Faculty
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Mission Statement
The mission of the Department is to provide students with a broad background in the study of society and human relationships from a Christian perspective, to enable them to enter graduate programs or entry level positions in their respective discipline.

Curriculum
I. Major in Sociology—36 semester hours
The courses in Sociology are designed for two types of students: (1) those who desire pre-professional training for sociology or other related fields of human relations, and (2) those who seek to understand underlying principles in human relations, the role of custom and group psychology in collective behavior, the structure of society, the problems of group living, and the tendencies toward the improvement or the disintegration of society. Courses are designed to present both a practical and a scientific analysis of human relationships in the various areas of social life.
A. Core required of all SOC majors—24 hours
   1. SOC 211, 213, 214, 370, 417, 419, 422, 498 or 411
   B. Electives—12 hours
II. Major in Family Studies—36 hours
The family, as a basic building block of society, is critical to the functioning of society as a whole. The contribution of the Christian community to the development of leaders in family relations is crucial. The Family Studies major focuses on the development of the individual in the context of family and society. The program is designed to prepare students for (a) professional careers in a variety of human service areas; (b) leadership roles in church, school, and community; (c) personal roles in family living; and (d) graduate education. Graduates who do not pursue graduate study typically find employment as parent educators, child life specialists and program directors in public and private agencies.
A. SOC 214, 225, 325, 356, 370, 417, 411 or 498
   B. SW 338; PSY 219 or 324
   C. Select 9 hours from Chosen Concentration:
   *Pre-Child Life Concentration: SOC 322, SOC 420, PSY 313
   *Students seeking Child Life Specialist certification through the Association of Child Life Professionals are urged to consult the ACLP website (childlife.org) and to meet with the Sociology Department chair to ensure that they understand both the required undergraduate course work and post-baccalaureate certification requirements.
III. Major in Forensic Science—80 hours
Students must take BIO 112 and MAT 114 for core requirement.
A. Criminal Justice Foundation—30 hours: PSY 213, SOC 211, PSY 317 or SW 305, SOC/SW 324, SOC/SW 419, SOC 250, SOC 312, PSC 416, SOC 311, SOC 411
B. Biology—16 hours: BIO 211, 221, 315, 325
C. Forensic Science—8 hours: BIO 313, SOC 308
D. Chemistry—26 hours: CHE 111, 112, 314, 315, 319, 324, 326, 329
E. No minor required
IV. Major in Criminal Justice—39 hours
A. Social Science Foundation—18 hours: PSY 213, SOC 214, PSY 317 or SW 305, SOC/SW 324, SOC/SW 419
B. Criminal Justice Core—15 hours: SOC 250, SOC 312, PSC 416, SOC 311, SOC 411
C. Electives—6 hours from: PSC 340, PSY 313, SOC 317, SOC 326, SOC 422, SW 310, SW 338
V. Minor in Family Studies—18 hours
A. SOC 225, 417, SW 338
B. Select 9 hours from: SOC 325, SOC 356, SOC 370, SOC 419, PSY 219 or 324
VI. Minor in Sociology—18 hours
A. SOC 211, 213
B. Select 12 SOC electives (6 hours of which must be upper-level)
VII. Minor in Human Studies—21 hours
The interdisciplinary Human Studies minor is designed to give flexibility to the student interested in education and human studies.
A. Include two of the following: PSY 213, SOC 211, SE 230.
B. Fifteen hours, 9 of which must be upper-level, from EDU, PSY, SE, SOC, SW.
VIII. Minor in Criminal Justice—21 hours
A. Social Science Foundation—6 hours: PSY 317 or SW 305, SOC/SW 324
B. Criminal Justice Core—9 hours: SOC 250, 311, 312
C. Electives—6 hours from: PSC 340 or PSC 416, PSY 313, SOC 317, SOC 326, SOC/SW 419, SW 310, SW 338
Assessment of Majors

Both Sociology and Family Studies students have the option to round out their program with either SOC 498: Senior Capstone Seminar or SOC 411: Internship. When doing a capstone, senior students engage in original research which draws upon theoretical knowledge acquired in their research methods and theory classes. A major original research paper and oral presentation are the cumulative outcomes of the 498 course. The topic will be focused on a family topic for Family Studies students.

For those students who choose to participate in an internship, SOC 411 gives them the opportunity to apply knowledge from their coursework, clarify their own professional objectives, and gain professional experience in an approved community organization or agency. They will be required to complete a substantive term paper as part of their internship which will incorporate the theories and topics learned throughout their program.

