

Sociology

Learning Goals

1. To understand basic sociological concepts.
2. To understand the centrality of class, race and gender in most situations.
3. To learn the value of comparative analysis.
4. To be able to evaluate all sources of information critically.
5. To learn the value of questioning received wisdom or common sense.
6. To learn research methods that will enable you to pursue your own investigations in whatever field you choose.

About the major

Sociology is the study of the world created by complex human societies. By uniting concerns across the social sciences, sociology connects scholarship in history, economics, politics, and psychology. We examine inequality, social mobility and social class, identities based on race and gender, conflict and social change, and institutions related to crime, business, education, law, politics, religion, and science. Through a broad range of qualitative and quantitative methods—from close-up ethnographic observation and interviews to large scale data collection—sociologists produce critical and useful knowledge about our social world. Sociological training teaches us to think critically about social life, to carefully collect and analyze empirical data, and to understand the way the social world works and how it might be changed for the better. Learning to communicate clearly, creatively, and effectively are all abilities of tremendous value in a wide range of vocational callings and professions. Moreover, understanding the connections between broad social forces and personal experiences—what C. Wright Mills called “the sociological imagination”—is invaluable for living effective and rewarding lives in tumultuous times.

“Studying sociology at Middlebury gave me the tools and training to think critically about structural challenges, prepare and evaluate market research, identify barriers and windows to social connections, and substantiate a strategic, actionable point of view.”

—Caryn LoCastro '07
Integrated Sector Video Lead, Google

Reasons you might choose this major

- You are interested in the social lives of people, groups, and societies and the connections between them.
- You are interested in looking at society more objectively, and learning how we all fit together.
- You want to explore large societal problems, the challenges and consequences of human interactions, and systemic social change.
- You care deeply about social problems and want to find solutions.
- You have a need to evaluate all sources of information critically.
- You understand the centrality of class, race and gender in most situations.



Translating Learning into Professional Competencies

Throughout your time at Middlebury, you will develop and enhance the following core professional competencies, skills, and dispositions highly valued by employers that will prepare you for leadership and success in any given field:

Critical Thinking: Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems.

Oral/Written Communications: Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms.

Teamwork/Collaboration: Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers from diverse backgrounds.

Leadership: Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others.

Professionalism/Work Ethic: Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits.

Global/Intercultural Fluency: Value, respect, and learn from diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, sexual orientations, and religions.

Digital Technology: Leverage existing digital technologies ethically and efficiently to solve problems, complete tasks, and accomplish goals.

Career Management: Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional development.

Where sociology majors go

Applying your learning through internships . . .

Students pursue internships and research in a variety of fields, enabling them to apply their liberal arts learning in real-world settings. Internships, research, and self-directed projects enrich your academic experience and help prepare you for life after Middlebury. Students have interned or done research at the following:

Next Generation Scholars

Luxos

Drug Policy Alliance

Luminary NYC

Brandon Broderick Law Firm

Oratory Now

San Francisco Public Press

350Vermont

RiverLA

Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence

HelloWellness

One Year Lease Theater Company

New York State Attorney General's Office

ArtWaves

South Bronx United

Small Ones Farm

Lehong Brokerage

Be Social Change

. . . leading to meaningful, dynamic, and engaging career paths.

See some of the many interesting ways our graduates have applied their liberal arts learning to engage the world. If you want to see what other Middlebury alumni are doing now, log into Midd2Midd and search by major. [go/midd2midd](#)

Center for Resilient Leadership, *Founder*

Middlesex District Attorneys Office, *Asst. District Attorney*

Kent Emergency Physicians, *Emergency Physician*

Healthfirst, *Care Manager SNF Rehabilitation*

Mind Well Foundation/Clarkesmith International, *Managing Director, Mindfulness in Schools Project/Director*

National Pro Grid League, *Founder/Chairman*

Big Water Productions, *Consulting Services Director*

Activo Renewables, Ltd., *Managing Partner and Founder*

International Program Assistance, Inc., *Founder/President*

McFarland-Johnson, Inc., *Environmental Consultant*

Ahearne Research Services, *President*

Central Intelligence Agency, *Political Analyst (Taiwan)*

Capital Health, *Genetic Counselor*

Educators For Social Responsibility, *Executive Director*

U.S. Department of Labor, *Attorney/Civil Rights Division*

Iris House, Inc., *Senior Director of Community Health Initiatives*

FERA Formative Evaluation Research Associates, *Sr. Associate*

Wellsense International Public Health Consultants, *Director and Consultant*

International Institute for Sustainable Development, *Content Editor*

Harvard University, *Harvard Humanitarian Initiative*

StoryCorps, *Tour site Supervisor/Facilitator*

Etonhouse Malaysia International School, *Head Teacher*

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, *Executive Office of Health and Human Services*