



**THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
SOCIOLOGY PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

MAY 2015

Sociology

The program requires a minimum of 120 semester hours for a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology. This includes the general education and institutional requirements, sociology required courses and sociology electives.

Objectives

1. To teach students the concepts, theories, and methods of the behavioral and social services.
2. To introduce students to the basic social processes of society, social institutions and patterns of social behavior.
3. To train students to understand and to interpret objectively the role of social processes, social institutions and social interactions in their lives.
4. To enable students to cope effectively with the socio-cultural and interpersonal processes of a constantly changing complex society.
5. To train students for positions in criminal justice, gerontology, social science and social welfare.
6. To prepare students for graduate study.
7. To strengthen the marketable expertise in quantitative analysis and computer applications in advertising, demography, marketing and the social sciences.

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Courses

Required Core Courses (15 hours):

SOCI 2320, Social Problems: In this course major social problems are identified and analyzed, including inequality, crime, drug abuse, pollution, and racism. Solutions to these problems are offered and the consequences of policies are examined. *Offered face-to-face or online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify which attributes or actions have come to be defined as social problems in our society, and which social problems are deemed the most pressing in U.S. society today.
2. Recognize how sociologists conceptualize and study social problems.
3. Review several persistent and widespread social problems.
4. Present the viewpoints of people involved in social problems.
5. Develop critical thinking skills.

SOCI 3312, Statistical Techniques in Social Science: This course covers the basic concepts in the study of statistics. Major topics include: measurement, organization of data, descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and parametric and nonparametric statistics. The levels of and types of measurement will be emphasized along with assumptions underlying various statistical tests. Sampling techniques, statistical inference and probability theory will constitute an important part of this course. *Offered face-to-face.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Define and describe basic statistical concepts, understand the uses and limitations of statistics.
2. Describe various types of various levels of measurements, underlying assumptions for statistics.
3. Organize data into tabular form; cumulative distribution frequencies, pictorially exhibit data using histograms, frequency polygons and other graphs.
4. Compute and understand measures of central tendency and dispersion.
5. Thoroughly understand the concepts of probability, normal curve and statistical inference.
6. Understand and calculate tests of significance for one sample, two samples and three or more samples.
7. Understand and calculate various and no parametric statistics.
8. Understand and calculate various parametric and nonparametric measures of association: correlation, regression, partial correlation and multivariate analysis.

SOCI 4310, Introduction to Social Research: This course introduces the principles and techniques of social investigations. Acquaints students with the aims, methods, devices and aids used in the investigation of social phenomena done through research. Limited research projects. *Offered face-to-face or online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. List and describe each of the steps of the scientific approach to human inquiry, the accumulation of knowledge, and social research.
 2. Compare and contrast the scientific approach with other ways of obtaining knowledge, and understand how the methods differ with regard to causality and generalizability.
 3. Compare major research designs and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each.
 4. Articulate the advantages of the scientific approach to practice.
 5. Define basic statistical terms and concepts, and discuss the concepts of measurement, sampling, and data collection.
1. Explain how the scientific approach may be affected by ethics, and issues related to diversity, minority status, and oppression.
 2. Describe how the scientific approach may be used to test the efficacy of social interventions.
 3. Use appropriate professional journal styles and formats in writing.
 4. Critique published studies in the social work literature using objective standards.

SOCI 4313, Seminar in Sociology: This course is designed to prepare students for the comprehensive exam (a requirement for graduation) and conduct sociological research while utilizing their training in sociology. This is a capstone course that is meant to be taken during the final year or semester of study. *Offered face-to-face.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Exhibit a command of basic sociological knowledge.
2. Prepare for the comprehensive exam in sociology.
3. Develop an ability to develop and conduct social research.
4. Disseminate research findings to the public via a professional presentation.

5. Conduct a research project and write a paper reporting the results.

SOCI 4331, Sociological Theory: This course provides an introductory overview of major sociological theories, ranging from the foundational works of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim, to current theories of postmodernism and globalization. *Offered online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify and explain the significance of the central concepts and arguments in sociological theory.
2. Use fundamental categories of theory to assess some of the most influential contributions to the sociological canon.
3. Identify the significant features of modernity and its implications for social life.
4. Recognize how society comes into existence and how it (usually) avoids disintegration.
5. Identify the key sources of social conflict and how conflict is resolved or contained.
6. Utilize various sociological theories to predict society's future.