Major of Sociology or Family Studies with Discipline-Specific Honors

The goal of the Department of Sociology and Family Studies’ Discipline Specific Honors (DSH) track is to help students to produce a high-quality research paper or community project that is the culmination of their academic coursework and interests. Both sociology and family studies majors will complete 12 hours of honors contracted courses toward this end.

Admission Requirements:

Students must email their intent to join discipline specific honors to the chair of the department. This written declaration must include at least one (more are welcome) general area of study the student hopes to further explore through the DSH track. Students are free to change their general topic but they must enter the program with some proposed area of study. The department chair will make the final decision regarding the student’s admission into DSH following a meeting with the student.

Sociology majors will complete the following as honors contracted courses:
- SOC 214: Social Research I or SOC 422: Social Research II (3 hours)
- SOC 417: Social Theory (3 hours)
- One upper-level sociology elective (3 hours)
- SOC 498: Senior Capstone (3 hours)

*Substitutions are allowed if agreed upon by the thesis advisor and department chair.

Family Studies Majors will complete the following as honors contracted courses:
- SOC 425: Strengthening Marriages and Families OR SOC 214: Social Research I OR SOC 422: Social Research II
- SOC 417: Social Theory
- One upper-level sociology elective
- SOC 498: Senior Capstone

*Substitutions are allowed if agreed upon by the thesis advisor and department chair.

The final product of the DSH track will be either:
1. A high-quality research paper that will be submitted to a peer-reviewed academic journal.
2. A community project or program that the student creates and implements. For example, students may help to assess the efficacy of a local non-profit, designing a workshop for families at a local church, or creating a semester-long afterschool program for disadvantaged youth.

All students will present their final product at one of the following:
1. The Union University Spring Scholarship Symposium.
2. An academic conference.
3. A meeting of stakeholders or community leaders, if applicable. This option is primarily for those undertaking a community project or program.

Progression:

Advising sessions will be used to further explore the student’s interests and monitor their progression toward a completed research paper or community project. By the fall advising session of their junior year the student must propose a general research topic or community project in order to enroll in DSH contracted courses for the spring of their junior year. Students may modify their topics up to the start of the fall semester of their senior year.

Student Organizations

Pi Gamma Mu, national social science honor society, seeks to improve scholarship in social studies; to inspire service to humanity by an intelligent approach to the solution of social problems; and to engender sympathy towards others with different opinions and institutions. Students who have completed 20 hours of social science with a “B” average or above are eligible for membership.

Sociological Inquiry Society (S.I.S) functions as a Christian community of students interested in sociological foundations and enables students to better understand and exercise sociology outside the classroom through discussion, activities, and service.

Student Awards

The Pi Gamma Mu Scholarship Leader Award is presented to the graduating member of the society with the highest academic average.
211. Principles of Sociology (3) F, S
Designed to introduce students to the sociological study of society. Sociology focuses on the systematic understanding of social interaction, social organization, social institutions, and social change. Understanding sociology helps discover and explain social patterns and see how such patterns change over time. By making vivid the social basis of everyday life, sociology also develops critical thinking by revealing the social structures and processes that shape diverse forms of human life.

213. Social Change for Social Problems (3) F—Odd Years
Reciprocal credit: ICS 213.
Sociologists hold a passion to make the world a better place. This passion is combined with the use of the scientific approach to understand and explain social phenomena. The results of scientific investigation can be used to suggest social policies that can mitigate the negative consequences of problems that inevitably plague all human societies. We will discuss suggestions for policy designed to mitigate the negative consequences of social problems.

214. Social Research I (3) F—Odd Years
Prerequisite: SOC 211
An introduction to statistics common in social science research. Topics include descriptive and inferential statistics, hypothesis testing, significance, correlation, analysis of variance, and multiple regression. Emphasis is on application and effectively using a common statistical program (PASW/SPSS).

220. Introduction to Studying Families (3) F—Odd Years
This course is designed to provide an interdisciplinary introduction to issues pertaining to contemporary families. The course provides an engaging contemporary look at family studies’ theories, methods, essential topics, and career opportunities. Concepts are brought to life through striking examples from everyday family life.

221. Sociology of Education (3) As Needed
Explores education as an institution that affects and is affected by the larger social structure. Topics may include the role of schools in society; connections between schooling, stratification and the economy; gender and ethnic differences in achievement; and social and cultural contexts of learning.

