Sociology is the study of individuals, cultures, and groups. We study the social characteristics of individuals, the power dynamics that emerge, inequality among members, and how groups, institutions, and societies change over time. Sociology at RU focuses on **Applied Sociology**, a field that provides high-demand skills and training for successful careers in a diverse and global society. Sociologists produce knowledge that is useful to **organizations, businesses, and communities** in their efforts to build programs, make decisions, assess actions, and solve problems. Through our **Center for Social and Cultural Research (CSCR)** and our required **practice experience** students have the opportunity to apply what they learn in classes and to gain research skills and experience.

**Program in Public Sociology**

Students who complete the Sociology Major with the requisite courses in SOCY 110 (Introduction to Sociology), and either SOCY 493 (Practicum in Sociology) or SOCY 499 (Internship), also will be completing a Program in Public Sociology that has been accredited by the Commission on the Accreditation of Programs in Applied and Clinical Sociology (CAPACS).

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**Undergraduate Program**

The Department of Sociology promotes a challenging atmosphere in which students are encouraged to recognize, understand, and think critically about social processes, issues, and cultural diversity. Sociology at RU teaches students how to gather, analyze and interpret qualitative and quantitative data.

We teach from the philosophy that active engagement in real-world research enhances employment opportunities and opens doors to graduate school. Sociology at RU is dedicated to graduating practitioners able to infuse their research with an understanding of the complexities of social issues. Leaders of the 21st century will possess the ability to synthesize seemingly disparate ideas and information, see relationships and patterns in that material, and bring meaning to observations. Sociology at RU teaches these skills.

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**Bachelor’s Degree Requirements**

- **120 Credit Hours**
- 43 to 45 credit hours of Core Curriculum coursework is required for either the B.A. or the B.S. degree as well as 36 credit hours in required Sociology coursework and an additional 39 to 41 credit hours of elective coursework, though a minor or double-major is highly suggested to support, challenge and make the student much more marketable upon graduation.

   **Bachelor of Arts Degree (B.A.)**
   - Six to eight hours of study in one foreign language

   **Bachelor of Science Degree (B.S.)**
   - Six to eight hours of additional coursework from a selection of approved courses.

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**Required Sociology Coursework**

- SOCY110. Introduction to Sociology
- SOCY250. Social Inequality
- SOCY365. Society and Individual
- SOCY360. Sociological Theory
- SOCY380. Introduction to Social Research Methods
- SOCY480. Survey Research Methods
- SOCY497. Senior Seminar

15 credits in Sociology Electives with four courses at the 300-400 level to focus your area of expertise. Three hours must be an internship or applied sociology experience selected in consultation with Dr. Roby Page, Departmental Advisor. See Catalog for details.

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**Minor in Sociology**

- SOCY 110. Introduction to Sociology
- SOCY 210. Social Problems or SOCY 250. Social Inequality
- SOCY365. Society and the Individual

Three additional Sociology electives must include two courses at the 300-400 level. See Catalog for details.
Internship Opportunities
Majors are required to participate in a practice experience — either an internship (SOCY 499) or a Practicum course (SOCY 493). Recent placements for internships include: Women’s Resource Center of the New River Valley, National Opinion Research Center, Boys & Girls Clubs SW Virginia, AFLAC, New River Community Services, RU SustainABILITY Office, and Center for Survey Research at VT.

The RU Sociology Club is open to all students, a Sociology major or minor is not required. Club members participate in field trips and social activities as well as attend conferences and guest lectures.

Faculty-Student research
Students are encouraged to get involved in collaborative research with faculty and the community through the Center for Social and Cultural Research (www.radford.edu/cscr). Recent projects include: program assessment for the Radford Women’s Resource Center, customer satisfaction surveys for the Radford University Disability Resource Office and Student Health, and consulting for the New River Historical Society and the Wilderness Road Regional Museum.

Careers in Sociology
Sociology is a cutting-edge discipline. Organizational leaders depend on survey data and statistical analysis for making sound decisions. Equally important, workplaces are culturally diverse settings serving a clientele with varied and multiple needs. In our data-driven and globalized world, Sociology is a high demand career field. Recent graduates have gone on to these positions: Survey Researcher, Research Assistant/Data Analyst, University Admissions Counselor, Market Researcher, Recruiter, Community Development/Urban Planner, Environment Specialist, Public Relations Specialist, and Graduate student in Sociology.

Sociology Faculty
Dr. Joanna Hunter  
Assistant Professor
Dr. Mary B. LaLone  
Professor
Dr. Elizabeth Lyman  
Chair and Associate Professor
Internship Coordinator
Mr. Steve McGlamery  
Instructor
Dr. Jeanne Mekolichick  
Professor
Dr. Roby Page  
Associate Professor
Departmental Advisor
erpage@radford.edu
Dr. Amy Sorensen  
Assistant Professor
Dr. Melinda Wagner  
Professor Emerita
Dr. Allison Wisecup  
Assistant Professor
Additional Instructors:
Dr. Quenton Keatts
Mr. Devon Lee
Dr. Kristin Richardson
Mr. Will Taggart
Ms. Kathryn Van Patten
Alumni Profiles
They (the folks at RTI, International) were all incredibly impressed by the amount of experience that I had in the CSCR and on my own project. Nearly everyone that interviewed me said that we must have a phenomenal department (which we do)! ~ Caitie Hennessy, class of 2011, Public Health Analyst, RTI Intl.
I feel like I had the upper hand in my graduate classes because of my coursework in Sociology at RU. ~ Amy Dove, class of 2011, Counselor Education Masters student at Virginia Tech.
The research, writing and critical thinking skills that I gained in the Sociology Department have helped me transition to graduate school. There is a stark contrast in my level of preparation for graduate level work and other students in my program, which I attribute to the faculty and curriculum of RU sociology. ~ Michael King Gibbs, class of 2012, Public Policy Masters student at George Mason University.
The Sociology department at RU really prepared me for the professional workforce. It meant a lot having faculty who actually cared, respected, and guided me even when it was not his or her primary responsibility. I now have co-workers (at the CRA) who wish they had instead graduated from the Sociology Department at RUI ~ Heather Wright, class of 2012, Center for Evaluating the Research Pipeline (CERP)/Computing Research Association.