

What can I do with a degree in... **SOCIOLOGY?**

Why study **SOCIOLOGY?**

Sociology is the empirical study of society ranging from large scale institutions to face-to-face human interaction. Sociological research reveals the lives and experiences of individuals are influenced by social forces beyond their direct control and individuals can also effectively influence society in both positive and negative ways.

Sociologists study aspects of human behavior and social life such as community, crime, family, education, poverty & wealth, the media, health & medicine, work, and social groups, roles, & identities. The discipline informs organizational and governmental policy in ways that can strengthen and stabilize society.

The sociology program at Western Carolina University provides a variety of courses and applied experiences that prepare students to use the knowledge they gain in real-life professional and personal situations.

What are the **DEGREE OPTIONS?**

Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Sociology: [2025-2026 Catalog Link](#)

Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) in Sociology: [2025-2026 Catalog Link](#)

NOTE: Students must complete 6 additional hours of a chosen world language for the B.A. degree.

A **Minor in Sociology** is also available: [2025-2026 Catalog Link](#)

NOTE: The sociology program's flexibility in hours and class choice makes it easy for some students to earn a **second degree** within the 120 total credit hours. Many students who earn a sociology bachelor's degree from WCU also earn a second bachelor's degree in a related program. Talk to a sociology faculty member for more information about this.



What is the **ADMISSION PROCESS?**

Students declare a major in sociology with the Advising Center, located in Killian Annex, or with a sociology faculty member. Please make an appointment with someone in the Advising Center or speak with a sociology faculty member in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology for assistance with declaring the sociology major.

What **JOBS ARE AVAILABLE?**

Sociology graduates have a lot of flexibility in what they do with their degree. A sample of sociology-related careers include social services, nonprofit work, mental health & counseling, program development, policy writing & analysis, social science research, consumer & marketing research, social statistics, demography, education, law enforce-

ment, administration & management, human resources, public relations, sales, training, and more. **NOTE:** An advanced degree may be required for some of the listed professions. Talk to a sociology faculty member in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology for more information.

Who employs **SOCIOLOGY GRADUATES?**

Our graduates gain employment with a variety of employers including hospitals & nursing homes, community health organizations, adoption & child care agencies, market research firms, public relations departments, religious or social service organizations, advocacy groups, federal, state & local government agencies, law enforcement agencies & prison systems, court systems, human resource departments, business & consulting firms, and educational institutions including pre-K through 12 & institutions of higher education.

MAJOR MAP

How to use this map: Review the four categories and suggestions of activities and when you should consider engaging in them. Remember, these are just suggestions! There is a fillable space for you to add in any other ideas you have to set yourself up for success in life after college.

1st YEAR

2nd YEAR

EXCEL IN ACADEMICS

Many first-year students in the sociology major will focus on the liberal studies requirements as well as introductory sociology courses. [Check out the 8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Students in their second year will likely continue with liberal studies electives, intermediate sociology topics, as well as introductory courses with their minor or second major degree program. [Check out the 8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

GET HANDS-ON EXPERIENCE

Check out [WCU's DegreePlus program](#) and choose which events in any of the four categories you want to attend: Professionalism, Teamwork, Leadership, or Cultural Responsiveness.

See what on-campus employment opportunities are available by logging in to JobCat via your MyWCU.

Connect with a faculty member to learn about undergraduate research and service opportunities.

Get involved with the Sociology Club or Alpha Kappa Delta (invite only), the honors society for the field of Sociology.

If you are thinking about attending a graduate school, start engaging in hands-on experiences required in graduate school admissions, such as undergraduate research with a faculty member.

Engage deeper with [DegreePlus](#); choose an additional competency to complete.

BE PART OF THE COMMUNITY

Connect with the [Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning](#) and ask about the [Spark Award](#), a program aimed to encourage students to be connected with their community.

Job shadow with professionals in the career area you wish to pursue.

Volunteer with area non-profits or organizations which interest you.

Consider the [study abroad programs related to sociology](#). Talk with a study abroad advisor about targeted experience for your areas of interest.

PREPARE FOR LIFE AFTER COLLEGE

Further explore your career options or career interests using the [Center for Career and Professional Development's](#) online resources, [Focus 2](#), and [O*NET Online](#).

Connect with a CCPD career counselor early on to explore opportunities and experiences you can do while in college to further develop your professional resume.

Check out [CCPD's list of career-building activities](#) and participate in an activity this year, such as attending [Career Fair Plus](#).

Talk with a sociology faculty member about whether graduate school is a good idea for the kind of work you want to do after graduation. Start a spreadsheet of graduate schools you wish to apply to in a few years with their admission requirements so that you are aware of the expectations.

