

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

Drawing on the expertise and commitment of our research-active faculty, we provide excellent educational experiences to undergraduate majors, minors and MSU as a whole.

The unifying theme of the department is the study of societies—past and present—embedded in the tradition of the liberal arts.



ANTHROPOLOGY, THE STUDY OF HUMANKIND FROM A CROSS-CULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Because anthropology views humankind as both a biological and cultural organism, it combines the biological and social sciences. The broad scope of anthropological studies has resulted in most scholars specializing in one of the following four major sub-fields:

- Social and cultural anthropologists study the symbols, meanings and social practices of contemporary societies.
- Archaeologists use scientific and humanistic techniques to define and expand our picture

of past cultures, including those for whom no written record exists as well as those of the recent historic past.

- Biological anthropologists study both the evolution of humankind, and the variation and physical adaptations of modern peoples.
- Linguists study the nature and development of language, and how language is used in everyday life to structure and negotiate social interactions.



Michael Ruiz, a recent anthropology graduate, conducted undergraduate research in the field of physical anthropology.

THE ANTHROPOLOGY CURRICULUM AT MSU

The anthropology curriculum at Montana State University emphasizes each of the sub-fields of the discipline, with field and lab research opportunities in archaeology, ethnography and comparative ethnology. The content and organization of courses provide

students with an understanding of the theory and practice of anthropology, including skills useful in interpreting past social practices as well as the social and cultural constructions of historic and current-day social groups.

HOW WILL I BENEFIT FROM MY ANTHROPOLOGY DEGREE?

Given its comprehensive approach to the study of social action, anthropology provides its graduates with the opportunity to obtain an array of conceptual skills that are applicable to a wide selection of occupations.

Many businesses are beginning to appreciate the ways in which the unique anthropological perspective can contribute to their particular enterprise. An anthropology background provides students with the ability to

understand small scale social organizations of all types; it is also particularly useful for those who may find themselves interacting with members of other social groups, either foreign or domestic.

Major Options

- Anthropology (four subfields)
 - *Archaeology*
 - *Biological Anthropology*
 - *Linguistic Anthropology*
 - *Sociocultural Anthropology*
- Criminology
- General Sociology

Minors

- Anthropology
- Sociology

What can I do with a degree in sociology or anthropology?

- Admissions counselor
- Advertising manager
- Anthropologist
- Archaeologist
- Business manager
- Career/guidance counselor
- Child welfare worker
- Communications specialist
- Community affairs specialist
- Community agency director
- Cooperative Extension agent
- Cultural affairs specialist
- Editor/writer/journalist
- Fundraiser
- Gerontologist
- Government agency administrator
- Government research analyst
- Historical society director
- Hospital administrator
- Human resource administrator
- International/labor relations specialist
- Lobbyist
- Market research analyst
- Marriage counselor
- Mental health worker
- Multi-cultural educator
- Museum curator
- Nonprofit agency administrator
- Nursing home administrator
- Peace Corps worker
- Personnel manager
- Probation/parole officer
- Psychiatrist
- Psychologist
- Public administrator
- Public relations manager
- Public safety/police officer
- Rehabilitation counselor
- Researcher
- Sales representative
- School psychologist
- Social worker
- Sociologist
- Substance abuse counselor
- Teacher/professor
- Youth counselor

SOCIOLOGY, THE SCIENTIFIC STUDY OF HUMAN INTERACTIONS AND RELATIONS WITHIN A STRUCTURED SOCIETY

Knowledge developed by sociologists informs and shapes social and economic policy.

Through systematic observation, sociologists:

- Examine individuals, groups and collectives, networks, communities and large organizations, and whole societies and the world system.

- Study human behavior in families, communities, schools, legal and justice systems, religious groups, workplaces, political organizations and economic systems.
- Study cooperation, coordination, conflict, dissension, stability and change, social integration and cohesion, the diffusion of culture, deviance and social control.

THE SOCIOLOGY CURRICULUM AT MSU

- Theory and research methods so that students understand the basic ideas that are at the root of sociological inquiry and how sociologists learned what they know. Students conduct independent research under the guidance of faculty.
- Social dynamics so that students can better understand their constantly changing world and location in it.
- Social institutions so that students can more clearly see the pervasive role of social patterns and structures in their lives.
- Social inequity so that students can analyze the effects of class, race, ethnicity and gender on our society and on the lives of ordinary people.
- Other courses on a wide variety of topics including group processes, white collar crime, legal systems and the law, the family, education, religion, indigenous peoples, environment, immigration and population processes.

HOW WILL I BENEFIT FROM MY SOCIOLOGY DEGREE?

Sociology majors acquire a broad-based liberal arts education. We especially emphasize skills such as:

- Working individually and in teams
- Oral communication skills
- Synthesis of data and information
- Research and analysis

- Critical reading and thinking
- Analytical writing



Colter Ellis and Kelly Knight, both assistant professors of sociology, study victimization and its detrimental effects on health disparities in rural Montana.

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