SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY

The Sociology and Anthropology Department at Fairfield University challenges students to critically examine the social and cultural dimensions of the modern world. The program integrates quantitative and qualitative approaches to understand and engage major social problems faced by societies, our own and others.

Sociology is the scientific study of human society and social behavior. It seeks to understand why individuals form groups and how membership in groups influences a person’s behavior. Why do human beings live in families? Why do the rich act, and even think, differently from the poor? What makes some people break social rules and others obey them? What holds societies together? Why do they sometimes break apart? Why do all societies change over time? These are questions that sociologists ponder.

Anthropology asks similar questions, while emphasizing cross-cultural, interdisciplinary and longer-term perspectives. The discipline includes four subfields: biological anthropology, archaeology, linguistics, and cultural anthropology. This integrative and comparative approach highlights patterns of similarity and difference among human groups and helps people understand their own practices and those of others in a broader cross-cultural and historical context.

The department offers two majors and two minors. Students may choose the sociology major or the joint sociology-anthropology major. For minors, students pursue a sociology minor or an anthropology minor.

Sociology and anthropology students are supported by a committed faculty, dedicated to developing their knowledge of these disciplines. Sociology and sociology-anthropology majors at Fairfield University begin their study by taking several fundamental courses that provide them with an understanding of the basic concepts and methodologies of the field. Students build on this foundation by selecting from a wide variety of elective courses. The diversity and flexibility of the curriculum provides unique opportunities for majors and minors to work with faculty to clarify their career goals and build an excellent foundation for graduate school, or for finding careers in fields such as business, marketing and communication, criminal justice, social work, health services, and education.

Programs

- Anthropology Minor (http://catalog.fairfield.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/anthropology/anthropology-minor)
- Sociology Major (http://catalog.fairfield.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/anthropology/anthropology-major)
- Sociology Minor (http://catalog.fairfield.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/anthropology/anthropology-minor)
- Sociology and Anthropology Major (http://catalog.fairfield.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/anthropology-anzology/joint-sociology-anthropology-major)

Courses

Anthropology

AY 0010 Introduction to Four-Field Anthropology 3 Credits
Attributes: WDIV World Diversity
Who are we, where do we come? Why is life unfair, and why do intolerance, poverty and inequality persist? Anthropologists hold no monopoly on truth or explanation, but they do employ a wide range of methods to explore what it means to be human. In this introductory anthropology course we survey the four sub-fields that comprise this multi-disciplinary science: biological anthropology, archaeology, sociocultural anthropology, and linguistics. Over the course of the semester, we will explore what anthropology and its sub-fields contribute to our understanding of ourselves, our histories, and our world.

AY 0052 Culture and Political Economy 3 Credits
Attributes: MWAC Magis Core: Writing Across Curriculum
This course examines the ways in which global political economic dynamics impact local cultures. Students will begin with classic texts in social theory, examine how this theory informs contemporary debates, and look to small-scale societies in the Global South for an intimate, ethnographic perspective of our global era.

AY 0110 Biological Anthropology 3 Credits
The study of natural selection, primate evolution, and living primate societies provides a baseline from which to study the evolution of the human species. The course also traces human cultural and social development from the foraging bands of the first humans to the civilizations that appeared at the dawn of written history. Students also examine physical variation among living populations. This course meets the core natural science requirement and not the social science requirement.

AY 0111 Cultural Anthropology 3 Credits
Attributes: WDIV World Diversity
Why is there such variety in the way people live, dress, speak, eat, love and fight? This course explores the shared patterns of thought, behavior, and feelings - that is, the cultures - of a number of peoples and presents explanations for the forms they take and the differences between them. The course helps students develop a new perspective on the values and institutions of Western culture.

AY 0115 Biomedical Anthropology 3 Credits
Attributes: HSST Health Studies: Science and Technology
This seminar-style class explores biological anthropology to examine the dynamic relationship between health, biology, and culture. Across cultures, geography, and time, we uncover the underlying processes that inhibit or enhance human health. From the biology of stress to the eradication of tuberculosis and Ebola, we’ll see biological anthropology’s invaluable contributions to modern medicine, public health, and global health management. Students will learn theoretical and applied approaches to understand the evolution and ecology of disease; human development and metabolism; and sexuality and gender; as well as health policy and medical practice (in terms of cultural universals, differences, and disparities). This course meets the core natural science requirement and not the social science requirement.
AY 0130 Cultures of Africa  3 Credits
Attributes: BSFC Black Studies Focus Course, BSSS Black Studies: Social and Behavioral Sciences, WDIV World Diversity
This course explores the wealth of cultural traditions and histories from Africa. It begins with an abridged review of African history from the dawn of humankind to 21st century challenges and achievements. Then the focus shifts to regional case studies through African literature, film, and music. For the final segment of the class, students conduct and present original research on the cultural dynamics of critical issues facing contemporary Africans. Students learn and practice research methods in African Studies and Anthropology.