Sociology Electives (24 hours):

SOCI 2310, Introduction to Sociology: This course introduces students to the examination of human societies and interaction. Students are exposed to major theories, methods, concepts, and research findings within the discipline. Characteristics of basic social units, their patterns of interrelation, and processes of change are presented as well. *Offered online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Define the basic terms and ideas of sociology.
2. Develop a sociological perspective to understand social issues; that is, to help you to see different ways of organizing empirical observations into an explanatory and/or predictive framework.
3. Retain the realization that societal and structural factors profoundly influence an individual's behavior and development.
4. Develop an ability to look critically at our society and its institutions, as well as learning to foster a critical, but non-ethnocentric, understanding of other cultures.

5. Learn a persistently applied understanding of the difference between individual opinions that are based on a narrow range of experienced behavior versus an assessment based on a body of data gathered through scientific investigation.

SOCI 3305, Urban Community: This course provides an introduction to urban society.

Students examine the historical, theoretical, and practical issues cities face today. *Offered online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the various theories and methods of understanding and studying metropolitan areas.
2. Recognize the relationship between the city and the modernization of society.
3. Identify the ways in which cities in the U.S. have changed since World War Two.
4. Discover the ways in which cities affect social institutions, such as religion, education, and families.
5. Evaluate strategies of urban revitalization and renewal.

SOCI 3311, The Family: The course is designed to provide an opportunity to the student to learn and critically appreciate the application of sociological perspective to study concepts, issues, and problems revolving around the institution of marriage and family. In this course, emphasis is placed on the analysis of the family in contemporary society. *Offered online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the sociological analysis of the origin of marriage and family.
2. Identify the structural components of marriage and family, including intimacy, sex roles, mate selection, and family relations.
3. Critically understand the issues and problems underlying social change in marriage and family, including various forms of cohabitation.
4. Critically analyze conflicts and alternatives to marriage and family.
5. Explore the future of parenthood and marriage and family in human diversity and cultural variations.
6. Understand and explain work and family in America; mate selection processes, and communication and conflict resolution in marriages.

7. Explain issues related to communication in relationships, marriages and families; and power and violence in families.
8. Identify causes and effects of divorce and managing family stress and crisis. Remarriage and stepfamilies.

SOCI 3315, Inequality in America: This course offers students deeper empirical and theoretical understanding of social inequality in the United States. Students examine the causes and consequences of social inequality, as well as the ways in which inequality comes into existence and is maintained over time. *Offered face-to-face or online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Assess the class position of individuals and groups in the United States.
2. Identify the major theories of social stratification.
3. Describe the political, economic, and social forces that help produce inequality and social stratification.
4. Critique systems of social inequality in the United States and abroad.
5. Appraise the efforts to eliminate poverty in the United States.

SOCI 3320, Race and Ethnic Relations: This course introduces students to the sociological study of race and ethnicity, with a focus primarily on the United States. Students examine the ways that race and ethnicity affect life chances of individuals and groups. *Offered online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Study the theoretical position that race and ethnicity are socially constructed.
2. Understand that racial and ethnic stratification is a very real and tangible phenomenon that differentially creates barriers and opportunities that in turn affect life chances.
3. Distinguish between individual and institutional racism and their effects.
4. Examine your own position within racial and ethnic stratification.
5. Develop an appreciation of racial and ethnic diversity.
6. Acquire tools to combat both individual and institutional racism.

SOCI 3326, Sociology of Sex and Gender: This course introduces students to a gender analysis of contemporary U.S. society and culture. The social construction of gender in everyday life will

be examined, as well as how gender shapes the distribution of resources, power, and privilege in ways that benefit men over women. *Offered face-to-face or online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Think critically about social issues, social history, and social experiences and how these contribute to feminist perspectives of such phenomena.
2. Increase knowledge of gender-related issues, including key concepts, and theoretical approaches sociologists use to study women today.
3. Explore the diversity of men and women's experiences in the United States.
4. Add to their understanding of the evolution of contemporary feminism in America and to explore feminism as part of political and social change.
5. Critically reflect on how social institutions such as the media, schools, the workplace, and families contribute to gender differences and inequality.

