

# What Can I Do With A Major In... Sociology?

This is a list of job titles and job descriptions of entry-level positions for which graduates with a B.A. in sociology might be hired.

Contents:

DIRECT Career Options

LESS DIRECT Career Options

INDIRECT Career Options

For more information on these careers, use the Career Exploration Center library. See the University of Texas Department of Sociology for more information about majoring in sociology.

## DIRECT Career Options

The skills required for the jobs listed here are so similar to the skills acquired in studying sociology that a degree in the field will usually serve as a credential for getting the job.

### ELIGIBILITY WORKER

Screens prospective beneficiaries of a government program to determine their eligibility for the program's services. Works for federal, state, and local government agencies.

### INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCHER/HISTORIAN

Writes institutional and policy histories; researches and reports on current issues, long-range trends; edits public records, manages archives. Works for executive, legislative, and judicial agencies, international institutions, military services, cultural agencies, planning agencies, public archives and libraries, private industries and corporations.

### LABOR RELATIONS RESEARCHER

Assists labor relations specialists with detailed research required for contract negotiations. Prepares advisory reports on union-management agreements. Works for unions, unionized employers, and government arbitrators.

### LOBBYING RESEARCHER

Identifies information that can be used to support the positions and the efforts of lobbyists. Involves library research, attendance at conferences and committee meetings, and writing of reports. Employers include a diversity of special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

### RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Assists researchers in collecting and analyzing data, observing and interviewing people, surveying appropriate literature, and writing reports in order to advise or inform a client. Works for research and consulting firms.

#### SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Helps students to gain self-understanding, solve school-related problems, make personal and career decisions, and select appropriate educational programs. Administers and interprets standardized tests; works with school staff, students, and parents to identify and evaluate learning problems. Employers include elementary and secondary schools, technical institutes, and colleges. Typically requires course work in counseling and a credential.

#### SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Instructs high school and junior high school students in specialized subject areas. Most secondary school teachers teach several courses in a single subject area. Public schools generally require certification; private schools typically do not.

#### SOCIAL WORK ASSISTANT

Helps social workers to furnish counseling and referral services to individuals and families. Handles intake, maintains files, interacts with referral agencies, and documents cases. Works for government agencies, hospitals, and social workers in private practice.

#### SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Does sociological analysis; studies policy issues; prepares analytical reports; coordinates interdisciplinary studies. Works for "think tanks", universities, public research agencies.

#### SURVEY ASSISTANT

Assists in the design of survey interviews and questionnaires, the interviewing of subjects, the management of interviewers, collection and analysis of data, and documentation and presentation of findings. Works for government agencies and private surveying and market research organizations.

#### SPECIAL PROGRAM TEACHERS

Instructs students enrolled in special education programs. Settings (e.g., churches, social service agencies) and topics (e.g., vocational training, preschool Head Start, drug-abuse prevention) vary widely.

#### URBAN PLANNING RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Under the supervision of a city or regional planner, conducts research into the economic, environmental, and social consequences of development in order to support strategies for appropriate growth and renovation of rural, suburban, or urban areas. Typically works for a government agency. May work for a consulting or architectural firm.

### LESS DIRECT Career Options

The fit between the academic training in sociology and the job skills is still very close. However, knowledge of sociology may be less pertinent to these positions, and a degree in sociology itself may or may not serve as a credential for employment.

#### ACADEMIC ADVISOR/COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Advises students at all levels on selection of courses and majors. Sometimes involves career counseling. Sometimes requires certification.

#### AFFIRMATIVE ACTION REPRESENTATIVE

Researches, analyzes, and monitors staffing policies in order to achieve affirmative action goals. Conducts outreach activities in order to identify and attract qualified women and minority applicants for company openings. Employers in all fields.

#### CAREER PLANNING AND PLACEMENT COUNSELOR

Assists individuals in setting and implementing career and job-search goals, teaches decision-making and job-search skills, networks among employers for interviewing opportunities and internships, develops related library resources. Employers include private firms and universities and colleges.

#### EDUCATIONAL RESEARCHER

Creates new educational methods and materials; assesses the effectiveness of existing methods and materials. Employers include school districts, private schools, manufacturers of educational equipment, educational publishers, and national testing organizations.