AY 0135 Refugees and Culture in the Modern World  3 Credits
Attributes: HACA Humanitarian Action Minor Context Course, PJST Peace and Justice Studies, WDIV World Diversity
This course provides students with an overview of refugee movements with a focus on cultural encounters across the world. Students will focus on the social integration and identity adjustments of refugees in their host communities and/or country. The course will also allow students to learn about cultural adjustments of both refugees and host communities whether it is in the United States, Europe, Middle East, or Africa. Students will explore how features of the specific societies serve to inhibit or augment cultural adjustments and meet the new needs and realities of populations in movement.

AY 0140 Anthropology of Latin America and the Caribbean  3 Credits
Attributes: WDIV World Diversity
This course examines cultural diversity in Latin America and the Caribbean. Adopting a cross-cultural, anthropological perspective the course examines Latin American and Caribbean societies before European contact, as well as the processes of conquest and colonialism. Special consideration is given to gender and gender relations, race and ethnicities, religion and religiosity, health and folk medicine, food and food cultures, globalization, tourism and trade, poverty and inequality, labor, popular culture, music, violence and security, social movements, people and the environment, and migration.

AY 0145 Anthropology of Food  3 Credits
The way humans make and consume food shapes our lives and transforms our world. From our hunter-gatherer past to your family’s most recent holiday dinner, in this course we explore the relationship between food, society, and our environment. Through cross-cultural, historical, and ecological studies, the anthropology of food reveals fascinating patterns of cooperation, inequality, and human diversity. The class is divided into three parts: making food (food production), eating food (food consumption), and being food (relationship between food and identity). Our semester includes three feast days and an off-campus field trip.

AY 0152 Islamic Societies and Cultures  3 Credits
Attributes: WDIV World Diversity
This is an anthropological inquiry into a number of Muslim societies. This course investigates the cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity within Muslim societies, while seeking to understand what they have in common with each other and with their non-Muslim neighbors.

AY 0163 Culture and Inequality  3 Credits
Attributes: PJST Peace and Justice Studies
This course focuses on the concepts of "culture" and "inequality," two terms employed to deal with "difference" in a range of intriguingly different and morally charged ways. The course explores recent work in anthropology, economics, and sociology using culture and/or inequality as a lens through which to view various issues in contemporary social theory. In the process, students work to discover what kind of lens culture and/or inequality provides, how our implicit understandings of these ideas shape how we think about the world, and how we might better use such ideas to do our thinking.

AY 0168 Sex, Gender, and Sexual Orientation  3 Credits
Attributes: WDIV World Diversity, WSGF Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Focused
Through a comparison of selected Asian, Middle Eastern, African, and Native American societies, this course explores the ways that culture can mold the biological facts of sexual difference into socially accepted behavior, creating two, and sometimes more, genders. Topics include the allocation of work, power, and prestige between men and women; the belief systems that legitimate gender roles; and some possible causes for the wide variation that exists among cultures.

AY 0175 Sustainable Development: Anthropological Perspectives  3 Credits
Attributes: EVME Environmental Studies Major Elective, EVPE Environmental Studies Elective
This course examines the concept of sustainability from anthropological perspectives. With a focus on the contested meaning of both "sustainability" and "development," students will grapple with various theoretical, methodological, and ethical perspectives on how to build a just future on a planet with finite resources. Learning is practice driven; students write blogs and reflective essays, they learn ethnographic research methods, and pursue independent research on sustainability in our campus community. Students integrate experiential learning with readings on ecology and economic development to critically examine the values, assumptions and data that underpin different perspectives on social change and the future of humankind.

