop by our office at McGuinn 426.



One of our **Distinguished Visiting Scholar Series**, focusing on Class and Social Inequality, featured bell hooks and other prominent scholars.

Requirements for the Major in Sociology

The Major in Sociology requires a minimum of ten sociology (SC) courses for a total of thirty credits. Of these ten courses, four are required:

- Introduction to Sociology (SC001)
- Statistics (SC200)
- Research Methods (SC210)
- Social Theory (SC215)

Of the remaining six elective courses, **at least three** must be upper level courses (SC299 or above). Any of the required courses may be taken concurrently with the six electives.

The policy of the College of Arts & Sciences is that courses in one's major field should be taken during the regular academic year. Although there may be exceptions in special circumstances, this means that the Department of Sociology will NOT approve requests for Major field courses taken outside of Boston College or during the summer or evening sessions. One exception to this rule is that BC summer or evening courses taught by a regular, full-time member of the Sociology Department will usually be accepted. Another possible exception may be granted to students who have transferred to Boston College after completing one or more years elsewhere. A third type of exception may be allowed for students making up a deficiency incurred through failure, withdrawal, or underload.

During the academic year we do accept the two-course sequence in Psychology (PS120-121) as equivalents for our Statistics and Methods courses. In certain situations we will also accept the Economics Statistics course (EC151) to satisfy the SC200 requirement. Students should meet with the Director of Undergraduate Studies to discuss these substitutions and obtain approval. Students who elect either of these options must still take a total of ten sociology courses for the major.

Requirements for the Minor in Sociology

The Department offers a Minor in Sociology. The requirements consist of six courses, including:

- Introduction to Sociology (SC001)
- Social Theory (SC215)
- Research Methods (SC210)
- Statistics (SC200)
- One upper-level elective (SC299 or above) and
- One additional elective (any level)

The Department of Sociology will NOT approve requests for Minor field courses taken outside of Boston College or during the summer or evening sessions. One exception to this rule is that BC summer or evening courses taught by a regular, full-time member of the Sociology Department will usually be accepted. Another possible exception may be granted to students who have transferred to Boston College after completing one or more years elsewhere. A third type of

exception may be allowed for students making up a deficiency incurred through failure, withdrawal, or underload.

Internships

The Department offers internship placements in (1) court probation offices and other criminal justice settings and (2) human services, political, social research, or social policy agencies. Students typically take advantage of this internship opportunity in the junior or senior year. Students can participate in one or two semester internship opportunities, earning as many as 6 credits toward their degree. In most instances, students must identify their own internship sites, but the Department will provide some guidance. For additional information, consult the instructors of internship courses (SC54001 and SC54101 - Internships in Sociology I and II, and SC42201 and SC42301 - Internships in Criminology I and II).

The Honors Program in Sociology

The Undergraduate Honors Program in Sociology is designed to give eligible Sociology Majors (3.50 overall GPA, 3.50 in Sociology) the experience of doing original sociological research that leads to a Senior Honors Thesis. The program includes a three course, nine or twelve credit sequence that allows students to work closely with faculty and other students in the Program. The courses require the reading of the most engaging classics of sociological research, the designing of the student's own project, and in the last semester of the senior year, the gathering and analysis of data and subsequent writing and presentation of the thesis. The courses required of Honors Program students are:

- SC550 Important Readings in Sociology (three credits)
- SC555 Senior Honors Seminar (three credits)
- SC556 Thesis Seminar (three or six credits)

SC550 is usually taken in the second semester of the junior year. Any student planning on going abroad their second semester of junior year is still eligible for the program. In this situation, the student would take Important Readings (SC550) in the second semester of senior year in conjunction with the Thesis Seminar (SC556).

Admission to the Honors program is by invitation only and takes place during the first semester of junior year. For more information, students should see the instructor of SC550, SC555, and SC556.

Students who are also in the Arts and Sciences Honors Program may, with written permission, write a common Thesis.

Junior Year Abroad

Students interested in spending a semester or more studying in an international program should consult the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Credit for Core Courses Taken at Other Universities

The policy of the College of Arts and Sciences is that University Core courses should be taken during the regular academic year. The same is true of courses in the Major field. Although there may be exceptions in special circumstances, this means that **the Department of Sociology normally will NOT approve requests for Core courses taken outside of Boston College or during the summer or evening sessions.** Exceptions to this rule may be allowed for the following reasons:

- BC summer or evening courses taught by a regular, full-time member of the Sociology Department will usually be accepted.
- An exception may be granted to students who have transferred to Boston College after completing one or more years elsewhere.
- An exception may be allowed for students making up a deficiency incurred through failure, withdrawal, or underload.

