



Sociology and Future Study and Career Paths

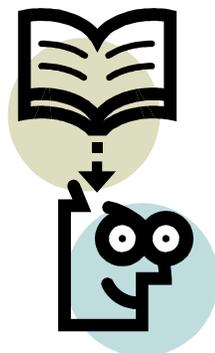
Sociology and Careers

The Sociology Department at University of Limerick is the newest department of Sociology in the Republic of Ireland. Sociology is offered at undergraduate level in a range of degree programmes and at postgraduate level. The Sociology faculty at University of Limerick has a wide range of teaching and research interests which are reflected in the content of modules available to Sociology students. As well as modules in theory and research methods we offer, amongst others, modules that examine the media, gender, education, work, development, health and poverty. The Department of Sociology is committed to excellence in teaching and two members of the department have been awarded university prizes for the quality of their teaching.

The Sociology faculty at University of Limerick are engaged in an exciting range of research projects. Faculty have advised a wide range of community and state bodies in the mid-west region and beyond. The department has strong links with Human Geography and Women's Studies. A more detailed account of faculty teaching and research interests is to be found on www.ul.ie/sociology. Our website is updated regularly with information for undergraduate and postgraduate sociology students. We hope that you will join us in the study of this exciting, challenging and rewarding discipline at the University of Limerick.

In this short booklet:

- **We discuss the kinds of career and study paths that Sociology graduates may pursue**
- **We provide a range of testimonials from UL Sociology graduates on how Sociology proved to be important in terms of their career choices.**



"I went to college to study HPSS and become a historian but did Sociology as a subject in first year. The way that it helped to explain and make sense of the world around me really appealed to me and I decided to take it as my major subject. I loved the subject throughout college and really enjoyed interpreting the world in which I live through the various sociological tools which I was taught in UL.

Studying Sociology brought me to the work I do now and gave me a deeper understanding of social exclusion. Being a Sociology student definitely influenced me to work in the area of Community Development."

-Karen O'Donnell-O'Connor (Community Development Worker, Limerick).

CAREER AND STUDY PATHS USING SOCIOLOGY

Entering the labour market with an undergraduate sociology degree

As a sociology graduate you will have acquired a number of valuable skills and competencies which are of interest to employers. The Department of Sociology at the University of Limerick provides among the most extensive training in research methods available to sociology undergraduates in Ireland. Those who major in sociology will have received instruction in both qualitative and quantitative research methods, including interviewing, questionnaires, statistical and textual analysis. Use of the sociological imagination develops skills in critical thinking. Sociology coursework promotes skills in reasoning and argumentation as well as information retrieval and synthesis. Sociology graduates are expected to have excellent writing skills and sociology tutorials focus in particular in providing an opportunity to develop competencies in verbal argumentation. Sociology also fosters cultural awareness and an appreciation of diversity, which is essential in a globalising marketplace. Such skills are particularly attractive to employers who are seeking well-rounded individuals, with strong analytical, communication and people skills, an ability to challenge traditional assumptions and to 'think outside of the box'. Potential private sector employers may be found in areas as diverse as management consultancy, recruitment, insurance and banking. Check out graduate employers such as KPMG, Accenture, Bank of Ireland, Brightwater Recruitment Specialists, Citi, Commission for Energy Regulation, Ernst and Young, IBM, Merill Lynch, UBS AG, VHI and BT. Graduate employment opportunities are also available in the public sector in Irish government departments, local authorities, city councils and country councils through Ireland's public appointments service.

"I first studied Sociology during my undergraduate degree in Public Administration. As the degree was quite broad I had a variety of different subjects, which were from both practical and thought-provoking viewpoints. Subjects such as Economics, Law and Public Administration gave me the opportunity to learn how public bodies and governments work. They provided a strong foundation on how legislation and policy is made and how the principles of economics can often underpin their implementation. Sociology, on the other hand gave me the opportunity to step back from the hard cold facts and to see what impact society as a whole has on the individual. In particular it gave me the opportunity to examine the key characteristics that make up groups in society. In looking at these groups it became evident that society in the way in which it is structure, often presents these groups with a set of individual challenges.

After my degree, my interest in Sociology really took hold when I undertook the MA Sociology (Applied Social Research) course. This course was extremely practical as it gave me a wide range of research skills along with the opportunity to examine the influence of social change and social exclusion on different groups in society. The class size was conducive to informal and formal learning in that while we spent time looking at theoretical frameworks we also spend a great deal of time discussing our individual experiences of society. These informal discussions were thought provoking and gave as much food for thought as the formal learning process."

- Naomi Feely (Researcher, The Housing Agency).