AY 0180 Grant Writing for the Social Sciences  3 Credits
Attributes: EVAP Environmental Studies: Applied Professional Skills, EVPE Environmental Studies Elective, HASM Humanitarian Action Minor Skills/Method Course
This course will introduce students to the practicalities of international research, with particular emphasis on qualitative social science methods and the eventual aim of producing a viable grant proposal. The course will be taught from an anthropological perspective, but the skills developed should be broadly applicable to the social sciences and humanities.

AY 0189 Theory and Practice in Anthropology  3 Credits
This course focuses on the production of ethnographic knowledge, a form of intellectual inquiry at once art and science, evocation and explication. Emerging in the 20th century as the preeminent form of anthropological expression, ethnographies are one of the few scholarly means of understanding other cultures and societies in meaningful depth. At the same time, ethnographies reveal as much about the disciplines and societies in which they are produced as they do about distant "others."

AY 0190 Special Topics (Shell)  3 Credits
Attributes: BSFC Black Studies Focus Course, BSSS Black Studies: Social and Behavioral Sciences, WDIV World Diversity
Special Topics in Anthropology provides an opportunity for students and faculty to explore compelling themes that are not covered in the department’s regular course rotation and curriculum.
AY 0199 Philosophy and Economic Anthropology 3 Credits
Attributes: PMMP Philosophy Major: Major Philosopher
Prerequisite: PH 0101.
This course examines the economy from philosophical and anthropological perspectives. We will investigate why people produce and exchange things, why they seek to amass things in some circumstances and give them away in others, and how our modern understandings of value, debt, and rationality emerged.

AY 0200 Anthropological Research Methods 3 Credits
Attributes: HASM Humanitarian Action Minor Skills/Method Course
How does anthropological field research help us understand our lives, our communities, and our world? How might anthropological research methods help you explore and pursue your own passions or professional ambitions? In this course students conduct original anthropological field research, write an original journal article manuscript, and develop an online portfolio to share results and conclusions beyond our classroom. Over the course of our semester, students learn and practice techniques for designing, proposing, conducting, analyzing, and sharing anthropological field research. The class is divided into four sections: Developing Your Research Question, Your Anthropology Toolkit, Anthropological Analysis and Writing, and a Final Research Symposium.

AY 0399 Independent Study 1-3 Credits
Independent studies experiences provide intellectually curious students with opportunities to take the reins of their education, and delve deeply into the ideas and subjects that truly inspire them. Upon request and by agreement of an individual professor, students undertake a one-semester independent study on a defined research topic in anthropology.

Sociology

SO 0011 Introduction to Sociology 3 Credits
This introduction to sociology provides students with a sense of sociology’s orientation; its particular way of looking at human behavior in the context of people’s interaction with each other. The course emphasizes the kinds of questions sociology asks, the methods it uses to search for answers, and how it applies the answers to problems of people’s everyday lives and issues of social policy.

SO 0112 American Society 3 Credits
Attributes: ASGW American Studies: Gateway, ASSO American Studies: Sociology, UDIV U.S. Diversity
This course analyzes the dominant ideology and values that have shaped American culture – namely the Protestant ethic – and how and why these values are changing. The course also analyzes major institutional trends that have transformed and continue to transform America and the modern world - bureaucratization, industrialization, urbanization, the rise of the business corporation, science, and technology - and the effects of these institutions in producing new personality types, mass society, and rapid social change. The course provides a macro-sociological framework.

SO 0142 Sociology of the Family 3 Credits
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology, WSGC Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Component
The family is a basic social institution of all societies. This course, which examines family systems as they exist in other cultures and in times past, focuses on understanding the contemporary American family system. Students consider American patterns of dating, mate selection, sexual behavior, marriage, parenting, and aging, as well as alternative life styles and family instability.

SO 0144 Sociology of Sexuality 3 Credits
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology, WSGF Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Focused
This course explores the social construction of human sexual behavior, examining the influence of social institutions on sexuality, social responses to variations in behaviors, and the organization of sexual identities.

SO 0151 Sociology of Religion 3 Credits
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology, UDIV U.S. Diversity
This course analyzes the dominant ideology and values that have shaped American culture – namely the Protestant ethic – and how and why these values are changing. The course also analyzes major institutional trends that have transformed and continue to transform America and the modern world - bureaucratization, industrialization, urbanization, the rise of the business corporation, science, and technology - and the effects of these institutions in producing new personality types, mass society, and rapid social change. The course provides a macro-sociological framework.