Looking for a minor? Consider these options:

Anthropology
Cherokee Studies
Communication
Criminal Justice
Economic Analysis

Environmental Health
Emergency and Disaster Management
Global Black Studies
History
Hospitality and Tourism

Inclusive Education
Latinx Studies
Management
Political Science
Psychology

3rd YEAR

Third level courses focus on upper-level sociology courses, special topics relating to your career path, or your chosen minor or second degree major program.

Check out the [8-semester plan](#) and make an appointment with your advisor.

Consider internship experiences that will give you practical and hands-on experience to put on a resume. Talk to a sociology faculty member about applying for the **[SECU Public Fellows Intern program](#)**.

Talk to a sociology faculty member about attending a national, regional, or state conference hosted by one of several professional sociology associations.

Develop deeper relationships with the organizations for which you volunteer. Ask for special projects or responsibilities that you can highlight on a resume.

Connect with alumni in your field through **[LinkedIn](#)**.

Visit the CCPD to hone your professional resume and cover letter. Apply for internships. Utilize the **[Writing and Learning Commons](#)** for MCAT, GRE, and other professional exam preparation sessions. Use **[Big Interview](#)** to learn more about professional interviews.

Schedule a visit to tour graduate schools of your choice, if applicable.

4th YEAR

Courses in your final year will complete the major coursework requirement, concentration courses, as well as electives for your minor or second major degree program. Be sure to **check out the [8-semester plan](#)**, make an appointment with your advisor, complete your degree audit, and **[apply for graduation!](#)**

Investigate requirements for full-time jobs. Assess what skills or experiences you're lacking and invest time in seeking additional opportunities such as certification programs, classes, or professional development workshops during your last year to fill that gap. Connect with your faculty advisor or career counselor in the CCPD.

Join professional organizations such as the **[American Sociological Association](#)**, **[Southern Sociological Society](#)**, the **[North Carolina Sociological Association](#)**, or another of several other respected sociological associations.

Network with employers and non-profits at the annual **[Career Fair Plus](#)** event, held each October and February.

Apply to graduate schools, if applicable.

Look for and apply for jobs between 4 and 6 months before graduation.

Polish your resume, cover letter, and interview skills by visiting the **[CCPD](#)**.

Internships are still the number-one educational experience employers look for in a recent college graduate resume. (Chronicle of Higher Education's study on 59,000 employers)

DID YOU KNOW?

MORE INFORMATION

INTERNSHIP Information

There are numerous internship opportunities for students at Western Carolina University. For the sociology program, internships are established through a sociology faculty member and administered through the Center for Career and Professional Development. Talk to a sociology faculty member about the [SECU Public Fellows Internship program](#), which offers a valuable paid professional experience for sociology students. Oftentimes students find part-time jobs in an area related to their field of study. When this happens, students should discuss with their academic advisor the possibility of receiving college credit. Generally, 3 hours of elective credit can be earned for 120-150 hours of documented organizational work experience.

What CAREER COMPETENCIES are developed in the sociology program?

Findings from research conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers found the following career competencies to be most valued by employers:

- Critical thinking/problem solving;
- Oral/written communications;
- Equity and inclusion;
- Teamwork/collaboration; and
- Career and self-development.

Students in the sociology program at WCU are strongly trained in these competencies as well as other competencies valued highly by employers, including research, data collection, and quantitative and qualitative analysis. For more information about career readiness and competencies, see <https://www.nacweb.org/career-readiness/competencies/career-readiness-defined>

National surveys of sociology graduates highlight the following:

- Sociological concepts help students grasp the changing social world and their place in it;
- Sociological concepts help students understand how to bring about social change; and
- The sociology major prepares students for a variety of careers, including learning research skills desired by many employers.

Professional RESOURCES

- Alpha Kappa Delta: alphakappadelta.org
- American Sociological Association: asanet.org
- Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology: www.aacsnet.net
- Association for Humanist Sociology: www.humanist-sociology.org
- Association of Black Sociologists: associationofblacksociologists.org
- International Sociology Association: isa-sociology.org/en
- NC Sociological Association: northcarolinasociologicalassociation.org
- Southern Sociological Society: www.southernsociologicalsociety.org

QUESTIONS?

For more information, or to schedule an appointment with a sociology faculty member, contact the sociology program by visiting the Department of Anthropology and Sociology main office in 101 McKee, call 828-227-7268 or visit sociology.wcu.edu.

To schedule an appointment with a career counselor in the Center for Career and Professional Development, call 828-227-7133 or email careerservices@wcu.edu.