

Sociology

Sociology involves the systematic study of individuals, groups and societies. As an incredibly broad discipline, it encompasses studies in just about everything in our social world from the development of identities in childhood through old age, to gender and sexual orientation, race and ethnicity, social inequalities, family, health and disability, media, economics and work, politics, and technology.

Sociologists develop a 'sociological imagination' which is a creative way of thinking that connects individuals' experiences and personal problems to the wider social context. Sociology illuminates how individuals' choices and actions both shape and are shaped by social forces through an examination of such things as cultural norms, social roles and social institutions, small groups and large scale social organizations. This unique perspective also uncovers the ways that many of the things we take for granted as "natural" or "normal" are socially constructed or the product of social interactions and interpretation. Sociological study reveals that nothing is quite what it seems, and is therefore filled with many surprises!

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STUDENT PROFILE

Sociology students develop an inquiring mind and learn to think critically about the social world around them. Many students claim that taking sociology courses is a truly eye-opening experience and contributes to their personal growth. As they acquire an understanding of sociological perspectives and research skills, students find themselves reflecting on their own lives and relationships, as well as those of others in Canadian society and around the world, in ways they had never thought of before.

Sociology students are open to multiple perspectives and knowledge bases. They are not afraid to tackle the 'big questions', engage in debate, and exchange informed viewpoints about current social problems and controversial social issues. While they recognize that collective action is required to bring about significant social change, sociology students take away the knowledge and skills that can help them contribute to the well-being of their communities and greater social justice. Sociology stimulates students' curiosity, broadens their worldview, and helps them to better understand and participate in our highly diverse society as informed citizens.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Sociologists are often employed as researchers or consultants in universities, governmental departments or agencies, and community organizations. As researchers, they may be involved in conducting studies and producing reports that are used for purposes such as social policy formation, governmental initiatives related to social welfare, or community development projects. However, a degree in sociology opens up multiple career paths by equipping students with knowledge, critical thinking, research skills and other competencies that are sought after by employers today and are transferrable to a wide variety of occupations. Although many of these occupations require

additional credentials, sociology graduates may find employment in areas such as:

- Social work
- Family counselling
- Addictions counselling
- Community, non-profit and non-governmental organizations
- Child/youth services
- Health care and disability services
- Education
- Human resources and labour relations
- Social policy development and analysis
- The criminal justice system
- Customs and immigration services
- Housing and urban planning
- Recreation and tourism
- Marketing
- Financial and banking institutions
- Public relations
- Journalism and media analysis
- International development
- Rural outreach