



Sociology Major, Urban Studies Specialization

Beginning in Fall 2026, the Sociology Department is pleased to offer a new undergraduate **Specialization in Urban Studies** for Sociology majors and minors. This specialization will reflect on student transcripts and diplomas.

This specialization will be of interest to students:

- who want to study the origins and reproduction of social inequality;
- who want to apply that knowledge to address issues of pressing public concern; and
- who have a particular interest in investigating how inequalities manifest in urban spaces, including St. Louis.

Our department's core areas of expertise are critical for urban studies: racial and gender inequality; economic sociology; work, organizations, and occupations; health; immigration; and political sociology and social movements. Our location in St. Louis provides an ideal vantage to engage the complex interplay of inequity and policy, along with the vibrant social movements that have emerged to address entrenched injustices in the city and region.

An interdisciplinary component of the specialization also ensures that students' investigation of urban studies is informed by other relevant disciplines at Washington University.

Program Requirements

- **Total Units Required:** 34-40 (credits may vary based on capstone option)
- **Grade Requirement:** Courses must be completed with a letter grad of C– or better to satisfy major and specialization requirements. Courses taken on a Pass/No Pass basis do not satisfy program requirements, save for internships used for capstone credit.

Requirements

- Students must declare as a Sociology major on Workday. As students fulfill their standard program requirements within the Sociology major, they will need to incorporate completion of three regular courses with a focus on urban issues:

1. At least one course should be taken from the Group A list of Sociology offerings below.

Code	Title	Units
EDUC 4260	Neighborhoods, Schools, and Social Inequality	3
EDUC 4470	The Political Economy of Urban Education	3
SOC 2010	The Roots of Ferguson: Understanding Racial Inequality in the Contemporary U.S.	3
SOC 2020	Order and Change in Society	3
SOC 2050	Inequality By Design: Understanding Racial/Ethnic Health Disparities	3
SOC 3810	Film and the City	3
SOC 4214	Race and Place	3

2. At least one course should be taken from the Group B list (courses outside of Sociology) offerings below.

Code	Title	Units
AFAS 2151	St. Louis Black History, Culture and Civic Engagement	3
AFAS 3070	Topics On Africa: African Urban Futures	3
AMCS 2062	Visualizing the American City	3
AMCS 3189	Engaging the City: The Material World of Modern Segregation	3
AMCS 3192	Surveillance & the City	3
ANTHRO 3275	Introduction to GIS for Anthropologists	3
ANTHRO 4314	Archaeology of St. Louis	3
ARCH 3401	Drawing On the City	3
ARCH 4441	Designing the Modern City	3
ARCH 4477	Segregation By Design: A Historical Analysis of the Impact of Planning and Policy in St. Louis	3
ARCH 4493	Landscapes Through Time: The History of St. Louis' Built Environment	3
ARCH 5468	East Asian Urbanisms	3
ARTARCH 2040	Cities and Towns of the Ancient World	3
ECON 4360	Urban Economics	3
EDUC 4220	Race, Ethnicity, and Culture: Critical Qualitative Understandings of Urban Education	3
ENST 2530	Metropolitan Environment	3
ENST 3530	Sustainable Cities	3
ENST 3610	Urban Ecology	3
ENST 3710	Introduction in GIS	3
ENST 4710	Advanced GIS	3
FRENCH 3701	In-Depth: Paris, Capitol of Modernity: A Digital 19th Century	3
HISTORY 2360	Urban America	3
HISTORY 4815	Advanced Seminar: New York, New York: The Empire City From Stuyvesant to Trump	3



HISTORY 4871	Colonial Cities and the Making of Modernity	3
POLSCI 3760	Globalization, Urbanization, and the Environment	3
POLSCI 3890	Power, Justice, and the City	3
SPAN 3611	Researching Cultures: Urban Iberian Cultures -- Barcelona and Madrid	3
URBDES 5403	Public Space and City Life: Contemporary Discourses On Public Space	3
URBDES 5412	Everyday Urbanism: Global and Local Practices	3

3. The third course may be any other class in either Group A or Group B.

Because this program is a specialization and not a separate major, students may count their Group A courses toward both their Urban Studies specialization and major requirements in Sociology. One or more of the three classes needs to be at the 3000- or 4000-level. Groups' course lists are updated annually.

Students must complete an Urban Studies capstone consisting of *one* of the following three options. Only one capstone is required (i.e., not one for Sociology and a separate one for Urban Studies).

1. A regular capstone project (1-3 credits) with an urban studies lens that draws on the current urban studies literature. Key subfields include but are not limited to the following:

- Residential, school, or other forms of segregation
- (Sub)urban social life
- (Sub)urban wealth and poverty
- (Sub)urban policy
- Global cities
- Locally embedded social interaction and community life
- (Sub)urban cultures and the meaning(s) of place
- (Sub)urban political economy
- (Sub)urban spatial arrangements
- Social impacts of local natural and built environments
- Urban, suburban, and rural neighborhood/community inequalities

2. An internship (2-3 credits for majors) relevant to urban studies, broadly defined

3. An honors thesis (6 credits) with substantial focus on urban studies. The Sociology Honors Thesis is a year-long program. Students are required to take SOC 4902 Sociology Honors Thesis in the fall and SOC 4900 Capstone Paper for Sociology Majors in the spring.

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