

Program Overview: Bachelor of Arts, Sociology

About This Major . . .

Sociology is the **scientific study of social life**. It is the exploration of social change and the complexities of the causes – and consequences – of human behavior, focusing on the ways that human behavior is shaped by social factors. Sociologists study a broad range of topics including families, politics, religion, education, race, class, and gender (and much more!). Sociologists ask questions about patterns of human life, and then answer those questions using a variety of theoretical perspectives and research methodologies. Sociologists frequently contribute to public debate about the causes of social problems and what might be done to help bring about **positive social change**.

The BA in Sociology exemplifies Colorado Mesa University's liberal arts mission, emphasizing a wide range of skills and content areas. The Sociology program encourages students to develop critical thinking skills, quantitative literacy, and the ability to apply their "sociological imagination" to problems, programs, and policies in the real world. Beyond this, Sociology prepares students for responsible action in the social world and provides a foundation for **lifelong learning and civic participation**.

The American Sociological Association calls Sociology a "**21st Century Major**" because it offers the flexibility students will need in a **fast-changing and increasingly global labor market**. Graduates who choose to go directly into a career can find work in human resources, social services, government, business, the health professions, the criminal justice system, and a wide variety of other industries. Sociology graduates are also very well-prepared for graduate study in Sociology and related disciplines.

All CMU baccalaureate graduates are expected to demonstrate proficiency in critical thinking, communication fluency, quantitative fluency, and specialized knowledge/applied learning.

As a graduate of the Sociology program, you'll be able to:

1. *Articulate the relationship between individuals and society.* Using your sociological imagination, you'll understand not only how our lives are shaped by social forces but also how we can work toward social change.
2. *Interpret published statistical findings on social problems or issues.* Using your knowledge of statistics and research methodologies, you'll be prepared to analyze and interpret quantitative studies relevant to your professional, civic, and personal life.
3. *Frame and answer complex questions about social issues using theoretical perspectives and scholarship from the field of sociology.* Questions about social issues abound and those questions are often relevant to our everyday lives. You'll develop a foundation of knowledge to help you to answer these questions not just while you are in college but throughout your life.
4. *Write fully developed and empirically supported research papers in standard American Sociological format.* Knowing all of the above will get you far, but it'll get you even further when you learn to make strong, well-supported, and well-written arguments.
5. *Describe ways in which theories and research from the discipline of sociology are applied in real-world organizational and clinical settings.* You'll be encouraged to investigate the connection between the academic knowledge and real-world applications of that knowledge as you move through your Sociology degree.

Program Highlights:

Small Classes / Committed Faculty

You'll take your Sociology courses with passionate and approachable faculty who have chosen to make teaching undergraduates their top priority. Most of your classes, especially your upper-division classes, will be small so that there will be plenty of opportunity for discussion and participation. You may also be able to work with one of our faculty members on an independent research projects.

Sociology Club / Honor Society

You'll have the opportunity to get involved with Sociology Club, which in recent years has been involved in a variety of activities from the informal and social all the way to trips to professional research conferences. You may be able to join our chapter of AKD, the International Sociology Honor Society, which recognizes Sociology students for their particularly noteworthy accomplishments within the program.

Individualized Programs

In addition to their core Sociology courses, our students choose from a variety of upper-division electives, both in Sociology and in related disciplines. We also encourage students to choose a minor that supplements their Sociology major. You'll work with your faculty advisor to customize a program that it is right for you and for your future.

Explore Your Options

If you're interested but want more information, any of the Sociology Faculty would be happy to talk with you about Sociology, the courses we offer, the Sociology major, or the Sociology minor!



Program Requirements

A student must follow CMU graduation requirements by completing 120 semester credit hours, including 40 credits of coursework and the 300+ level. See the “Undergraduate Graduation Requirements” in the catalog for additional graduation information. Students should work closely with a faculty advisor when selecting and scheduling courses prior to registration. In general, CMU’s programs of study are based on two curriculum groups:

1. Essential Learning

CMU’s Essential Learning program provides the foundation of skills and information that cuts across all fields of study and the support for advanced concepts that students will later encounter in their majors. Before moving into work at the 300+ level, students complete the Maverick Milestone and its co-requirement, Essential Speech. This pair of courses is a capstone experience where students integrate what they have learned from their foundation courses by making connections between diverse areas of knowledge. The capstone also is an opportunity for students to work with disparate ideas, a critical skill expected of all CMU graduates that will aid them in solving the complex and unscripted problems they will encounter in their personal, professional, and civic lives.

2. What You Will Study in This Major. . .

Foundational Courses

- Social Problems
- Human Geography

The Sociology Core

- General Sociology
- Introduction to Sociological Inquiry
- Statistics for Social and Behavioral Sciences
- Sociological Research Methods
- Classical Social Theory
- Contemporary Social Theory

Sociology Electives

- Political Sociology
- Environmental Sociology
- Sociology of Religion
- Social Movements
- Population
- Social Inequality
- Sociology of the Life Course
- Sociology of Aging
- Racial & Ethnic Relations
- Global Sociology
- Sex and Gender
- Special Topics Courses, such as the 21st Century Family and the Sociology of Education

Independent Study courses are also offered to motivated students interested in subject areas within Sociology.

Restricted Electives

We believe that students are well-served by developing a core of knowledge and the ability to think from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. Students who want to minor in any of these disciplines typically find that they are able to use courses for both their major and their minor. You’ll choose from the following:

- History courses, including American Slavery, the 20th Century, Global America, and Women’s History.
- Political Science courses, including Public Administration, Public & Elite Political Behavior, and Religion & Politics.
- Social Work courses, including Child Welfare, Gerontology & Social Work, and Social Welfare Policy.
- Criminal Justice courses, including Victimology, Criminology, Domestic Violence, and Women & Crime.
- Psychology courses, including Social Psychology, Psychology of Women, and Cross-Cultural Psychology.
- Philosophy courses, including the Roots of Western Thought and the Examined Life

For more information about this major, go to: <http://www.coloradomesa.edu/sbs/sociology.html> or contact the Academic Department Head for Social and Behavioral Sciences, 414 Lowell Heiney Hall, 970.248.1932.