

# SOCIOLOGY USC, COLUMBIA

## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

### FALL 2025

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**SOCIOLOGY 101.2: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY**      **TR**      **10:05AM – 11:20AM**      *Erin Davenport*

This interactive class will push students to question the society they live in. Things that seem “just the way things are” have underlying structural and societal significance. In SOCY 101 we will peel back those layers and try to make sense of the world around us using lenses of different theoretical perspectives. Curiosity is key to enjoying this class! Participation is emphasized, and this course features small assignments and consistent work across time rather than larger projects or assignments at the end.

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**SOCIOLOGY 101.3 INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY**      **TR**      **11:40AM – 12:55PM**      *Erin Davenport*

**SOCIOLOGY 101.4: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY**      **TR**      **4:25PM – 5:40PM**      *Professor Shane Thye*

**CONTENT:** This survey course covers many aspects of modern sociology. The course begins with an overview of the origins of sociology. Then the course covers a survey of sociological research methods and the role of theory and science in sociology. Theoretical perspectives on social life are covered along with sociological treatments of societal institutions. Theories of socialization, deviance, family, group dynamics and religion are also covered. Student assessment takes the form of three examinations and several film assignments. Students should gain a grasp of the role of social structures on individual lives and an understanding of the role of sociology in the modern world.

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**SOCIOLOGY 101.5: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY**      **TR**      **10:05AM – 11:20AM**      *Valerie Barron*

This course will introduce you to the foundations of sociology! Throughout the semester, we will consider some common sociological questions as we learn about the theories that are often used to frame these questions. Using a sociological perspective, we will examine how external social forces affect all aspects of our lives -from our opportunities and failures to our likes and dislikes- and we will discuss how we often are completely unaware of these processes. Just think how your core values and beliefs could be different had you grown up in a different country, or as a different race, or even in a different time period. Sociology provides a unique perspective to examining our social world in many ways. It not only traces how people are shaped by the society that they are in but also how people shape society. This course will help you develop a greater understanding of these processes while introducing some of the most important areas of study within the growing field of sociology

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**SOCIOLOGY 101.6: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY**      **TR**      **1:15PM – 2:30PM**      *Professor Rebekah Broussard*

Sociology is the study of society, with a focus on human behaviors, social relationships, and institutions. In this introductory course, we explore how individual experiences — including your health, your career path, your relationships — are shaped by broader social forces. We'll learn to see the familiar in new ways by using the sociological imagination — a way of thinking that places personal experiences within broader social and historical contexts.

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**SOCIOLOGY 101.H01: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY**      **TR**      **8:30AM – 9:45AM**      *Professor Laura Brashears*  
*Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students*

Each of us has an idea of what is meant by the word “society:” the people we live with, the work we do, and the government agencies that touch our lives. We live in particular places, work at specific businesses, and belong to our own groups. And while we must

experience society from our own individual perspectives, none of those individual perspectives can encompass the totality of each of our experiences. Sociologists seek to examine the social world through an objective lens, rising above individual experiences to understand the whole. In other words, sociologists do not take the world before their eyes for granted; rather, we use scientific methods to gain a deeper understanding of how “society is inside of man and man is inside society.”

No social endeavor is off-limits to sociologists; we study religion, education, the family, the self, crime, work, economics, politics, organizations, demographic shifts, gender, race and ethnicity and social movements, among others.

In this class, you will learn to use the “sociological imagination,” a faculty that allows us to see the way the world is, and to imagine how it might have been, or might become, different. Once you do so, you will be able to develop a deeper understanding of how social factors have influenced you in the past and will continue to influence you in the future.

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<b>SOCIOLOGY 101.H02: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY</b>	<b>TR</b>	<b>10:05AM – 11:20AM</b>	<b><i>Professor Laura Brashears</i></b>
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***Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students***

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<b>SOCIOLOGY 101.J10: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY</b>	<b>ONLINE</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b><i>Hanne Van Der Iest</i></b>
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This **100% online Carolina Core** course will give you a broad introduction to the field of sociology. Throughout the semester, we will practice taking a sociological perspective – assessing the effects of context, social forces, and society on individuals, and the effects of individual behavior on shaping social environments. We will focus on evidence and facts, and we will learn why sociology is necessary for good policy and good citizenship.

Due to the breadth of the discipline of sociology, we will take a topical approach – discussing some of the most important lines of inquiry in the field. Topics include culture, social norms, social networks, trust, crime, inequality, race, gender, marriage and family, research methods, education, and happiness, among others.

The course is divided into 14 Modules. Each Module contains video lectures, readings, and other media. For each Module, you will be assessed with a class participation assignment, homework, and a short, timed, quiz. Although this course will be asynchronous online, you can expect frequent communication and guidance from me, and many opportunities for interaction with your fellow students.