#### FOREIGN SERVICE OFFICER

Works in foreign service posts to represent and administer United States embassies and various foreign service programs. Requires testing and security clearance.

#### HISTORICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Does historical analysis; studies policy issues; prepares analytical reports; coordinates interdisciplinary studies. Works for "think tanks", universities, public research agencies.

#### INTELLIGENCE OFFICER

Researches and analyzes a diversity of geopolitical issues on behalf of the government. Employed by intelligence services such as the F.B.I., the C.I.A., the National Security Agency, and military intelligence agencies. Work requires testing and security clearance.

#### LEGISLATIVE AIDE

Performs research, writing and liaison functions for a state or U.S. senator or congressional representative or for a municipal officeholder. Positions typically secured through direct contact with officeholder.

#### LOBBYING ORGANIZER

Distributes materials and disseminates information about a particular issue or organization, recruits volunteers, solicits funds, and organizes such efforts as rallies, letter-writing campaigns, and voter registration drives. Employers include special and public interest groups as well as professional lobbyists.

#### POLITICAL CAMPAIGN WORKER

Assists in planning, fund raising, research, writing issue statements, canvassing, and assessing voter attitudes. Works for candidates or interest groups during political election campaigns. Frequently leads to permanent positions with political organizations or officeholders.

#### VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION COUNSELOR

Assists physically, emotionally, or mentally disabled individuals to develop and carry out vocational and educational plans. Cooperates with other professionals such as physicians, placement counselors, and educators. Works for state and local rehabilitation agencies, hospitals, schools for the handicapped, and the Veterans Administration. Typically requires course work in vocational rehabilitation and a credential.

### INDIRECT Career Options

At first glance, the jobs listed may not appear to have much to do with the study of sociology. Yet there is a connection. The primary skills required in these jobs overlap substantially with some of the skills a sociology major normally acquires. For instance, an immigration agent will be more effective with a sociological understanding of foreign peoples. Or consider the many jobs that call for research skills. Sociologists are trained researchers.

#### ACTUARY

Assembles and analyzes statistics, calculates risk probabilities, and determines premium rates for policies and pension plans within the three basic areas of insurance: life, health, and property and casualty. Works for insurance companies and their regulators.

#### ALUMNI AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Produces educational programs, social events, and special tours for alumni; writes alumni publications; coordinates fund raising and reunion activities. Works for college and university alumni affairs offices.

#### ARCHIVIST/HISTORIAN

Accesses and organizes records and documents; conducts historical research to verify authenticity and significance of historical material. Conducts tours, presents lectures on historical topics. Works for libraries, historical museums, historical sites.

#### ADVERTISING MEDIA PLANNER

Determines the most cost-effective means of reaching a target market via print and broadcast media. Researches demographics of different media outlets, and analyzes demographic and budgetary aspects of advertising proposals.

#### BANK RESEARCH ANALYST

Researches, analyzes, and assesses prospective banking projects. Typically works for the bank involved.

#### BIOMEDICAL/MEDICAL RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Follows detailed instructions and prescribed procedures to assist in laboratory research. Keeps records, writes reports, often conducts library research. Works in hospitals, clinics, colleges and universities, research institutes, and private industry.

#### COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICER

Recruits and selects prospective students, creates promotional materials, makes presentations on and off campus, sets admissions criteria, reviews applications, and communicates with applicants.

#### COLLEGE DEVELOPMENT SPECIALIST

Creates and implements programs to raise funds for a college or university through corporate and alumni contributions.

#### COLLEGE FINANCIAL AID OFFICER

Helps students secure financial aid by providing appropriate information and processing a wide variety of applications.

#### COMPENSATION/BENEFITS COORDINATOR

Assists Compensation/Benefits Analyst in examining compensation packages, including wages, salaries, and benefits, and in comparing them with those in the same field to determine competitiveness and fairness. Employers in many diverse fields, including compensation consulting firms.

#### COMPUTER SYSTEMS ANALYST

Works with computer programmers to solve systems problems. Examines such problems from the perspective of organizational needs and operations. Acts as a liaison between programmers and personnel in operational areas such as marketing or finance. Employers may include any organization that relies heavily on computers, as well as computer companies per se and consulting firms.

