

Which Sociology Program is Right for You?

McMaster offers **two** different Sociology Honours BA programs

Compare key aspects of the programs to decide which one is right for you. For more information about the programs, contact:

The Department of Sociology

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Overview of the Programs

	Honours Sociology BA	Honours Sociology Specialist Option BA
Program Objective	<p>This program provides a general background in sociology.</p> <p>It is designed for students who want a broad understanding of social issues in preparation for further study or employment.</p>	<p>This program provides a more comprehensive background in theories, methods, and areas of study associated with sociology.</p> <p>It is designed for students who are considering graduate work in sociology or students who are seeking to develop enhanced academic skills in preparation for other areas of study or employment.</p>
Program Admission	Entry to either sociology program requires completion of Level I with a Grade Point Average of at least 5.0, including a grade of at least C in SOCIOL 1Z03 or SOCIOL 1A06 A/B.	
Combined Program	It is possible to combine either sociology program with another subject (if admission requirements for the Honours program in the other BA subject have been satisfied).	
Program Length	Each program, including any combined program, has a four-year duration (Level I, Level II, Level III, and Level IV).	



Features of the Programs: **Courses and Requirements**

	Honours Sociology BA	Honours Sociology Specialist Option BA
Types of Courses	<p>Each program includes lecture, seminar, and directed research courses. Lecture courses, in which a professor primarily focuses on presenting information to many students, exist at all levels. There could be well over 100 students in some lecture courses at lower levels (which may include small group tutorials), but lecture courses in Level IV are restricted to 40 students. Offered only at Level IV, seminar and directed research courses provide a more personal learning experience.</p> <p>Seminar courses involve discussions between a professor and up to 25 students. There is only one student in each directed research course; a student has the opportunity to undertake an individual research project and write a paper under the supervision of a sociology professor. The student must approach a sociology professor who specializes in the research area of interest and get permission from that professor to take a directed research course.</p>	
Selection of Courses	<p>In all four years of the Honours Sociology program, students take lecture courses. However, at Level IV, students may also take one seminar course or one directed research course.</p>	<p>In the first three years of the Honours Sociology Specialist Option program, students take lecture courses. However, at Level IV, students primarily take seminar courses or directed research courses.</p>
Theory Requirements	<p>Two courses on sociological theory in second year (2KK3 and 2LL3).</p>	<p>Two courses on sociological theory in second year (2KK3 and 2LL3). One additional theory course in third year (from a choice of 3A03 or 3P03).</p>
Methods Requirements	<p>One course on sociological research methods in second year (2Z03) and one additional methods course in third year (3FF3).</p>	<p>One course on sociological research methods in second year (2Z03); two methods courses in third year (3FF3 and a choice of either 3O03 or 3W03); and one methods course in fourth year (4FF3).</p>
Level IV Requirements	<p>One required fourth year lecture course (4HH3); two additional lecture courses drawn from the Level IV Sociology lecture course list; and one course drawn from the Level IV Sociology lecture, seminar, or directed research course lists.</p>	<p>Two courses drawn from the Level IV Sociology seminar or directed research course lists; one additional course drawn from the Level IV Sociology seminar, lecture, or directed research course lists.</p>



Features of the Programs: **The Learning Experience**

	Honours Sociology BA	Honours Sociology Specialist Option BA
Class Sizes	Due to the emphasis on lecture courses, this program features classes with larger enrollments (even in Level IV). However, there are opportunities for students to take some smaller classes at various levels.	This program offers more opportunities to take classes with smaller enrollments. Many Level III required theory or methods courses are likely to be smaller than other lecture courses, and Level IV of this program emphasizes the small class experience. Smaller classes provide more opportunities for students to interact with professors, enabling professors to personally assess the skills and behavioural qualities they have to comment on in reference letters for employment or entry to further education.
Academic Assessment	Larger class sizes in lecture courses generally mean that tests or exams are likely to emphasize multiple-choice questions (although there may also be a written component, such as some short answer questions). There is often a major written assignment in these courses, and some other forms of evaluation may be utilized (including tutorial participation).	Smaller class sizes in some lecture courses may mean that tests or exams are more likely to feature short answer questions or essay questions. Seminar courses in Level IV may not even include tests or exams. Work in seminar courses tends to focus on writing papers, giving presentations, and actively participating in discussions or debates.
Learning Goals	In light of the larger class sizes, this program has a greater emphasis on learning that involves understanding and processing sociological ideas.	The smaller class sizes in this program permit a greater emphasis on learning that involves application, analysis, and evaluation of sociological ideas.



The Programs in Relation to Skills and Careers

	Honours Sociology BA	Honours Sociology Specialist Option BA
Development of Skills	Each program provides a solid background in sociology and the opportunity to develop skills that are crucial for further education and valued by employers. As described below, the skills emphasized vary by the nature of each program.	
	<p>The Honours Sociology program aims to develop skills that students need as they directly enter the work world or pursue further education.</p> <p>These skills include critical thinking skills, problem-solving skills, research skills, analytical skills, organizational skills, time-management skills, writing skills, speaking skills, and other skills that employers are seeking in job candidates.</p>	<p>The Honours Sociology Specialist Option program develops the same skills as the Honours Sociology program, but it has a stronger emphasis on preparation for further education.</p> <p>Some students may go on to graduate level Master's programs in areas such as sociology, social psychology, or social work.</p> <p>Other students may go on to professional schools offering training in areas such as law, teaching, or business.</p> <p>The greater emphasis on methods courses in this program provides more opportunity to develop marketable research skills.</p> <p>The smaller class sizes in this program enable greater opportunity to develop the strong analytical, writing, speaking, and presentation skills desired by graduate programs, professional schools, and employers.</p>
Preparation for Further Education and Careers	<p>This program offers general preparation for the work world and general preparation for further career training in a variety of areas (including law, teaching, policing, or other areas that may require or benefit from knowledge of social issues).</p> <p>There is a possibility that graduate schools and sociology departments might view the program as acceptable for entry to graduate level training in sociology, but the Honours Sociology Specialist Option provides stronger preparation for this training.</p>	<p>Due to the stronger emphasis on theory and methods as well as writing and speaking skills, this program offers excellent preparation for further training in sociology or other subjects at the graduate level.</p> <p>The program provides an enhanced foundation for students who are pursuing graduate or professional training and careers in areas that heavily involve evaluation and communication as well as knowledge of social issues (e.g., law, teaching, research, journalism, counselling, or business).</p>

