

SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY (SOAN)

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Sociology and anthropology are two social sciences that seek to understand the relationship between individuals and the social worlds they create and inhabit. Sociologists and anthropologists investigate how societies are organized, how cultures are reproduced, and how these processes shape individual identities.

At Guilford, our courses cover a wide variety of social groups in the United States and around the world, and we study just about every aspect of social life, including science, religion, medicine, politics, family, gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity, economic systems, and the arts. Integrating scientific and humanistic approaches, we attempt to look at past stereotypes and understand people from their own points of view. In a world characterized by rapid social and technological change, globalization, deepening inequalities, ethnic clashes, poverty, environmental degradation, and changing social norms, anthropology and sociology are more relevant than ever. Our department prepares students to critically analyze social systems and to come up with creative solutions to social problems on various scales.

Students and faculty develop close working relationships both inside and outside the classroom, and our department offers a close-knit learning environment. Our courses promote student discussions and experiential learning, and many also count toward interdisciplinary programs. Our work really gets fun once we engage with the world around us first hand. Sociology and anthropology students at Guilford have the opportunity to develop and pursue their own interests through independent studies and research, community service, internship opportunities, and study abroad. Students greatly benefit from integrating their academic training and their experiences beyond Guilford, exploring career options, and expanding their horizons. Sociology and anthropology are part of a strong liberal arts education that prepares you for work and life – anything that involves interacting with people in a diverse world.

Degree Offered

The Bachelor of Arts degree is offered in sociology and anthropology.

- Sociology and Anthropology Major (<https://catalog.guilford.edu/catalog/academic-departments-majors/sociology-anthropology/sociology-anthropology/>)
- Anthropology Minor (<https://catalog.guilford.edu/catalog/academic-departments-majors/sociology-anthropology/anthropology-minor/>)
- Sociology Minor (<https://catalog.guilford.edu/catalog/academic-departments-majors/sociology-anthropology/sociology-minor/>)

SOAN 100. Introduction to Sociology. 4.

This course will provide an introduction to the field of sociology and how it can be used in the critical examination of contemporary society. The course will explore and compare theoretical perspectives on culture, social structure and the development of the individual within the social context. The course will also have a strong emphasis on social inequality as the product of structural and belief systems, with race, class, gender and sexuality explored as central elements of social organization. Fulfills social science and social justice/environmental responsibility requirements (1998). Social/behavioral science and evaluating systems and environments (2019).

SOAN 103. Cultural Anthropology. 4.

Introduction to the study of culture and society in comparative perspective. Utilizes various approaches of anthropologists and data from societies around the world in order to illustrate the nature and functions of culture and social structures. Fulfills social science requirement (1998). Social/behavioral science requirement (2019).

SOAN 106. Introduction to African Heritage (AFAM 106). 4.

Course serves as an introduction to the geographical roots and cultural heritages of the peoples of African ancestry. It will help students to begin to explore and understand the diverse lifestyles, experiences as well as the dispersion, opportunities, challenges and concerns of peoples of African ancestry in the U.S. multicultural setting. Fulfills diversity in the U.S. and social science requirements (1998). Sociocultural and social/behavioral requirements (2019).

SOAN 150. Special Topics. 1-8.

May also be offered at 250, 350 and 450 levels.

SOAN 216. HP:The Anthropology of Colonialism. 4.

Introduces historical anthropology by exploring the socio-cultural dimensions of European colonialism from the late 15th century to the post-colonial period. The course focuses on the colonial experience in Africa, the Americas, Asia and the Middle East, particularly from the point of view of the colonized. Prerequisite: ENGL 102. Fulfills historical perspectives requirement (1998 & 2019).

SOAN 234. Culture & Sexuality in Africa. 4.

Explores how culture shapes sexual practices, identities and roles in African societies. Course topics include virginity, male and female circumcision and other rites of passage, arranged marriages, fertility, the spread of HIV/ AIDS, sexual exploitation and domestic violence, as well as lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender “queer” practices. Fulfills intercultural requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 235. African Families in Transition. 4.

This course places African families at the center of an anthropological exploration of the myriad ways of family formation and the dynamic nature of how family is defined cross-culturally. It explores how families in different African societies have adapted and continue to adjust to the changing circumstances brought on by colonialism and post-colonial conditions. Fulfills intercultural requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 245. Race and Ethnicity in Latin America. 4.

Race and ethnicity occupy center stage in Latin America's identity politics and nation-building processes. Despite the myth of racial harmony, inequalities along racial and ethnic lines shape the life-chances and daily interactions of people throughout the region. This course examines racial and ethnic politics in Latin America from a sociological stand point. We analyze racial formations and the status of Indian communities and peoples of African descent since colonial times; however, our focus is primarily on contemporary racialized structures and relations. Fulfills intercultural requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 250. Special Topics. 1-8.**SOAN 259. Global Social Issues. 4.**

This course will help you develop a basic understanding of economic and population flows around the globe and a critical awareness of your position and participation in global structures and processes. Through readings, class discussions, and critical reflections, you will gain insight into specific global social issues that affect, preoccupy, and create dissent among peoples and nations worldwide: the global assembly line/offshore manufacturing and displacement/involuntary migration. Even though we will cover only a selection of topics, you shall acquire a comprehensible picture of the complexity of global interactions and the dilemmas posed by global interconnections. Further, you will better appreciate the intersections between your biography and the global networks and currents that keep transforming people's lives all over the planet. Fulfills evaluating systems and environments requirements (2019).

SOAN 260. Independent Study. 1-8.

May also be offered at 360 level.

SOAN 261. Native North America. 4.

