



Sociology & Criminal Justice

VI



The Passion

Sociologists study human relationships. Individuals rarely live or develop in isolation, and all people are connected to others as social beings. Sociologists address the problems of society by investigating how interpersonal relationships and the social contexts in which they occur influence human thoughts and behaviors. Students of sociology develop an understanding of human behavior and social interaction. They develop a perspective known as the “sociological imagination” in their understanding of society. This perspective encourages students to recognize how other individuals, groups, institutions, and international circumstances influence how people think, act, and behave.

The Program

Gonzaga University’s Sociology Department

offers a major (34 credits) and a minor (18 credits). The major develops skills in social theorizing and research through courses in general sociology, statistics, research methods, classical social theory, contemporary social theory, and sociological analysis. Students complete their program with electives in subjects such as crime, deviance, sociology of education, social psychology, social and economic inequity, race relations, education, and religion. Sociology minors are free to complete their program with electives after completing a general sociology course.

Gonzaga’s Criminal Justice Program is a multi-disciplinary major (34 credits) and minor (18 credits) administered by the Sociology Department. Emphasizing research and theory, the program prepares students for careers in law and the criminal justice system by combining a liberal arts background with specific courses in criminal justice, political science, psychology, and sociology. Majors must complete a senior seminar on criminal theory and measurement.

The Sociology Department urges students to design and implement research projects under faculty supervision. These projects deepen knowledge on specific subjects and develop research skills. The American Sociological Association encourages undergraduates to submit their research papers, which are then evaluated for creativity and potential contributions to the discipline.

Students interested in applying classroom lessons to real-life situations may take advantage of the Department’s internships and practica. Students may sign up under a professor with the skills and

knowledge to guide and help them secure community contacts and practicum/internship positions. As the Inland Northwest’s largest city, Spokane offers numerous opportunities for students to serve in social service agencies and criminal justice institutions.

Gonzaga sociology and criminal justice graduates plan to pursue a wide variety of careers. Law, law enforcement, teaching, counseling, and social work top the list of most desired careers for these students.

Additionally, a few students will volunteer in a variety of humanitarian and nonprofit organizations such as AmeriCorps, the Jesuit Volunteer Corps, and the Peace Corps prior to entering the workforce or attending graduate school.

Gonzaga Graduates Have Attended the Following Graduate Programs:

Brooklyn Law School
Eastern University, Master of Social Work Program
Georgetown University School of Law
Gonzaga University Law School
Northwestern University (Sociology)
Portland State University
Santa Clara School of Law
St. John’s University School of Law
University of Washington Law School
University of Washington, Master of Social Work Program
Washington State University

Mock Trial Team:

Students interested in the legal profession or in gaining courtroom experience may try out for Gonzaga's award-winning Mock Trial Team for experience in trial advocacy, character study, and oratorical skill. Under the guidance of sociology and criminal justice professor Georgie Ann Weatherby and assisted by sociology and criminal justice professor Vikas Gumbhir, Gonzaga's teams have placed extremely well at both the regional and national levels since the program's inception in 1997.

In 2010, Gonzaga captured the championship at the Pacific Northwest Regional Mock Trial Qualifier and sent two of their teams on to Silver Nationals in Irvine, CA from there. GU Team 1022 then qualified with a 5th place finish for a bid to the Gold National Grand Championship in Memphis, TN where they placed in the Prestigious Top Ten in the nation (ranking 9th overall). This follows a number of Top Ten showings at Silver Nationals through the years (including 1st place in 2003) and Gold Nationals appearances. In addition, Gonzaga University Mock Trial holds the all-time record for All-American Awards earned at any one competition (Silver Nationals in Minneapolis, MN in 2001). The American Mock Trial Association expects that record never to be broken. Students from all academic disciplines are encouraged to try out for the program.

The People

In addition to teaching, Sociology Department faculty serve as advisors and mentors assisting students with academic and professional planning. Many of the faculty also belong to the American Sociological Association and the Pacific Sociological Association.

As the major in criminal justice is interdisciplinary, professors from the Departments of Psychology, Political Science, and adjunct faculty working in criminal justice fields join Sociology and Criminal Justice Department professors in student instruction and advising.

Faculty Contacts and Specialties:

Matt Bahr, Ph.D., Purdue University; specializes in research methods and statistics, political sociology, law and society, and sociology of religion. (bahr@gonzaga.edu)

Andrea Fallenstein, M.A., Washington State University, Ph.D. in progress, Gonzaga University; specializations in juvenile delinquency, sociology of mental illness, organizations, and race/class/gender. (fallenstein@gonzaga.edu)

Vikas Gumbhir, Ph.D., University of Oregon; specializes

in deviance/criminology, policing, research methods, statistics, survey research, and symbolic interactionism. (gumbhir@gonzaga.edu)

William A. Hayes, Ph.D., University of California-Berkeley; specializes in comparative/historical sociology, cultural sociology, political economy, sociology of knowledge and East Asian development. (hayesw@gonzaga.edu)

Marguerite Marin, Ph.D., University of California-Santa Barbara; specializes in social and economic inequalities, collective behavior, politics in society, race and minority relations, and Latin American development. (marin@calvin.gonzaga.edu)

Andrea Bertotti Metoyer, Ph.D., Loyola University Chicago; specializes in inequality, health/medicine, gender, statistics and environmental sociology. (bertottimetoyer@gonzaga.edu)

Al Miranne, Ph.D., Washington State University; specializes in criminology, corrections, juvenile delinquency, and criminal justice. (miranne@gonzaga.edu)

Jane Rinehart, Ph.D., New York University; specializes in classical and contemporary social theory and the sociological study of gender, dying and death, and family life. (rinehart@gonzaga.edu)

Edward Vacha, Ph. D., University of California-Santa Barbara; specialties include deviant behavior, social psychology, sociology of education, research methods, program evaluation, and applied sociology. (vacha@gonzaga.edu)

Georgie Ann Weatherby, Ph. D., University of Washington; specializes in sociology of religion, law and society, criminal law, social theory and deviant behavior. (weatherb@gonzaga.edu)

Photo Credits: Alan Bisson, Dean Davis, Eric Galey, Craig Hill, Lauren Intinarelli, Jennifer Raudebaugh, Amy Sinisterra, and Allen Hubbard.

For more information, please contact: Dr. Edward Vacha, Chair, Sociology and Criminal Justice
vacha@gonzaga.edu, (509) 313-6793 or (800) 986-9585 ext. 6793