225. Relationships, Marriage and Families (3) Su; S—Odd Years
Reciprocal credit: SW 225.
An investigation of the sociocultural and historical factors influencing relationships, marriage and families emphasizing challenges, prevention and intervention.

250. Introduction to Criminal Justice (3)
Course provides an overview of the criminal justice system, including policing, courts, and the correctional system. This course also explores key concepts and processes of criminal justice, as well as contemporary issues and debates within the field, at the local, state, and national level.

300. Sport Sociology (3) S—Odd Years
Reciprocal credit: PEWS 300.
Application of sociological principles to sport and athletics. Exploration of sport as a social institution in American society and how it is an agent of social change.

308. Introduction to Forensic Science (4) F—Even Years (beginning 2022)
Prerequisites: BIO 112, CHE 111.
Course introduces students to the field of forensic science. The course will include the following topics: crime scene documentation, collection and analysis of trace evidence, fingerprints, ballistics, fire, explosives, and poisons and toxins, among other topics.

310. Social and Economic Justice (3) As Needed
Prerequisites: CHR 111 or 112. Reciprocal credit: SW 310, ICS 310. See SW 310 for course description.

311. Crime and Society (3) S—Odd Years
This course examines the social, political and economic processes that affect the creation and implementation of law. It focuses on history and fundamental principles of American legal system and compares it to other legal systems existing in today’s world. In assessing how judicial opinions and legislative efforts affect social relations and institutional arrangements, inquiry is centered on: the ways in which social problems become defined as legal issues, the forces which shape the initiation and ultimate formulation of legislative acts designed to affect public policy, the role which cultural values and assumptions play in framing legal arguments and influencing judicial opinions and remedial programs, and the strengths and limitations of the law as a means of achieving special social policy objectives.

312. Criminology (3) F-Odd Years
This course explores classical and contemporary theories of crime, providing a foundation for understanding other issues within the field of criminal justice. Special emphasis is placed on the integration and interplay of components of multiple theories for a more nuanced understanding of the social determinants of crime.

317. Urban Sociology (3) As Needed
Prerequisite: SOC 211.
An exploration and analysis of social forces that structure human community. An overview of the process of urbanization in America, and the various ways in which rural and urban community life are organized into diverse social patterns.

319. Sociology of Religion (3) F—Even Years
Reciprocal credit: ICS 319.
A sociological analysis of religious practice and belief. The intersection of religion with personal, family and social life is emphasized. Cults, sects, fundamentalism and radicalism are all examined in this context.

321. Social Gerontology (3) As Needed
Prerequisite: SOC 211. Reciprocal credit: SW 321.
A brief, comprehensive introduction to the subject of aging. The social and socio-psychological aspects will be examined.
322. Sociology of Health and Medicine (3) As Needed
A sociological examination of health, illness, and the social organization of medical care in the US. Consideration is given to race, class, gender, and age as factors influencing health, illness, and the delivery of medical care.

324. Social Deviance (3) F-Even Years
Prerequisite: SOC 211. Reciprocal credit: SW 324.
Focuses on why certain individuals violate social norms and the ways society responds and attempts to control deviant behavior. Topics include: defining, measuring and explaining social deviance and types of deviant behavior as well as personal and social consequences of deviant behavior.

325. Families Across Cultures (3) F, S
Reciprocal credit: SW 325, ICS 325.
The family as an object of sociological inquiry within the context of cross-cultural, multi-cultural and historical bases. Continuity and change, similarities and differences are emphasized.

326. Juvenile Justice (3) As Needed
This course covers youthful crime: its volume, causes and trends. The prediction, prevention, treatment and control of juvenile delinquency by social control agencies is examined relative to social policies needed to reduce its incidence. The organization and procedures of the juvenile justice system are also explored.

327. Sociology of Media and Technology (3) As Needed
In this course, attention will be given to different aspects of the relationship between technology and society and directions for the future. The nature of technology and the process of innovation are driven by social influences and pressures. Those social influences mean that technologies reflect and often reinforce the structures of social, economic, and political power in any society. Special emphasis on social media and the effects it has on daily interactions in society.

333. Parent-Child Relations (3) As Needed
Prerequisite: SOC 211.
Social and historical context of parent-child interaction over the life course; analysis of theories, research and educational programs; socialization into the family; examination of parenting as a developmental process. Overview of the parenting process in diverse cultural and familial structures. Emphasizes the use of Biblical teaching in parent-child relations.