Introduces the complexity and diversity of native North American societies from an anthropological perspective. Emphasizes contemporary Indian communities and the dynamic process of maintaining distinctive cultural identities. Fulfills diversity in the U.S. requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 265. Racial and Ethnic Relations. 4.

A comprehensive exploration of the experience of different racial and ethnic groups in the United States and the social relations they have established with each other. The examination starts from their countries of origin, moves to their initial migration and settlement and concludes with analysis of their current economic, social and cultural situations. Fulfills diversity in the U.S. requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 267. Race and Gender in Media Focus. 4.

This course will examine the mass media as a social institution that reinforces the perception and construction of race and gender in contemporary American society. The class will discuss race and gender as socially constructed identities that can be internalized through interaction with media products. Fulfills diversity in the U.S. requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 290. Internship. 1-8.

Supervised and reported experience in social agencies, organizations or related institutional services. May also be offered at the 390 level.

SOAN 313. Sociology of Sex and Gender. 4.

Explores the social construction of masculinity and femininity within specific socio-historical contexts, with emphasis on identity formation and structural discrimination. The social organization of sexuality and gender relations within institutions such as the family, labor force and health care are also explored. Prerequisite: SOAN 100.

SOAN 321. Development Anthropology. 4.

Comparative study of planned and unplanned development, particularly as it affects rural and traditional societies. Emphasis upon the intersection of capital and technological changes and inequalities predicated on ethnicity, class and gender. Prerequisite: SOAN 103.

SOAN 322. Environmental Anthropology. 4.

Introduces environmental anthropology and examines human-environment relations and the social construction of nature in cross-cultural perspective. Explores "traditional environmental knowledge" and the relationship between indigenous peoples and environmentalism. Prerequisite: SOAN 103 or instructor permission. Fulfills social justice/environmental responsibility requirement (1998). Evaluating systems and environments requirement (2019).

SOAN 323. Gender Health and Illness. 4.

This course uses a sociological perspective to analyze the relationship between the U.S. medical system and socially constructed ideas about gender for medical knowledge and for men's and women's experiences with health and illness. A variety of topics will be analyzed such as obesity, menstruation, erectile dysfunction, and pregnancy and birth. Prerequisite: SOAN 100 or instructor permission.

SOAN 331. Latinx Migration Patterns. 4.

Explores the historical roots and the current economic and political forces, both local and global, that stimulate contemporary out-migration, return and "revolving-door" migration between selected Latin American countries and the U.S., within the larger context of U.S.-Latin America relations. Prerequisite: any SOAN course or instructor's permission. Fulfills diversity in the U.S. requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 337. Social Research Methods. 4.

Trains students in the rigorous use of sociological and anthropological methodologies to investigate the social world. Students will learn to use documents, artifacts, social practices, quantitative reasoning and the scientific process as relevant sources of research questions and tools for research design and implementation. Typically offered in the Fall. Prerequisites: Historical Perspectives, Quantitative Literacy, SOAN 100, SOAN 103 and one 200-level SOAN course.

SOAN 342. Social Theory. 4.

Provides an overview of major 19th and 20th century social theories with special attention to their assumptions and their treatment of core sociological and anthropological concerns and questions. Students will analyze how time periods influence the creation of social theories as well as the theories' practical relevance. Typically offered in the Spring. Prerequisites: Historical Perspectives, SOAN 100, SOAN 103 and one 200-level SOAN course.

SOAN 350. Special Topics. 8.**SOAN 358. African Cultures in Film. 4.**

Survey of traditional culture patterns in Africa south of the Sahara; examination of the processes of change in contemporary Africa. Profiles of African cultures as seen by anthropologists and African writers. Prerequisites: SOAN 100 or SOAN 103. Fulfills intercultural requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 360. Independent Study. 1-8.

SOAN 362. Popular Culture and Media Studies. 4.

Explores sociological theories and methods used to study popular culture and media products in relation to broader social patterns in the contemporary United States. The course includes examination of the content of popular culture products, the significance of the institutional environments of production, and patterns of audience consumption and interpretation. Prerequisite: SOAN 100.

SOAN 390. Internship. 1-8.**SOAN 416. Gender and Sociology of the Body. 4.**

This course examines feminist and sociological debates about gender and the body through a variety of topics to analyze whose bodies receive more cultural, political, media and medical attention, and why. Social contexts will be examined to discuss how and why women's bodies are defined as different than men's, as well as the implications for men's and women's daily lives. Gender equality and social change are discussed at the individual, structural and cultural levels. Typically offered in the Spring. Prerequisites: SOAN 337 and SOAN 342, or instructor permission.

SOAN 430. Inequality in Latin America. 4.

Analyzes power relationships and economic inequality in Latin America and examines the way rural and urban populations in the region cope with poverty and exclusion. The course also explores ethnic and gender relations as expressions of status inequality and the effects of global processes on patterns of stratification in the area. Typically offered in the Spring. Prerequisites: SOAN 337 and SOAN 342, or instructor permission.

SOAN 432. Women of Color in the United States. 4.

Examines the consequences of intersecting social systems of race and gender, with a focus on women of color in the United States. Guiding topics include the impact of structural context and individual agency on the shaping of gendered racial identities, experiences and social interactions. Issues of power, privilege, inequality and exclusion in feminist and anti-racist social action will also be explored. Typically offered in the Spring. Fulfills diversity in the U.S. requirement (1998). Sociocultural engagement requirement (2019).

SOAN 450. Special Topics. 1-8.**SOAN 470. Senior Thesis. 1-8.****SOAN 490. Departmental Honors. 4.**

Honors and credit for grade of B or above; credit only for grade less than B. Prerequisite or corequisite: SOAN 470.