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<b>SOCIOLOGY 101.J11: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY</b>	<b>ONLINE</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b><i>Hanne Van Der Iest</i></b>
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<b>SOCIOLOGY 101.J12: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY</b>	<b>ONLINE</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b><i>Hanne Van Der Iest</i></b>
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<b>SOCIOLOGY 101.J13: INTRODUCTORY SOCIOLOGY</b>	<b>ONLINE</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b><i>Hanne Van Der Iest</i></b>
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<b>SOCIOLOGY 300.1: SOCIAL STRUCTURES</b>	<b>TR</b>	<b>11:40AM – 12:55PM</b>	<b><i>Professor Jun Zhao</i></b>
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Do your friends have more friends than you? Can social networks predict the spread of epidemics? Does misery truly love company?

This course introduces the foundations of social network analysis from both conceptual and empirical perspectives. We’ll explore how patterns of relationships—between individuals, organizations, and even nation-states—shape social outcomes.

Through in-class discussions and hands-on activities, you’ll dive into key theories and topics such as the small-world puzzle, the strength of weak ties, friendship formation, disease transmission, and how influence spreads through advertising, politics, and beyond.

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<b>SOCIOLOGY 304.1: RACE, CLASS, GENDER &amp; SEXUALITY</b>	<b>TR</b>	<b>4:25PM – 5:40PM</b>	<b><i>Erin Davenport</i></b>
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Active learning and discussion will be used to create an engaged learning community. In this course students will learn to think critically about race, social class, gender, and sexual identity from an interdisciplinary perspective. Students will engage with theoretical and empirical scholarly readings as well as materials from popular culture and current events to explore how race, class, gender, and sexuality structure our daily lives. This course emphasizes the social processes producing inequality and stratification, and will discuss racism, patriarchy, capitalism, and heteronormativity.

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**SOCIOLOGY 305.1: SOCIOLOGY OF FAMILIES**    **TR**    **2:50PM – 4:05PM**    *Allison Dunatchik*

Family is one of the most influential social institutions in our everyday lives. This course will cover topics such as dating, marriage, parenting, caregiving and policy, and will investigate fundamental questions like: Who is considered family? Who decides? How has family diversity evolved, and what does this reveal about inequality? Students will learn to use critical thought and empirical research to develop an understanding of how family and social issues are interconnected. This class seeks to sociologically and critically rethink current family issues and the future of family life.

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**SOCIOLOGY 306.1: FROM FACTORY TO FAST FOOD: WORK IN THE NEW ECONOMY**    **TR**    **10:05AM – 11:20AM**  
*Professor Jennifer Augustine*

Are you interested in how jobs in the U.S. have changed over the past few decades, how the conditions of work vary across different segments of the labor market, **what challenges and opportunities you may experience in different job sectors?** This face-to-face class will answer these questions and more. An example of topics we explore are:

- Invisible dimensions of labor, like aesthetic labor performed by Hooters waitresses, or emotional labor of flight attendants.
  - The rise in autonomous contract work in white collar sectors and the time paradox, in which workers control their time, but time is money.
  - Contemporary cultural schemas that dictate your job should be your passion, and how this cultural dictate contributes to racial, gender, and class inequality and feelings of burnout and exploitation.
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**SOCIOLOGY 307.H01: SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION**    **TR**    **10:05AM – 11:20AM**    *Professor Andrea Henderson-Platt*  
*Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students*

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**SOCIOLOGY 308.1: COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION**    **MW**    **2:20PM- 3:35PM**    *Professor James Adams*

Why do organizations have the characteristics they do? Where do those features come from and what implications do they have for the success/failure of those organizations? In this class we'll explore how social scientists have studied organizations, what we know about them empirical, theoretical bases for those studies, and the implications of each of those for explaining organizational "success" and "failure". We'll examine differences between formal and informal organizational structures, what role individuals play in organizational patterns, and how those persist/change through time.

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**SOCIOLOGY 356.1: SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES ON POVERTY IN THE U.S.**    **TR**    **11:40AM – 12:55PM**  
*Professor Jennifer Augustine*

This is a class on poverty in the U.S. In this class, we will:

- Learn about current and historical trends in U.S. poverty
- Discuss cultural views and assumptions about poverty
- Explore theoretical and substantive perspectives for the causes of poverty
- Learn about the consequences of poverty for crime, health, and social relationships
- Understand the lived experience of poverty
- Consider policy approaches to remediating poverty in the U.S. and other countries

This is a discussion-based class that offers many activity-based assignments which draw on podcasts, films, and other media. Readings are sourced from books and reports and do not require purchasing additional materials.

