



Sociology & Criminal Justice

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. Both sociology and criminal justice majors are trained to empirically examine human behavior and social interaction. This perspective, known as the “sociological imagination,” applies across a broad range of fields because it encourages students to recognize how other individuals, groups, institutions, and international circumstances influence how people think, act, and behave.

THE PROGRAM

The **Sociology Department** offers a major (33 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 an introductory sociology course.

The **Criminal Justice program** is a multi-disciplinary major (33 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.

RESEARCH & PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

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 practicums. Students may sign up and work 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.

OUTCOMES

Gonzaga Sociology and Criminal Justice graduates plan to pursue a wide 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 Criminal Justice graduates have participated in graduate study programs at the following institutions:

Sociology/Criminal Justice

- Boston University
- Brandeis University
- John Jay College of Criminal Justice (NY)
- Northwestern University
- Portland State University
- Syracuse University
- University of Southern California
- Washington State University

Law School

- Georgetown University
- Gonzaga University
- Santa Clara University
- St. John's University
- University of Washington

Master of Social Work

- Eastern University (PA)
- University of Washington

THE PEOPLE

In addition to teaching, Sociology Department faculty serve as advisors and mentors assisting students with academic and professional planning. Many faculty members 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 & SPECIALTIES

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