SO 0161 American Class Structure 3 Credits
Attributes: NOT Applicable
This course examines the roots and structure of class in the United States and the consequences of this hierarchical arrangement on everyday life. It focuses primarily on social class; however, the dynamics and consequences of social class cannot be fully understood without addressing the complex interconnections between class, race, and gender.

SO 0162 Race, Gender, and Ethnic Relations 3 Credits
This course analyses sociological and social psychological dimensions of race relations, ethnic interaction, and the changing role and status of women. It focuses on the American scene but also examines problems of women and minorities in other parts of the world and their importance for world politics. It also considers what sociologists and social psychologists have learned about improving dominant/minority relations.

SO 0163 Urban/Suburban Sociology: NYC 3 Credits
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology, BSCC Black Studies Component Course, BSBS Black Studies: Social and Behavioral Sciences
This course explores the nature of the city and growth of metropolitan regions in the contemporary world; the ecological approach and the use of demographic data in the analysis of modern urban communities; social organization of metropolitan regions and the emergence of urban-suburban conflict; big-city politics, community control, and regional government as dimensions of organization and disorganization in city life; and city planning and urban development at local and national levels as efforts to solve the urban crisis.
SO 0165 Race, Cities, and Poverty 3 Credits  
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology, BSFC Black Studies Focus Course, BSSS Black Studies: Social and Behavioral Sciences, EDCG Educational Studies Cognate, PJST Peace and Justice Studies, UDIV U.S. Diversity  
The geography of cities is in constant flux. People move in and out, businesses open and close, city government institutes social policy in response to existing changes in different communities. Many of the changes in cities have been influenced by racial-ethnic and economic dynamics. In this course we will examine the ways race has shaped our perceptions of and responses to community. Why are urban areas "racialized"? Why does talk of the underclass imply black Americans and Latinos? We will focus primarily on black Americans, but will also consider white ethnic groups and other ethnic groups in discussion. In our examinations we will focus on case studies of urbanization and race such as post-Katrina New Orleans, southern migration to Chicago, and Bridgeport.

SO 0166 Feminism, Gender, and Everyday Life 3 Credits  
Attributes: ASGW American Studies: Gateway, ASSO American Studies: Sociology, PJST Peace and Justice Studies, WSGF Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Focused  
This course provides an introduction to the study of gender through a feminist lens. The central themes of the course are the changes and continuities of gender roles within the United States, the social processes that influence our gender identities, and the connections between gender, power, and inequality. The course addresses the ways in which the media, popular culture, work, and schools have been pivotal sites for the creation and maintenance of gender performances, and explores sites of resistance in art and activism. The course pays special attention to the ways in which race, class, and sexualities intersect processes of gender relations and social change.

SO 0169 Women: Work and Sport 3 Credits  
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology, PJST Peace and Justice Studies, UDIV U.S. Diversity, WSGF Women, Gender, and Sexuality Studies: Gender Focused  
Sex and gender stratification exists in most areas of everyday life throughout American society. This course concentrates on women in the workplace and in sport. It analyzes women’s occupational status and the accompanying roles from the colonial period to the present from a variety of theoretical perspectives. Since sport is a microcosm of society, the course treats the perceptions and experiences of female athletes in 20th-century America as a mirror of the inequality within the larger world.

SO 0171 Criminology 3 Credits  
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology  
This course examines crime rates and crime trends in the U.S. Theories of criminal behavior are critically analyzed. It also explores victimless crime, white collar crime and organized crime. Societal responses to crime and criminals are addressed.

SO 0175 Sociology of Law 3 Credits  
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology  
Based in the relationship of law and society, this course explores the meaning of law, civil disobedience, and other challenges, and law as an agent of social change. It takes as its major theme legal equality versus social inequality and analyzes this theme in terms of discrimination against the poor, women, and various racial groups. Students discuss the role of lawyers, the police, and the courts in American society in the second half of the semester.

SO 0179 Death Penalty in America 3 Credits  
Attributes: ASSO American Studies: Sociology, PJST Peace and Justice Studies  
This course is an in-depth analysis of capital punishment. The history of the death penalty and its contemporary status in the U.S. is explored. Public opinion and the decisions of the courts, prosecutors, and juries are addressed. Some of the questions raised include the following: Is the death penalty a deterrent? Is it racially biased? Does it victimize the poor? Are the innocent ever convicted and executed? What sociological factors influence clemency decisions? How is the U.S. position on the death penalty perceived by the international community?

