

Sociology Department

Fulton School of Liberal Arts

PROGRAMS

MAJOR

- Sociology

MINORS

- Ethnic and Intercultural Studies
- Sociology

About the Department

Sociology is the study of human social behavior, particularly human interactions within groups, organizations, institutions and social systems. At Salisbury University, the Sociology Department offers a high-quality program grounded in critical thinking, intercultural competence, technological proficiency, research skills and social justice.

Our faculty and courses address diverse and timely topics, including environmental issues, immigration, human rights, criminal justice, social and economic inequality, globalization, race relations, gender and sexuality, education, health systems, social movements, and population change.

Teaching is our top priority. We engage students through lively class discussions, rigorous writing assignments, original research projects, internships and one-on-one mentorship. Sociology majors develop strong skills in critical thinking, problem-solving, analytical reasoning, communication, data analysis, collaboration and empathy. Recent student research projects have explored topics such as racial disparities in maternal health care, teen suicide, food deserts and media influences on substance abuse.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

“I’m incredibly fortunate to have studied in the Sociology Department at Salisbury University, as it provided a perspective that profoundly influenced my journey in both life and business. Sociology taught me to see beyond the bottom line and recognize the human element in every organization. It’s easy for some in business to fall into the trap of viewing employees as interchangeable cogs in a revenue system, but sociology helped open my eyes to a deeper understanding of people, communities and the importance of fostering meaningful relationships in the workplace.

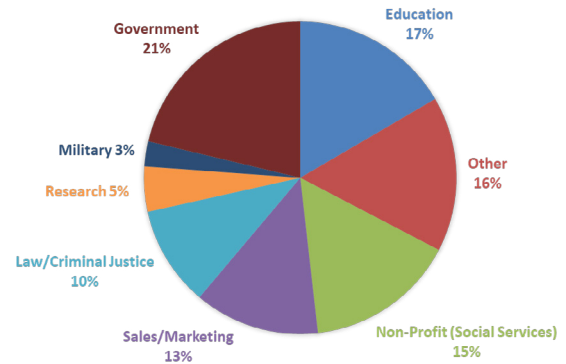
Our goal at Rise Up Coffee has never been just about selling a cup of coffee. We’ve worked to create a space where everyone – employees, customers and community members – feel valued and heard. We’re now a company not just known for our coffee, but also for our amazing team of people. The Sociology Department at Salisbury University gave me the tools to see this bigger picture and for that I’m eternally grateful.”

– Tim Cureton, CEO of Rise Up Coffee (SU Sociology Alumnus, 1996)



CAREER SECTORS

Salisbury University sociology alumni work in diverse fields, including education, government, business, health care and law. This chart shows the percentage breakdown of alumni occupations by sector.



INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS

- Civil Rights and Labor Law Office
- Department of Homeland Security
- Fenix Youth Project
- HALO Homeless Shelter
- Habitat for Humanity
- LGBTQ+ Safe Spaces Program
- Life Crisis Center (Domestic and Sexual Violence)
- Maintaining Active Citizens (Geriatric Services)
- Maryland Commission on Civil Rights
- Maryland Department of Parole and Probation
- Maryland State’s Attorney, County Offices
- Migrant Clinicians Network
- Ocean City Police Department
- Salisbury Mayor’s Office
- WMDT TV News
- Wicomico Partnership for Families, Children and Adults

Many of these placements have led to full-time employment opportunities for our graduates.

Make Tomorrow Yours

salisbury.edu/sociology



Tony Topolski Scholarship

The \$500 Tony Topolski Scholarship is awarded to sociology majors who demonstrate a deep commitment to community engagement, justice and social change.

Beyond the Classroom

Outside of the classroom, the Sociology Front Club hosts regular events on applied sociology, particularly as it's seen in current events, films, and pop culture. Additionally, our students apply their knowledge and skills in many capacities. They volunteer with at-risk youth, individuals experiencing homelessness, the elderly, domestic violence hotlines and shelters, afterschool and tutoring programs, and more. Sociology faculty are active in their own research and encourage majors to enhance their classroom experiences through study abroad, internships (35% of majors participate) and individualized study. In partnership with the Sociology Front Club, the department invites scholars, alumni, and local community leaders to discuss their work and sociology in action.

Famous Sociology Majors in U.S. History

- W.E.B. Du Bois, founder of NAACP and early sociologist
- Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Roy Wilkins, former head of NAACP
- Rev. Jesse Jackson
- Barbara Mikulski, former U.S. Senator from Maryland
- Saul Alinsky, father of community organizing
- Michelle Obama, former First Lady
- Dan Aykroyd, actor/Blues Brother
- Ronald Reagan
- Ruth Westheimer, the "sex doctor"
- Frances Perkins, U.S. Secretary of Labor, 1933-45 (and first woman in presidential cabinet)
- Kal Penn (Kalpen Suresh Modi), actor and former associate director of White House Office of Public Engagement
- Stephen Curry, Golden State Warriors
- Amanda Gorman, youngest inaugural poet

Recent Graduates

Here's what some recent graduates have done next:

Advanced Degrees

- Conflict Analysis and Dispute Resolution
- Criminal Justice
- Educational Leadership
- Health Services
- Law School
- Public Policy
- Social Work
- Sociology

Employment Examples

- AmeriCorps Member
- Autism Therapy Coordinator
- Behavioral Health Advocate
- Case Manager for Unhoused People
- Domestic Violence Victim Advocate
- Equity Program Manager
- Financial Data Specialist
- Health Services Manager
- Health Services Recruiter
- Medical Sales Representative
- Mental Health Family Advocate
- Paralegal
- Police Officer
- Program Analyst
- TV News Editor
- Youth Health Outreach Specialist

FACULTY

Chair

- Professor
Timothy Dunn, Ph.D.
University of Texas at Austin

Associate Professor

- Ryan Sporer, Ph.D.
University of Illinois at Chicago

Lecturers

- Carleigh Jones, Ph.D.
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
- Christine Vassallo, Ph.D.
University at Albany, State University of New York

Emeritus Professors

- Charles Cipolla, Ph.D.
University of Georgia
- Diane Illig, Ph.D.
University of Maryland College Park
- Shawn McEntee, Ph.D.
Ohio State University
- Allan Pappas Jr., Ph.D.
Louisiana State University

CONTACT INFORMATION

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