



Sociology & Criminology

Sociology and Criminology majors are trained to empirically examine human behavior and social interaction. This perspective, known as the “sociological imagination,” applies across a range of fields because it encourages students to recognize how other individuals, groups, institutions, and global circumstances influence how people think, act, and behave. Gonzaga Sociology and Criminology graduates pursue a variety of careers in fields such as public health, social policy, data analysis, urban planning, law, education, counseling, and social work.

THE PROGRAM

The Department offers a Sociology major and minor. The program helps students to develop an awareness of the connections between our individual experiences and the groups to which we belong. Learning the theories and methodologies of sociology provides students with an excellent foundation for a variety of careers, including law, government service, teaching, and business. The Department has designed program requirements to facilitate the acquisition of skills in social scientific theorizing and research design.

The Department offers a Criminology major and minor. The program introduces students to sociological perspectives on the causes, consequences, and control of criminal behavior. Coursework focuses on the development and organization of criminal justice institutions, especially the police, courts, and corrections. The program fosters a commitment to social justice and the common good as students develop a sociological imagination and learn to critically consume information, theorize social contexts, create new knowledge, and communicate with and for others. In addition to providing opportunities for academic research and analysis, students gain the knowledge base and skills for pursuing careers in criminal legal institutions and related policy and non-profit fields.

CURRICULUM

Sociology students complete their program with electives in subjects such as:

- Crime and deviance
- Race
- Gender
- Education
- Social psychology
- Social and economic inequality
- Health and medicine

Criminology coursework focuses on the development and organization of criminal justice institutions, especially the police, courts, and corrections. Students examine pressing social issues such as:

- Mass incarceration
- Prisoner re-entry
- Racial profiling

RESEARCH AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

The Department of Sociology & Criminology offers a unique and dynamic undergraduate research program. Participation is an option available to students interested in expanding their intellectual capacity and taking their studies to the next level. The undergraduate research experience prepares students for a variety of graduate study fields in and beyond the social sciences. Although a number of participants go on to pursue graduate school, students learn valuable skills that can be applied outside of postgraduate education. These skills include intensive research consistency, effective public speaking, credible presentation delivery, confident self-representation, integrated participation in a group setting, and determined productivity.

Students interested in applying classroom lessons to real-life situations may take advantage of the Department's internships and practicums. As the Inland Northwest's largest city, Spokane offers numerous opportunities for students to serve in social service agencies and criminal justice institutions.



RESEARCH PROJECTS

The Pacific Sociological Association encourages undergraduates to submit their research papers, which are then evaluated for creativity and potential contributions to the discipline.

Recent research topics include:

Sociology

- The Enduring Effects of Inequality: Race, Class, and Infant Mortality
- Inclusion, Affirmation, and Equity in the Classroom
- Me, Myself, and iPhone: Fitness Apps and Body Surveillance among College Women

Criminology

- As Seen on TV: Forensic Science on the Screen and in the Courtroom
- Foundations of Fear: Student Perceptions of Crime and Safety
- From Combat to Chaos: The Emotional, Physical, and Mental Obstacles Student Service Members/Veterans Face in Higher Education

OUTCOMES

Gonzaga Sociology and Criminology graduates pursue a variety of careers in fields such as public health, social policy, data analysis, urban planning, law, law enforcement, education, counseling, and social work.

Prior to entering the workforce or attending graduate school, students often volunteer in humanitarian and nonprofit organizations such as AmeriCorps, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and the Peace Corps.

Gonzaga Sociology and Criminology graduates have participated in graduate study programs at the following institutions:

- Boston University
- Brandeis University
- Georgetown University School of Law
- Gonzaga University School of Law
- John Jay College of Criminal Justice
- Loyola University Chicago
- McGill University
- Northwestern University
- Portland State University
- Santa Clara University School of Law
- St. John's University School of Law
- Syracuse University
- University of California - Berkeley
- University of California - Irvine
- University of Southern California
- University of Washington
- University of Washington Law School
- Washington State University

For students interested in continuing their study of sociology and/or criminology, Gonzaga offers a J.D. through the Gonzaga University School of Law.

Contact: admissions@lawschool.gonzaga.edu



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