

Sociology Program
The Department of Sociology and Social Work
Social Science Element

General Education Program
Pacific Lutheran University

Framing Language and Program Goals

Sociologists investigate the structure and development of individuals, communities, organizations and societies. The study of sociology provides students with unique interpretive tools for understanding themselves and others in a changing world. Coursework includes analysis of crime, deviance, family, gender issues, race/ethnicity, social class, social problems and inequality. In addition, sociology provides training in a range of research techniques which can be applied to many areas of social life and social policy.

General Education Element Description

Investigating Human Behavior, Culture and Institutions

The social sciences investigate individual and collective human behavior, and the history, development and variation of human culture and institutions. To assure exposure to a wide variety of social science concepts, theories, and methods, students must select at least two courses chosen from different disciplines.

Sociology: studies social structure and social interaction, and the social factors contributing to change in each.

Sociology helps us understand how our personal, everyday experiences as individuals influence society, and how the larger society in which we live influences our individual experiences. In contrast to disciplines that study what happens within individuals, sociology examines what happens among people when they interact as individuals, groups, or societies. Students in sociology investigate individual experiences and collective social behavior by collecting data, identifying patterns, and drawing on social explanations for the patterns they observe.

General Education Element Learning Outcomes

The student will:

1. learn how sociologists investigate and understand collective social behavior;
2. learn how individuals influence collective social behavior;
3. learn how society influences individual experience;
4. learn basic knowledge about social life, social institutions, and the social causes and consequences of human behavior; and,
5. learn how race, class, gender, and other hierarchies influence social life.

Particular course outcomes

SOCI 101

Students will:

- know and use sociological concepts;
- know three major sociological perspectives (functionalism, conflict, and symbolic interaction);
- know research methods;
- see sociology “in practice” (journal articles, newspaper articles, research projects);
- have experience in writing sociologically;
- participate in oral discussions and/or presentations;
- be able to think critically; and,

- develop an appreciation for the impact of race, class and gender and other hierarchies upon social life.

SOCI 240 and SOCI 296

Students will:

- develop an integrated research paper, addressing a specific social problem;
- be able to demonstrate a synthesis of sociological terms, concepts and theoretical perspectives; and,
- explore intersection of race, class and gender upon specific areas of social life;
- see sociology in “practice”, through community service, field work or academic literature.

Alignment to the ILOs

Critical Reflection

- Select sources of information using appropriate research methods, including those employing technology, and make use of that information carefully and critically.
- Consider issues from multiple perspectives.
- Evaluate assumptions and consequences of different perspectives in assessing possible solutions to problems.
- Understand and explain divergent viewpoints on complex issues, critically assess the support available for each, and defend one’s own judgments.

Expression

- Communicate clearly and effectively in both oral and written forms.

Valuing

- Recognize how others have arrived at values different from one’s own, and consider their views charitably and with an appreciation for the context in which they emerged.

Multiple Frameworks

- Recognize and understand how cultures profoundly shape different assumptions and behaviors.
- Cultivate respect for diverse cultures, practices, and traditions.