



MORTON HALL

SOCIOLOGY COURSES

SPRING 2019

Detailed descriptions of Sociology courses
offered in the upcoming semesters.



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 (General Education Requirements).

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



Several sections of this course are taught every semester. This course is designed as an overall I 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



In this course, we will use the sociological perspective to examine social problems in a variety of institutions, such as the economy, education, and health care. Topics to be covered include drug abuse, unemployment, divorce, and poverty among others. We will be exploring different approaches to understanding the causes of social problems as well as social responses to them. We will also discuss how these problems are framed and perceived by various social groups. The goal is for students to learn how to apply the sociological perspective to understanding important contemporary social issues and the social actions and policies that attempt to address them.

SOC 105 | Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (3 hours)

Dr. Bhavani Sitaraman



This course introduces you to the discipline of anthropology through a focus on cultural anthropology. The course explores how anthropologists define and study “culture” and cultural differences. You will learn key concepts and theoretical perspectives in cultural anthropology and apply them to original ethnographic texts you read. You will also learn to apply anthropological ideas to understand culture in everyday life and in the context of contemporary global issues. The course is organized around the following topics: (a) origin and development of anthropological approaches to culture (b) fieldwork and ethnographic description of cultures (c) cultural materialism and idealism as perspectives (d) kinship and marriage (e) power, prestige and inequalities (f) religion, art and symbolic systems (g) politics (h) cultural change.

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

SOC 302 | Sociological Theory (3 hours)

Dr. Christina Steidl

From, “How does society hold itself together?” to “What is the basis of our ‘self’? — These are the types of questions pondered by sociologists since the beginning of the discipline. This course explores sociologists’ basic questions and the theories they pose to address them. Beginning with the classic statements we trace ideas as they are expressed through theorists’ writings through contemporary presentations. Theoretical positions are further understood within the context of modernization and the times in which authors write. Students will be able to engage in the theoretical debates that form the basis of the sociological enterprise, and keep the discipline dynamic and lively. Through writing and discussion we decipher, critique, apply, and sometimes even develop social theories.

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 304 | Statistics for the Social Sciences LAB (1 hour)

This course is taken in combination with Statistics for the Social Sciences. Throughout the course, you will learn how to use a statistical package of computer software (SPSS) in a weekly lab session in order to perform and interpret statistical analyses of social data.

SOC 340 | ST: Sociology of Tourism and Travel (3 hours) ***Dr. Bhavani Sitaraman***

Pilgrimages, safaris, cattle drives, heritage tours, cruises, package tours, native tours, cannibal tours, disaster tours, theme parks, and even, slum tours represent the breadth and specialization of contemporary domestic and international tourism. Sociology of Tourism is a serious study of the practices of travel, leisure and consumption in contemporary societies. For sociologists, tourism raises interesting questions about the nature of modern life and the quest for authentic, novel and pleasurable escape from ordinary routines. Have you ever wondered why some people love to travel and others dread traveling to unfamiliar places? Why do some places become designated as tourist sites while others are considered ordinary? Why do we seek authentic experiences of culture and heritage when we travel? What makes a cultural experience “authentic?” What is the impact of tourism on host economies, cultures, and environments? This course takes up some of these questions by examining (a) motivations for tourism (b) the touristic experience and social interactions between tourists and hosts, (c) the social construction of tourism sites and the commodification of culture, and (d) the social and ecological consequences of tourism. The course will include exams, one research project based on field research of a tourist site, and class participation through brief presentations and discussion.

SOC 340 | ST: Qualitative Research Methods (3 hours)
Dr. Jennifer Sims

Qualitative Research Methods teaches the theory behind and technical skills to conduct qualitative social science research. The course covers focus group research, interviewing, content analysis, and ethnography (participant observation research) and includes multiple hands on learning activities plus a data analysis practicum. Upon completion of the course, students will be able to identify, collect, organize, and analyze qualitative data as well as effectively communicate results to academic and professional audiences.

SOC 369 | Environmental Sociology (3 hours)
Dr. Kyle Knight

Environmental sociology explores the ways in which human societies and the natural environment interact and shape each other. We will engage with the major debates in the field of environmental sociology over the last few decades in an attempt to understand the challenges and options humans face as we confront our global environmental crisis. We will investigate from a sociological perspective a number of currently recognized environmental problems and issues, such as climate change, natural resource consumption, pollution, and population growth.

SOC 375 | Social Psychology (3 hours)

Dr. Dianhan Zheng

This course examines many “real life” issues from a perspective that provides an interface between psychology (causes due to characteristics of individuals) and sociology (causes due to societal structures). For example, homelessness may be explained in terms of addiction or lack of initiative (psychological analysis) or in terms of an inadequate educational system or poor economy. We will examine both levels of explanation in this course, using both culture (e.g., ethnicity, nation) and gender as lenses for examination. More specifically, we will compare and contrast individualism and collectivism as value systems and as motivators of behavior. Topics will include development and maintenance of attitudes as well as persuasion techniques. We will also study social perception (self concept and group concepts) as they impact stereotyping, prejudice, intergroup relations, and aggression. Students will engage in several web-based class projects. This course can be applied to either a Sociology or to a Psychology major or minor (depending on the prefix of the course in which the student enrolled) or as an elective in the Women’s and Gender Studies minor. Either SOC 100 or PY 101 is a pre-requisite.

SOC 495 | Senior Capstone Seminar (3 hours)

Dr. Christina Steidl

The Senior Capstone Seminar provides students who are close to completing the sociology major with the opportunity to *either* (1) design and carry out an independent empirical research project *or* (2) complete an internship with a local social service provider, writing an organizational report on some aspect of this experience. The course itself supports both of these tracks, incorporating readings, discussion, and regular workshops where students share their progress and receive feedback from the instructor and peers. This course is intended for students in their senior year as it seeks to bring together the knowledge that they have acquired in their 300+ level sociology courses, in sociological theory, and in research methods. Students enrolling in the Senior Capstone Seminar should meet with the instructor during the fall semester to arrange their project/internship.



THE UNIVERSITY OF
ALABAMA IN HUNTSVILLE

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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

SOCIOLOGY FACULTY

Bhavani Sitaraman
sitarab@uah.edu

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

Kyle Knight
kyle.knight@uah.edu

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

Christina Steidl
christina.steidl@uah.edu

Associate Professor
Ph.D., Emory University, 2012
Intro to Sociology, Sociological Theory, Social Stratifica-
tion, Sociology of Education, Sociology of Social Move-
ments, Senior Capstone Seminar

Mitch Berbrier
berbrim@uah.edu

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