SOCI 3360, Peoples & Cultures of Africa: An introduction, from an anthropological perspective, to the physical, cultural and linguistic diversity of peoples living south of the Sahara as they meet the challenges of modernization and the post-Colonial political order. *Offered face-to-face.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the physical and cultural geography of the continent, the physical and linguistic diversity of African peoples, and prehistory and history in Sub-Saharan Africa.
2. Recognize the vast diversity of social, political, and economic systems in Africa.
3. Examine of the impact of modernization on the social life and cultural identities of African peoples.
4. Explain the difficulties they face and the today, including lack of economic opportunity, environmental change, war, and AIDS.
5. Identify the role that African peoples and cultures have played and continue to play in the shaping of the modern world.

SOCI 3390, Sociology of Sport: This course examines the institution of sport from various sociological perspectives. It is designed to provide students with an opportunity to critically

analyze the assumptions surrounding the social significance of sport through a process of reflective thought. *Offered face-to-face.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the institution of sport in U.S. society and its interrelationship with other sociocultural environments (educational, political, economic, religious, etc.).
2. Appreciate the influences, analysis and projection of sport on past historical occurrences.
3. Identify the ways sport reinforces social boundaries.
4. Recognize the process of socialization within sport and physical activity contexts to include role modeling and leadership behavior in sport.
5. Discuss the workings of commercialization and mass media exploitation in sport.

SOCI 4340, Population Problems: This course introduces students to the study of human population and anything that influences, or can be influenced by, population size, distribution, processes, structure, and characteristics. *Offered online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Know the current world population and its current rate of growth.
2. Compare and contrast current rates of population growth with that of the past.
3. Describe the works of Thomas Malthus and his impact on demography.
4. Identify the different ways to gather data on populations.
5. Recognize the ways the U.S. population has changed over time, and the consequences of such changes.

SOCI 4351, Readings in Sociology: In this course we examine a host of interesting topics in sociology through the readings of recent publications in the field (as well as a couple of readings from among the classics). This course is both reading and writing intensive. *Offered online.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Know the ways in which sociology is unique among the social sciences.
2. Review and assess current studies by sociologists.
3. Discuss the role institutions play in shaping our identities?

4. Identify the ways in which racism, classism, sexism, and other forms of oppression embedded in the social structure.
5. Refine critical thinking and writing skills.

SOCI 4360, Independent Studies: This course offers prospective graduate students an opportunity to conduct a research project with the guidance of a faculty member. *Offered face-to-face.*

Course objectives: Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop an ability to develop and conduct social research.
2. Formulate a theory and create hypotheses.
3. Polish skills in expository writing.
4. Collect and analyze data.
5. Disseminate results.

Sociology Faculty

Full-time Faculty Members

John D. Foster, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Sociology

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Education:

Ph.D. in Sociology (2006): University of Florida

M.A. in Sociology (2002): University of Florida

B.A. in Sociology (1999): University of Minnesota

Courses Taught: 2310 Introduction to Sociology; 2320 Social Problems; 3305 Urban Community; 3315 Inequality in America; 3320 Race and Ethnic Relations; 3326 Sociology of Sex and Gender; 3390 Sociology of Sport; 4310 Introduction to Social Research; 4313 Seminar in Sociology; 4331 Sociological Theory; 4340 Population Problems; 4351 Readings in Sociology; 4360 Independent Studies

Research Interests: Dr. Foster's research interests lie predominantly in the area of race relations. He is currently involved in progressing four main lines of research in this vein: (1) race discourse, (2) media representations of race and ethnicity, (3) Southeast Asian Americans (particularly Cambodian Americans), and (4) interracial relationships.

G.D.S. Khullar, Ph.D., Professor of Sociology

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Education:

Ph.D. in Sociology (1981): University of North Texas

M.S. in Sociology (1976): Texas A & M University Commerce

Courses Taught: 2310 Introduction to Sociology; 3311 The Family; 3312 Statistical Techniques in Social Science; 3315 Inequality in America; 4310 Introduction to Social Research; 4360 Independent Studies

Research Interests: Dr. Khullar's research interests lie predominantly in the area of aging and family studies. He is currently involved in progressing five main lines of research in this vein:

(1) retirement, (2) long-term care, (3) social policy and administrations, (4) social psychology and leisure participation of the aged, and (5) the legal aspects of aging.