#### CONSULTING OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR

Furnishes support services for consultants. Coordinates travel arrangements, proofreads and edits reports, develops charts and graphs to illustrate findings, maintains and operates audiovisual equipment for presentations, organizes resource libraries, etc. Works for consulting firms.

#### CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Writes press releases, speeches, annual reports, and other material to promote a corporation and its image. Works for corporations in all fields.

#### CORRECTIONS OFFICER

Maintains order in a penal facility, enforces rules and regulations, and supplements counseling provided by psychology professionals.

#### CORRESPONDENT/STRINGER

Writes freelance reports for one or more publications. Usually has special knowledge of the subject or geographic area covered. Works as an independent contractor.

#### ENERGY RESEARCHER

Researches a variety of issues involved in working with six major types of energy: oil and gas, coal, hydroelectric, nuclear, solar, and "alternatives" such as wind, tide, and geothermal. Works for producers, government agencies, consulting firms, and lobbying groups.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL RESEARCHER

Researches, develops, and presents information regarding environmental issues in fields such as: earth, marine and atmospheric sciences; mining; forestry; public works; and parks, wildlife, and water management. Works for government agencies, consulting firms, citizens' groups, research laboratories, scientific associations, and industry.

#### FILM RESEARCHER/COPYWRITER

Reviews scripts, checks for factual and technical accuracy, rewrites copy, assists in creating storyboard representations of scenes. Relevant course work or prior experience preferred. Works for entertainment, documentary, educational, and industrial film producers.

#### FINANCIAL ANALYST

Assesses the feasibility and profitability of specific financial operations, programs, and transactions. Works for corporations, government agencies, investment banks, and brokerage firms. Usually requires relevant course work.

#### FREELANCE WRITER

Writes for publications on an assignment basis for a negotiated fee, usually after submittal of a query letter proposing ideas for articles or stories. Typically works as an independent contractor.

#### GENEALOGICAL SERVICES SPECIALIST

Researches genealogies, family and community histories. Writes, edits, publishes. Markets genealogical services. Works for private genealogical services firms.

#### HISTORICAL MUSEUM ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Responsible for organizational administration; analyzes, preserves, displays, and interprets historical material; publicizes programs; researches and produces presentations and exhibits. Works for museums of history and for historical exhibition projects.

#### HISTORICAL PROJECTS COORDINATOR

May perform diverse duties: editing, preservation, research, writing, media presentations. Often also manages and budgets for project activities, administers grants. Employers include universities, historical societies, foundations, government agencies, etc.

#### HISTORICAL SOCIETY ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Assists in management of historical resources and personnel, provides services and information to the public and to scholars; promotes interest in history; edits publications; provides a forum for historical meetings and activities. Works for private historical societies, professional associations, and government historical commissions.

#### HOUSING AND STUDENT LIFE COORDINATOR

Administers housing services and produces special programs to promote positive interaction on campus. Works for universities and colleges.

#### HUMAN RESOURCES RECRUITER

Interviews applicants on college campuses, at employment fairs, at trade and professional meetings, and in the office. Promotes effective relations with colleges, universities, and other institutions that supply prospective employees. Positions exist in many settings, including search firms.

#### IMMIGRATION AGENT

Assists in the regulation of immigration into the United States, including prevention of illegal immigration. May serve as a publicist, a translator, or a border patrol officer. May provide special services to refugees. Employed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the U.S. Department of Justice.

#### INVESTMENT BANKING ANALYST TRAINEE

Completes basic research required for investment banking transactions between institutions with long-term capital needs and major investors. Researches both broad industries and the specific financial status of particular institutions, and prepares documents and reports for staff and clients.

#### JUDICIAL CLERK

Performs clerical duties, schedules calendars, keeps records, and does research for federal, state, and local courts and judges.

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICER

Performs a variety of enforcement and investigative activities. May involve computer analyses. Works for federal, state, and local police departments and for special enforcement agencies such as the FBI, tobacco and firearms, drug enforcement, border patrol, etc.

#### MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT

Undertakes the preliminary research for a market study, gathering data concerning competitors' products, organizing existing sales records, etc. Also assists in writing final project reports. Works for market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

#### MARKET RESEARCH ASSISTANT ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Assists Account Executive in liaison work with clients and helps to coordinate studies. Studies include analysis of sales records, surveying attitudes and opinions, and test marketing. Positions exist in market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturing, and retailing.

#### MARKET RESEARCH INTERVIEWER

Conducts interviews to acquire statistical data pertaining to potential buying behavior, consumer attitudes, and other marketing issues. Works for market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

#### MARKET RESEARCH PROJECT SUPERVISOR

Under direction of an Account executive, coordinates the efforts of interviewers, tabulators, and coders in conducting a market research study. Employers include market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

#### MARKET RESEARCH STATISTICIAN

Provides guidance in a market study, ensuring that the results obtained are valid and worthy of interpretation. Positions exist in market research firms, advertising agencies, manufacturers, and retailers.

#### PARALEGAL

Performs preparatory work required to research a case, develops documentation required to write a brief. May interview prospective witnesses. Works for private law offices, law firms, prosecutors, and public defenders.

#### POLICY AND PROCEDURES ANALYST

Writes manuals on internal operating procedures and policies. Works for employers in all fields.

#### PRESCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER

Teaches basic academic and social skills to young children. Often teaches a variety of subjects to a single class or grade level. Public schools generally require certification; private schools typically do not.

#### PUBLIC AFFAIRS COORDINATOR

Creates, implements and coordinates a service to a community. May involve fund raising for a charity, overseeing a scholarship fund, operating a service-oriented program or facility, etc. Employers include nonprofit organizations, social service agencies, and the public affairs sections of commercial businesses.

#### PUBLIC RELATIONS/PUBLIC INFORMATION SPECIALIST

Assesses the public relations needs of an organization, and plans and implements programs to meet them. Distinct from advertising. Makes public appearances, produces special events, and prepares press releases and packets to generate favorable free publicity. Works for professional agencies, for businesses of all kinds, and for nonprofit and social service organizations.

#### PUBLICATIONS RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas: maintains research files on topics and people; checks stories for accuracy. Works for newspaper, magazine, or book publishers.

#### RADIO/TELEVISION RESEARCHER

Researches story and script ideas for broadcast media. Maintains research files on topics and people; checks stories for accuracy. Works for radio and television producers.

#### REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT RESEARCHER

Explores the real estate needs of particular communities, gathers information about available parcels of land, and explores the market feasibility of proposed projects. Works for real estate developers.

#### SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATOR

Develops and administers special education programs. Settings (e.g., churches, social service agencies, youth organizations) and topics (e.g., therapeutic arts-and-crafts, drug-abuse education, athletic programs) vary widely.

#### STUDENT ACTIVITIES ADVISOR

Administers various activities for college students, usually extracurricular. Positions include fraternity/sorority advisor, disciplinary advisor, foreign student advisor, student publications advisor, and so forth.

#### STUDENT UNION COORDINATOR

Operates facilities and furnishes services for students through a college union or student center. Includes bookstore management, conference and special classes coordination, food services and recreational services.

#### TECHNICAL WRITER

Researches, writes, and edits publications that communicate scientific and technical information to readers with no technical background. Employers include corporations, professional associations, and government agencies.

#### TELECOMMUNICATIONS ANALYST

Maintains existing telecommunications systems and researches, plans, and implements new ones. Acts as a liaison between the employer, systems, vendors, and consultants. Assesses the employer's telecommunications needs, analyzes system use, supervises and trains users and maintenance staff. Works for organizations with complex telecommunications needs.

#### TRADE SHOW COORDINATOR

Directs the display of exhibits in trade shows, promoting specialized sales within an industry. Employers include trade show service companies and high-tech manufacturers.

#### UNDERWRITER TRAINEE

Assists in determining whether an insurance company will take on a particular risk. Analyzes actuarial studies and other pertinent information, prices policies in an attempt to balance risk and the need for profit, and answers inquiries from agents and clients. Works for insurance companies and reinsurance companies (which underwrite other insurance companies in cases of very high risk).