It is rare that the Sociology Department will give Core credit for courses taught at other institutions as it is often difficult to assess how well courses given elsewhere conform to Boston College's requirements for Core courses. Students should submit a syllabus, reading list, and description of the course to the Director of Undergraduate Studies for approval of all courses taken at any university other than Boston College.

Cultural Diversity Core Courses

Boston College normally does not approve any Cultural Diversity courses taken at other institutions in the United States. However, some courses taken in the context of foreign study programs may fulfill both the letter and the spirit of the cultural diversity requirement. For approval of such courses, students should submit a syllabus, reading list, and description of the course to Richard Cobb-Stevens (cobb@bc.edu) in the Department of Philosophy.

Summer Courses (Not Core) Taken at Other Universities

Students are allowed to take up to two summer courses at other universities before their sophomore and junior year without having incurred deficiencies. Students must take courses at a four-year accredited college or university and must earn a grade of at least a C-, the courses must be equivalent to those offered at Boston College by the full-time undergraduate colleges or the graduate professional schools, and must be approved first by the Department and then the student's Dean. Students should submit a written proposal, including a syllabus, reading list, and description of the course to the Director of Undergraduate Studies to request approval for summer courses outside BC.

Global Proficiency (GP) Program

The Global Proficiency Program is a certificate program for undergraduates that can be completed in addition to any major(s) and minor(s). The program helps students take a holistic approach to time spent abroad, academic coursework, and co-curricular activities. Upon

successful completion of the GP program, graduates receive an official Global Proficiency transcript and certificate that will distinguish them with employers, graduate schools, and volunteer programs.

All of the Sociology courses listed below meet some part of the academic portion of the GP program. Bracketed course numbers beside the SC course numbers indicate courses that are cross-listed with another department. This is not a comprehensive list, and not all of these courses are offered every semester. For the most current information check with the Undergraduate Director.

If you have general questions about the Global Proficiency Program, please email global@bc.edu or go to the GP web page: <http://www.bc.edu/offices/odsd/intercultural/gp/>.

Sociology Global Proficiency Program Courses:

SC003 Introductory Anthropology
SC044 Global Ethnic Conflict
SC040 Sociology of a Global Economy
SC041 [BK 151] Race Relations
SC043 [BK 155] Introduction to African-American Society
SC092 Peace or War
SC093 Comparative Social Change
SC141 [BK 141] Cross-Cultural Studies: The Caribbean
SC242 [BK 242] Black Women and Feminism
SC268 [BK 268, PL 268] History and Development of Racism in the United States
SC368 Culture and Society of the Middle East
SC446 [BK 273, PL 445] Race and American Democracy
SC480 Native American Identities
SC485 Race and Racism
SC491 Sociology of the Third World

(Note that courses whose numbers begin with a zero (0) also fulfill Social Science Core requirements.)

Dual Degree Programs

1) The Five-Year B.A./M.A. Program in Sociology

The Department of Sociology and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences provide qualified students with the opportunity to earn a Master's Degree in Sociology along with their Sociology Bachelor's Degree in a combined five-year program. The B.A. degree is awarded with the student's class. The M.A. degree is ordinarily conferred one year later.

Admissions Procedures:

Application materials are available from The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences in 221 McGuinn Hall or students can apply online at <http://www.bc.edu/schools/gsas/admission>.

Application takes place late in the first semester of the Junior year. The deadline for application is January 15 (the same date as all graduate applications). Applicants must submit the same admissions materials as required of all graduate degree applicants, which include; two (2) letters of reference, the application, formal transcripts from all universities the student attended, and a writing sample. GRE scores are strongly recommend but are not required.

Undergraduates applying for this Dual Degree Program should recognize that admissions requirements are strict. Ordinarily, a student must have an overall grade point average of at least 3.50 after a minimum of five semesters of undergraduate course work, with at least a 3.50 GPA in Sociology. When considering whether to apply for this program, students are encouraged to meet with the Sociology Department's Director of Graduate Admissions.

In order to earn a Bachelor's Degree, students must complete the usual thirty-eight courses required of their specific program. This includes ten Sociology courses for the major.

Students in the B.A./M.A. program must also take the following courses. Ordinarily these courses are taken in the Senior year of work at Boston College.

- Multivariate Statistics (SC703). SC703 has prerequisite of either SC200 or SC702. SC702 is recommended.
- Advanced Research Methods (SC710). Whether or not a student has already taken SC210 (the undergraduate Research Methods course), he or she must then take one additional graduate level research methods course (SC710 or another approved graduate level research methods course).
- One graduate Theory course, either SC715 or SC716. One or both of these theory courses must be taken whether or not the student has taken SC215 (the undergraduate Social Theory course).