356. Food, Culture and Society (3) F-Odd Years
Reciprocal credit: ICS 356.
This course explores how social and cultural contexts affect food production and consumption. Specifically, this course examines how modern food practices have become disordered, diverging from a proper theological approach to creation.

370. Gender and Sexuality (3) As Needed
Reciprocal credit: SW 370.
Gender and sexuality in American society and cross-culturally with consideration to the role of gender in structuring identity, male/female interaction, and constraining or expanding opportunities. Topics: Sexual development, function and dysfunction, cultural and socio-psychological issues, and Christian, ethical and moral responses.

411. Internship (3) F, S, Su
A field situation in a community agency. Supervision will be provided by the agency and department. A journal and substantive term paper are required.

413. Globalization and Social Change (3) As Needed
Prerequisite: SOC 211
This course addresses contemporary social, economic, and political changes referred to as globalization. What is globalization and what is its history? Does economic globalization lead to development or only to new ways of concentrating wealth in the hands of the few? These questions suggest the overarching themes of the course, which include the institutional structures of globalization, how those institutional structures shape power and inequality, and the question of scale, or how institutional structures translate power and inequality from the global to the local and back, and, finally, possible alternatives to globalization. How does globalization affect God’s global work?

417. Social Theory (3) S—Even Years
Prerequisites: 6 hours of SOC including SOC 211.
Examines major social theories that explain society and human behavior. Special emphasis is given to family theories and applying other social theories to the family and behavior within the family.

418. Social Psychology (3) As Needed
Prerequisites: SOC 211 or PSY 213. Reciprocal credit: PSY 418. See PSY 418 for course description.

419. Social Diversity and Inequality (3) F—Even Years
Reciprocal credit: SW 419, ICS 419.
A study of the social, cultural, historical, political-economic, and psychological dimensions of minority-majority group relations with an emphasis on American society. Problems and intervention strategies will be examined.

420. Death and Dying (3) As Needed
Prerequisite: SOC 211. Reciprocal credit: SW 420.
An interdisciplinary investigation of death and dying exploring contributions from anthropology, ethics, health sciences, history, literature, psychology, religion, and sociology. Strategies of counseling with dying persons and their families will be central.

422. Social Research II (3) F-Even Years
Prerequisite: MAT 114; 6 additional hours in SOC including 211.
Research design, applied techniques, and data analysis methods with emphasis on a research project, from problem formulation to research report.
425. Strengthening Marriage and Families (3) As Needed
Prerequisites: SOC 211 or 220.
Family theories from sociological and family studies perspectives exploring historical roots, assumptions, concepts, and applications for strengthening relationships. Emphasizes using Biblical principles to strengthen marriage and families.

435. Contemporary Issues in the Family (3) As Needed
Prerequisite: SOC 211 or 220. Reciprocal credit: PSY 435. An in-depth look at the family, life issues, threats and challenges today. Biblical principles related to such issues as parent-child relationships, work and family, divorce and family violence are discussed. Preventive techniques and solutions are considered.

498. Senior Capstone Seminar (3) F
Prerequisites: SOC 211 and permission of instructor; Pre- or corequisites: SOC 417, 422.
The culminating experience for Sociology majors requiring students to successfully demonstrate an ability to apply research methods and sociological theories to an empirical research problem/question of their own choosing. The application will take the form of a written paper and a presentation in a public format.

Available in all prefixes:

179-279-379-479. External Domestic Study Programs (1-3) As Needed
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to registering.

179PF-279PF-379PF-479PF. External Domestic Study Programs (Pass/Fail) As Needed
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to registering.

180-280-380-480. Study Abroad Programs (1-4) As Needed
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to registering.

180PF-280PF-380PF-480PF. Study Abroad Programs (Pass/Fail) As Needed
All courses and their applications must be defined and approved prior to registering.

195-6-7. Special Studies (1-4) As Needed
Lower-level group studies which do not appear in the regular departmental offerings.

295-6-7. Special Studies (1-4) As Needed
Upper-level group studies which do not appear in the regular departmental offerings.

495-6-7. Independent Study (1-4) As Needed
Individual research under the guidance of a faculty member(s).

499. Seminar (1-3) F As Needed
To be used at the discretion of the department for majors only.