SO 0184 Population: Birth, Death, and Migration 3 Credits  
Attributes: HSSS Health Studies: Social Science, WDIV World Diversity  
Demography, the study of population, is the basis of this course. It examines the causes and consequences of population change. The course addresses global population problems and those faced by the United States. Students analyze real demographic data during weekly demographic techniques sessions.

SO 0185 Introduction to International Migration 3 Credits  
This course examines the causes, processes, and concerns of international migration, which are explored through the use of case studies that include a wide range of countries from different world regions. These case studies include international migrants, such as refugees, labor migrants, and undocumented migrants. In addition to studying the migrants and the reasons for their international movement, participants have the opportunity to discuss opposing perspectives on the immigration policies of developed countries.

SO 0188 Contemporary Latin American and Caribbean Society 3 Credits  
Attributes: LCEL LACS Minor: Elective  
This course introduces the basic political, economic, and sociological elements of contemporary Latin America and the Caribbean. It begins with an overview of the historical events that have shaped the region. While examining the region as a whole, this course also emphasizes the political, economic, and cultural diversity that characterizes Latin America and the Caribbean. Drawing from several disciplines, while emphasizing sociological approaches, this course explains some of the positive, as well as the more dubious events in contemporary Latin American and Caribbean society. Topics include popular culture, migration, political change, regional integration, urbanization, gender, and inequality, among others. Case studies will be selected for more detailed discussion based on current events.

SO 0189 Sociology of Europe 3 Credits  
This course introduces the basic political, economic, and sociological elements of contemporary Europe. It begins with an overview of historical events that have shaped the region. While examining the region as a whole, this course also emphasizes the political, socioeconomic and more recent cultural diversity that characterizes the European continent. Topics include political developments and regional integration such as the creation of the European Union, geopolitical dilemmas, popular culture, migration, social change, public policies, inequality and secularization. A comparative macro-sociological framework will be used to discuss differences and similarities with contemporary American society.
The single most powerful force transforming the world in which we live is the accelerating process of globalization. Information from the Internet, ideas, technology, products, services (and even people, the slowest to move) are all moving within and across national boundaries every hour of every day. As Joseph Stiglitz, former chief economist for the World Bank, puts it, "Globalization is like a giant wave that can either capsize nations or carry them forward on its crest." The goal of this course is to begin to understand the complex causes and effects of globalization. What’s driving it and what kind of future is it likely to bring?

This course examines the major societal changes occurring in developing countries, seeking answers to two basic questions: To what extent are the current modernization efforts of Third World nations comparable to the earlier experience of the United States and Western Europe? How do existing inequalities and dependencies between developed countries and Third World nations affect their chances of modernizing? Students complete a semester-long Web-based study of a particular country.

This course explores the development of the social work profession emphasizing the knowledge base, theories, values, and skills that underlie generalist social work practice with individuals, groups, families, and communities. Students consider a range of social problems and social policy concerns as well as the impact of these issues on diverse client populations. The course also conducts a related exploration of the role of the social worker in agency settings and the various fields of practice.

This course explores the development of the social work profession within the context of the evolution of social welfare in the United States, emphasizing the political, economic, social, and philosophical forces that have forged social welfare policy and helped shape the social work profession. Exploration of the importance of divisions in American society regarding social justice and issues of class, race, ethnicity, and gender provide a framework through which to view current controversies such as welfare reform and the feminization of poverty.

This course introduces students to sociological perspectives on education. We will focus on the structure, practices, content, and outcomes of schooling in contemporary society. Throughout the semester, we address three fundamental questions. What are the primary goals of American education? Why are there systematic patterns of race, class, and gender inequality in education? How can we use the sociological lens to understand, contextualize, and alleviate educational problems in the real world? Drawing upon readings dealing primarily with American education, we discuss how educational experiences influence important life outcomes including lifetime earnings, health status, and interaction with the criminal justice system.
Faculty

Professors
Crawford
Mielants

Associate Professors
Brunn-Bevel
Jones
Lacy, chair

Assistant Professors
Babo
Cansoy
Rodrigues

Lecturers
Aronsen
Delfino
Quartey
Wessler
Wilson

Professors Emeriti
Fay
Hodgson
Schlichting