Thus, the curriculum for the "undergraduate" part of the program, that is, courses taken in the first four years, *might* look like the following:

- Introduction to Sociology: SC001
- Statistics: SC703, preceded by either SC200 or SC702
- Theory: SC715 or SC716
- Methods: SC710 OR SC210 AND a graduate methods course
- Three upper level (SC299 and above) electives and
- Additional SC electives to complete the ten course requirement for the B.A. degree.

To complete the M.A. degree, eight additional graduate-level courses must be taken (in addition to the ten courses required for the undergraduate Sociology Major). These courses are ordinarily taken during a student's fourth and fifth year of study. Thus, in completing the combined B.A./M.A., students are required to take a minimum of eighteen Sociology courses.

In completing the M.A. portion of the program, students must also write either a Master's Paper or a Master's Thesis; this may be credited as one or two of the courses taken in the fifth year. The final step for either the Paper or the Thesis involves an oral defense of the student's written work.

A full description of these options and all other graduate requirements can be found in the Department's *Guide to Graduate Study*. (To see the *Guide*, click “Graduate Handbook” under <http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/sociology/grad> on the Sociology website.)

2) *The Five Year B.A./M.S.W. Program in Sociology and Social Work*

The Department of Sociology and Graduate School of Social Work offer Boston College Undergraduate Sociology Majors the opportunity to earn a Master's Degree in Social Work, along with a B.A., in a five-year program. The B.A. degree is awarded with the student's class at the completion of four years, and the M.S.W. is normally conferred one year later. The application to the program is normally made early in the second semester of the sophomore year. For more information see the detailed description below.

Admission Procedures:

The application process is done in the Graduate School of Social Work. Early in the Sophomore year, students should consult with the Department's Liaison with the B.A./M.S.W. Program, Professor Paul Gray, and the Director of Admissions in the Graduate School of Social Work. Applications can be obtained in McGuinn 208.

The Department of Sociology has adopted the following policies regarding the program:

- The courses SW747 and SW751 may be accepted in place of SC200 (Statistics) and SC210 (Research Methods) only for these students enrolled in the B.A./M.S.W. program.
- The total number of courses taken by B.A./M.S.W. students towards their Sociology major must include a minimum of five courses based in the Sociology Department; these five must include:
 - SC001 Introduction Sociology
 - SC215 Social Theory
 - SC378 Introduction to Social Work, and
 - Two upper level (SC299 and above) electives that do not include those SC courses that are cross-listed with GSSW, e.g., Racism (SW801), Social Welfare Systems (SW 701), or Social Policy Analysis (SW702).

Thus, the undergraduate part of the Program, the part that leads to the B.A. degree, consists of a total of ten courses, five in the Sociology Department (including SC378), and five in the Graduate School of Social Work.

For detailed information about the B.A./M.S.W. Program, interested students are very strongly advised to contact the Department's Liaison for the B.A./M.S.W. Program **and** the Graduate School of Social Work Admissions Office.

The Sociology Major and Your Career

There are several curriculum choices students might consider as they prepare for specific careers

in law, social work, health care, and business. Additionally, there are choices for those interested in pursuing advanced degrees for careers in research or academia. We strongly encourage Sociology Majors meet with a Sociology faculty advisor to discuss these options and to consult with the Director of Undergraduate Studies (or one of the faculty or staff members listed below) for additional details and advice.

The Sociology Department typically hosts an information session as well as a Career Planning event in the fall semester for all Sociology Majors and prospective majors. At this event, alumni from our program and representatives from the Boston College Career Center discuss how to translate a degree in Sociology into financially and emotionally rewarding careers.

Finally, students should consult with the Boston College Career Center for additional expert advice and information about career choices and opportunities.

Students who wish to explore the possibility of going on for a Ph.D. in sociology will find it very useful to spend some time talking to a few key faculty members to learn how to prepare to do so. It is very helpful to get to know one or two faculty members very well, to work with them on their (and your) research, and possibly to collaborate on that work.

Faculty and Staff: Important Contact Persons

Professor Michael Malec
Director of Undergraduate Studies
McGuinn 402
malec@bc.edu

Professor David Karp
Director of Undergraduate Honors Program
McGuinn 426B
karp@bc.edu

Professor John Williamson
Director of Internships
McGuinn 424
jbw@bc.edu

Professor Charlie Derber
Director of Graduate Recruitment
McGuinn 406
Derber@bc.edu

Professor Paul Gray
BA/MSSW Liason
McGuinn 507
gray@bc.edu

Sociology Department Contacts:

Phone: 617-552-4130

Email: sociology@bc.edu

Location: McGuinn 426

Other:

Director of Admissions, Graduate School of Social Work - McGuinn 208

For more information see the BC Sociology Department website at <http://www.bc.edu/sociology>.