

A black and white photograph of the Morton Hall building facade, featuring a classical portico with four columns and the name 'MORTON HALL' inscribed on the pediment.

MORTON HALL

SOCIOLOGY COURSES

FALL 2019

**Detailed descriptions of Sociology courses
offered in the upcoming semester.**



**THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE**

Conference Training Center 203, Huntsville, AL 35899
256.824.6190 ■ www.uah.edu/sociology ■ soc@uah.edu
An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Institution

The following 100-level courses have no prerequisites and count toward Charger Foundations.

SOC 100 | Introduction to Sociology (3 hours) **Various Instructors | Online options**



Charger
Foundations

This course is designed as an overall introduction to the field of sociology. The course generally begins with an introduction to the goals of sociological research, the methods used by sociologists, and some of the basic concepts of what “society” and “culture” are. This course will include study of the major social processes—socialization, deviation, stratification, power, and social change—and how they develop in the context of major social institutions—gender, race, the family, the economy, the educational system, the political system, and many more. A main goal of this course is to develop a “theoretical perspective” on these kinds of things; in other words, sociologists are not just interested in “the educational system” or “gender relations,” but in understanding why things are the way they are, and how they came to be that way.

SOC 102 | Analysis of Social Problems (3 hours) **Dr. Mitch Berbrier**



Charger
Foundations

This course focuses on understanding and analyzing the “social problems process.” We will distinguish between two perspectives: “objectivist” (social problems are things that objectively cause harm to society) and “constructionist” (social problems are things we come to agree objectively cause harm”). Following on that, topics will include a close examination of how claims are made in society about troubling social conditions; critically analyzing statistics as claims; the role of the media in constructing social problems; and the role of expertise in the process, among other things. We will read parts of, or all of, four books: (1) a short basic textbook (*Social Problems*, third edition), (2) a reader with empirical articles that complement the textbook (*Making Sense of Social Problems*); (3) a supplementary text (*Damned Lies and Statistics*), and (4) a monograph, which we use as an example of a sociologist, as an expert, making claims about a particular set of social problems related to housing and poverty (*Evicted*). There will be quizzes, assignments, and a comprehensive final exam.

SOC 103 | Introduction to Criminology (3 hours)

Dr. Robert Thomson

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the problem of crime in society. What is crime and who is a criminal? Who gets to decide? And how does society respond to crime? Students will learn to think about crime and deviance with the tools of social science. Students will learn how to define and measure crime, and we will explore criminological theories of crime and social control.



Charger
Foundations

The following lower-division sociology courses are open to students who have completed SOC 100.

SOC 206 | Marriage and Family (3 hours)

Dr. Anaafi I Sayki-Addo | Online

This course introduces the sociological study of the institution of the family and familiarizes students with the basic theories, concepts, and techniques used by contemporary sociologists to study family. There is a particular effort to provide an opportunity to examine the diversity of family forms in the United States and in other societies and to question common assumptions made about the functioning of the family. This examination will take into account the historical changes in the family in a multicultural environment. The course also focuses on helping the student develop an understanding of the relationship between family and other social institutions, such as the economy and the polity. This understanding includes an examination of how public policy affects families and how the organization of families affects public policy. We will examine the roles, positions, and structures of the family institution and learn how to assess and critique research on family dynamics.

SOC 301 | Research Methods (3 hours)

Dr. Jennifer Sims

“Why should anyone believe what a sociologist says?” The answer to that question is simple: It is because of the very careful methods by which sociologists come to say things! Just like any other science, sociological knowledge is achieved as a result of a rigorous process of background research, methodological choices, instrument development, analytical techniques applications, and peer review. This is not a course in statistics or computation, but students will develop a conceptual understanding of statistics and the ability to interpret some basic statistics presented in research articles. The object of this course is for students to be able to read, interpret, and explain scientific research in social science—to be able to convey to others what happened so they can address the question of why anyone should (or should not) believe the scientific reports.

SOC 303 | Statistics for the Social Sciences (3 hours)

Dr. Kyle Knight

This course is required for all sociology majors because familiarity with statistical methods is an integral part of understanding and participating in sociological research. This course is an introduction to the basic concepts and skills involved in performing statistical analyses of quantitative social data. In the first part of the course, we will concentrate on descriptive statistics. These include measures of central tendency, variation, and distribution that allow social scientists to *describe* social phenomena. We will then move on to inferential statistics, which allow social scientists to *infer* types of relationships between two or more variables. The concepts and skills learned in this part of the course include calculation of measures of association, calculation of confidence intervals, and hypothesis testing, including an introduction to basic regression methods. Assessment will consist of three exams, homework and lab assignments.

SOC 330 | Race and Ethnicity (3 hours)

Dr. Jennifer Sims

This course is designed as a general and broad introduction to the scientific study of social processes related to ethnicity and race, with a focus on the United States and a secondary focus on global issues. The groups most frequently discussed in the course will be white Americans and the “white ethnics,” black and/or African Americans, Latino and Asian Americans, and American Indians. Issues addressed in the course include the following: how ethnicity and race are social and historical constructs; assimilations and cultural pluralism; immigration and immigrants; the causes of ethnic pluralism in America; discrimination, institutionalized racism, and racial inequalities; residential segregation.

SOC 340 | Special Topics: Sociology of Religion and Crime (3 hours)

Dr. Robert Thomson

Whether you are religious or not, religion affects all of our lives, from its influence on those around us to its impact on public policy. In this course, we will examine the intersection of religion and crime using the tools of criminology and sociology. Are religious individuals less likely to commit crime? Can religious communities influence local crime? Does conservative and liberal religion influence crime in the same way? To what degree are individuals victimized because of their religion? We will learn to apply concepts and theories from criminology and the sociology of religion to address these questions, and more.



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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SOCIOLOGY FACULTY

Mitch Berbrier
berbrim@uah.edu

Professor
Ph.D., Indiana University, 1996
Intro to Sociology, Analysis of Social Problems, Deviance and Social Control

Kyle Knight
kyle.knight@uah.edu

Chair (in Fall 2019) and Associate Professor
Ph.D., Washington State University, 2012
Intro to Sociology, Research Methods, Statistics for Social Sciences, Environmental Sociology, Sociology of Environmental Justice

Jennifer Sims
jennifer.sims@uah.edu

Assistant Professor
Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2014
Intro to Sociology, Race and Ethnicity, Sociology of Sexuality, Qualitative Research Methods

Bhavani Sitaraman
sitarab@uah.edu

Chair (through Summer 2019) and Associate Professor
Ph.D., University of Massachusetts, 1990
Intro to Cultural Anthropology, Research Methods, Statistics for the Social Sciences, Sociology of Religion, Sociology of Globalization

Christina Steidl
christina.steidl@uah.edu

Associate Professor
Ph.D., Emory University, 2012
Intro to Sociology, Sociological Theory, Social Stratification, Sociology of Education, Sociology of Social Movements, Senior Capstone Seminar

Robert Thomson
robert.thomson@uah.edu

Assistant Professor (beginning Fall 2019)
Ph.D., Baylor University, 2017
Intro to Criminology, Statistics, Sociology of Religion, Sociology of Gender, Crime and Religion, Crime and Mass Media, Juvenile Delinquency