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**SOCIOLOGY 391.1: SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH METHODS** TR 2:50PM – 4:05PM *Professor Rebekah Broussard*

Are you curious about how social scientists make sense of the world? Want to learn the skills that journalists, policy makers, public health professionals, and UX researchers use every day? In this course, you'll learn how to ask better questions, collect and analyze data, and interpret social trends with a critical and informed eye

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**SOCIOLOGY 392.1: ELEMENTARY STATISTICS FOR SOCIOLOGISTS** W 10:05AM- 11:40AM *Professor Brian levy*  
TR 1:15PM-2:05PM

Statistical information is widely available and used to promote policy and social interests. This course introduces the use of statistics and data analysis for sociology and social sciences. Its goal is to help you develop statistical literacy and analytic reasoning. We cover the use of statistics to both describe data and make inferences. You will learn to use and apply different statistical techniques as well as evaluate their merit, a condition for ethical, inquiry-based citizenship. In the process, you will build competence in the use of a statistical software package—a highly marketable skill.

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**SOCIOLOGY 392.2: ELEMENTARY STATISTICS FOR SOCIOLOGISTS** F 10:50AM – 11:40AM *Professor Brian Levy*  
TR 1:15PM – 2:05PM

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**SOCIOLOGY 393.1: SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY** TR 2:50PM-4:05PM *Erin Davenport*

This reading intensive and discussion heavy course will focus on ideas about society and the way it works that span different contexts and time periods. Students will engage in frequent discussion with peers and deep textual analysis to build confidence in how to theorize and how to engage with theory.

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**SOCIOLOGY 507.J10: SOCIOLOGY OF SOCIAL CONTROL** ONLINE *Professor Mathieu Deflem*

This upper-level undergraduate course deals with the sociological study of social control, i.e., the definition of and response to crime and/or deviance. The course primarily discusses the official treatment of crime through formal systems of criminal justice. The specific themes of the course include: an overview of relevant theories; the history of the concept of social control; the perspective of discipline and its relevance for the study of surveillance; the role of police, including international police cooperation; and aspects of the policing of terrorism, both at home and abroad. The assignments include three tests, six forum posts (short essays), optional discussion opportunities, and one comprehensive final exam. This is a fully online distributed-learning course delivered through Blackboard (100% Web Asynchronous).

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**SOCIOLOGY 557.1: SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION & INEQUALITY** TR 1:15PM – 2:30PM *Professor Laura Brashears*

The study of educational inequality is vast and spans several disciplines. Given this, we will spend the semester focusing on two interrelated questions: Do schools deliver on the promise of equality in the United States today? And if not, why not? To answer these questions we will need to contemplate a variety of social realities and their relationships to education: federal-level school policies; the interrelationship between residential segregation, school funding, and school choice; the nationwide practice of tracking in perpetuating larger inequalities; the role of teachers in the classroom; the relevance of culture in understanding school climate and student beliefs and attitudes; and finally, the ramifications of unequal educational opportunities for individuals and U.S. society more broadly.

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**SOCIOLOGY 557.H10: SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION & INEQUALITY** TR 1:15PM – 2:30PM *Professor Laura Brashears*  
*Restricted to South Carolina Honors College Students*

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**SOCIOLOGY 560.1: ADVANCED SOCIOLOGICAL THEORY M 2:30PM – 5:15PM Professor Mathieu Deflem**

*Graduate students only.* This course introduces students to selected developments in the foundations and development of sociological theory. It discusses theoretical contributions in the foundational era of sociology, roughly defined as the period that coincided with the rise of classical sociology and the institutionalization of sociology as a social science, as well as developments during the modern era. Besides the classics, the course also includes some relatively neglected contributions and scholars that have made significant theoretical contributions, lasting until this day. The introduced variety should also enable students to explore additional theoretical developments in their individual graduate work.

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**SOCIOLOGY 561.1: REAL WORLD RESEARCH EXPERIENCE TR 11:40AM – 12:55PM Professor Matthew Brashears**

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**SOCIOLOGY 598.1 DATA VISUALIZATION W 4:40PM – 7:25PM Professor James Adams**

They say a picture is worth 1000 words. But for data visualization to make the best use of that potential, researchers must strategically develop their construction and presentation. This work requires trade-offs between data-fidelity, theoretical simplification, aesthetic appeal, and technical limitations. In this course we will explore theoretical and practical approaches for maximizing that potential in ways that address this range of considerations, including a variety of data visualization aims and approaches. We will focus on replicable visualization strategies using R, but will also explore several alternate visualization platforms

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**SOCIOLOGY 721.1 DATA VISUALIZATION W 4:40PM – 7:25PM Professor James Adams**

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**SOCIOLOGY 730.1: STATISTICAL ANALYSIS IN SOCIOLOGY TR 10:05AM– 11:20AM Professor Jun Zhao**

This is the first in a two-course sequence of graduate statistic courses. In this course, we will build a foundation for you to take to SOCY 731 in the Spring. Thus, this course will cover the elementary and intermediate quantitative techniques utilized in sociological investigation. Your goal should be to understand the logic of quantitative social research and the statistical analysis of social data. You should work to develop a solid base of knowledge from which you can critically evaluate the quality of statistical evidence produced by social scientists and the popular press; to appreciate both the relevance, importance, and limitation of statistics.

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**SOCIOLOGY 759.1 SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION & INEQUALITY TR 1:15PM – 2:30PM Professor Laura Brashears**

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