Sociology programs\(^1\) teach the study of society and social behavior by examining the groups and social institutions that people form, as well as various social, religious, political, and business organizations. Sociologists study the behavior and interaction of groups, trace the origin and growth of the groups, and analyze the influence of group activities on individual members. Some are concerned mostly with the characteristics of social groups, organizations, and institutions. Some are more interested in the ways individuals are affected by each other and by the groups to which they belong. Others focus on social traits such as gender, age, or race, which make a difference in how a person experiences life on a daily basis. Groups that are of interest to sociologists include families, communities, tribes, gangs, and governments. Sociologists conduct surveys or use direct observation to gather the data they need. They collect and analyze scientific data about social phenomena, such as community associations, social institutions, ethnic minorities, social classes, and social change. The results of their research is used to aid educators, lawmakers, administrators, and others interested in resolving social problems and formulating public policy. Graduates who have a bachelor’s degree in sociology may find work opportunities in the areas of law (including law enforcement), marketing & sales, politics, counseling, labor relations, public relations & communications, non-profit administration, and anthropology. A graduate degree may required for work as a sociologist doing research, or teaching in college.

Programs at Montana State University\(^2\) emphasize the application of knowledge and skills to national problems and social issues. The content and organization of courses are designed to provide a base of knowledge about human interaction and societies, and to teach particular skills which are useful in interpreting social and cultural events. Thus, the course offerings include subjects such as social problems, sociology of deviance, family and society, criminology, minority groups, social change, and political sociology.

Given the broad range of specialty areas within this field, sociology students receive an education which prepares them for employment in a wide variety of occupations and also for postgraduate education in sociology, labor relations, public administration, market research, community development, urban and rural planning, and law.

Characteristics associated with success\(^1\) include an investigative nature, a desire to learn about people and cultures that are different from yours, an interest in interpreting research and data and in understanding social structures and human behavior.

You should\(^1\):

- Be able to present your research, ideas and information orally and in writing so others will understand
- Have the ability to apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense
- Have the ability to combine pieces of information to form general rules or conclusions
- Be interested in social research
- Be able to collect, analyze, summarize and present data
- Have a well-developed sense of curiosity
- Have the ability to recognize potential problems
- Be an active learner and listener
- Be a critical thinker
- Have social perceptiveness

Occupations in this field require ability to\(^1\): be curious about people, write and speak well, organize data, work carefully and in logical order, be objective when gathering information, and communicate their findings to people.

Related occupations include\(^1\):

- Archaeologist
- Foreign Service Officer
- Criminologist
- Anthropologist
- Historian
- Sociologist
- Economist
- Market and Survey Researchers
- Statistician
- Research Worker
- Social Welfare
- Teacher
- Archivist
- Curator
- Urban and Regional Planner
- Museum Technician
- Lawyer
- Paralegals
- Legal Assistants
- Judges
- News Analysts
- Reporters
- Business Consultant
- Human Resources Manager
- Census Worker
**MSU graduates (Bachelor’s Degree) were hired in the following selected fields**: 

- Equipment Operator- Gallatin County
- Care Manager- Youth Dynamics, Big Brothers Big Sisters
- Crisis Counselor- Florida Department of Children
- Direct Care Specialist- Haugbeck Support Services, Inc.
- Events Manager & Graphic Designer- Zoot Enterprises
- Flight Instructor Pilot- Paragon Air Adventures
- Front Desk Manager- Gene Cook Real Estate
- Group Home Manager- AWARE, Inc.
- Home Counselor- HRDC, Inc.
- Institutional Counselor- Western State Hospital
- Juvenile Correction Officer- CCCS Martin Hall
- Legal Intern- Youth Imperative, Inc.
- Mental Health Worker- Cleo Wallace Centers
- Nurse- Cascade City Health Department
- Mobile Assessment Counselor- Mental Health Systems, Inc.
- Patient Service Manager- Morrison Management
- Paralegal- D’Amore, Law Office of Christopher J. Gillette
- Pilot- US Air Force
- Treatment Services Technician- AWARE, Inc.

**Salary averages of survey respondents: (# of respondents in parentheses)**:

- **2010**: MT: Insufficient Data* Out of State: $27,825 (12)
- **2009**: MT: Insufficient Data* Out of State: Insufficient Data*
- **2008**: MT: $27,111 (10) Out of State: $32,909 (3)
- **2007**: MT: $21,400 (2) Out of State: $28,693 (3)

**Licensure and Certification**: Certification by the Sociological Practice Association (SPA) is necessary for sociologists in some clinical and applied sociology positions, especially at the doctoral level. Candidates usually must have a doctorate or master's degree from an accredited school and one year's experience that demonstrates their competence in clinical sociology.

*Insufficient Data*: Each year the Career, Internship & Student Employment Services Office at Montana State University conducts a survey to determine placement rates and salary survey information from recent MSU graduates. Graduates were requested to participate in the survey to provide relevant information regarding the transition from college to career/graduate school. At times, there are few or no respondents or not all respondents answer all questions. Statistics, therefore, are not always based upon the response of the total sample group and are sometimes listed as “Insufficient Data”.

**Graduates from this program entered programs of further education at these institutions**:  

- Montana State University  
- University of Washington  
- University of Tennessee

**Other Sources of Information**:  

- American Sociological Association: www.asanet.org  
- Population Association of America: www.popassoc.org  
- Social Science Research Council: www.ssrc.org  
- Department of Sociology & Anthropology- Montana State University: http://socanth.msu.montana.edu/~dept/

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2 Montana State University Department of Sociology & Anthropology

3 Montana State University Career & Internship Services  

Number of graduates/number of respondents: 2007: 18/8; 2008: 26/19; 2009: 32/12; 2010: 33/16;