Entering the labour market with a postgraduate qualification

Many graduates of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences will complete a postgraduate degree to enable them apply directly upon graduation to positions which require more specialised qualifications. Sociology graduates who choose to take this route will find a wide variety of opportunities open to them; graduates have the option of selecting a postgraduate programme which leads to a specialism within sociology or they may use their undergraduate degree in sociology to apply for a postgraduate programme in a cognate or related discipline.

"I graduated from the University of Limerick in 2003, majoring in Sociology. Currently, I am manager of a not-for-profit, locally based agency, with a focus on children that are experiencing isolation and social and economic deprivation. As a leaving cert student the concept of Sociology meant nothing to me, however, after attending my first lecture I was hooked! For me, Sociology is not just a subject, it is a way of thinking and looking at the world around us. It gave me the skills and capacity to contemplate our local communities within the context of a global world and the belief that communities have the capacity to effect real positive change. The uniqueness of studying Sociology at the University of Limerick is that students leave with not just a new way of thinking but also with a 'trade', of which I have been able to build a productive and enriching career."

- Ciara Kane, (Co-Ordinator, Limerick County Childcare Committee)

Postgraduate programmes in cognate or related disciplines and related career prospects

Sociology majors are eligible to apply for postgraduate programmes in a wide-range of related or cognate disciplines, including programmes which offer career prospects in:

- ◆ **Applied behavioural analysis**
- ◆ **Civil service**
- ◆ **Counselling**
- ◆ **Criminology**
- ◆ **Diplomatic service**
- ◆ **Human Rights**
- ◆ **International development agencies**
- ◆ **Market research**
- ◆ **Print and broadcast journalism**
- ◆ **Psychotherapy**
- ◆ **Public relations**
- ◆ **Urban and Regional Planning**

*** Please note that some programmes may require a Major in Sociology.**

"In 2002, I embarked on a career change when I decided to leave my job in the international financial sector in Dublin in order to undertake the Masters in Sociology (Applied Social Research) in UL. One of the main reasons for doing so was because I wanted to have the opportunity to explore some interesting issues I saw emerging in Irish society at that time, that were of relevance to not just my own life, but to Irish society as a whole.

The Masters in Sociology provided me with the opportunity and skills to do this. Since completing the Masters, I have worked on many research projects ranging from large-scale national research projects in Trinity College and UL to smaller community-based projects undertaken on behalf of local community and voluntary groups. Some of the issues I have explored include educational disadvantage; adult literacy; intercultural education; diversity and integration; social exclusion of particular groups; and community development.

I am now a Research and Evaluation Officer in an organisation which aims to support social inclusion in Limerick City, and where I can use the knowledge, skills, and research experience I have gained since I first started the Masters in Sociology to undertake and support research into social inclusion-related matters in Limerick City"

- Helen Fitzgerald (Research & Evaluation Officer, PAUL Partnership, Limerick)

Postgraduate programmes in sociological specialisms and applied sociology, and related career prospects

Sociology majors who wish to pursue a career in sociology or applied sociology can also access a wide variety of career options through postgraduate study. Your choice of postgraduate programme may orient you towards a career in which you have opportunity to research and generate new knowledge about key social issues, such as integration, obesity, poverty or education. You may have the opportunity to contribute to solutions to pressing social problems such as the spread of HIV/AIDS or racism. Depending on your career path you may find yourself contributing to and informing the content of government policy and legislation on these and other issues. Alternately, you may choose a specialism which enables you to work with directly with the public on a daily basis, such as social work, community work, youth work and probation. Graduates who specialise within sociology and in applied sociology sometimes work in the private sector, but more commonly locate themselves in the third sector and in the public sector and may also find opportunities in the management of such organisations.

Some of the careers prospects resulting from postgraduate programmes in sociology and applied sociology include:

 **Advocacy**

- ◆ Community development
- ◆ Equality training/auditing
- ◆ Probation
- ◆ Public sector management
- ◆ Social epidemiology
- ◆ Social gerontology
- ◆ Social policy analysis
- ◆ Social research
- ◆ Social work
- ◆ Third level teaching
- ◆ Third sector management
- ◆ Youth work

Graduates of sociology at the University of Limerick, who have completed postgraduate qualifications in sociology and applied sociology, have gone on to work for such organisations as:

- ◆ Centre for Housing Research
- ◆ Combat Poverty Agency
- ◆ Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, UCC
- ◆ Disability Support Services
- ◆ Economic and Social Research Institute
- ◆ Enable Ireland
- ◆ Health Services Executive
- ◆ Limerick County Childcare Committee
- ◆ Mary Immaculate College
- ◆ National Suicide Research Foundation
- ◆ OPEN
- ◆ Paul Partnership
- ◆ Pobail
- ◆ Universidad de Celaya
- ◆ University of Limerick

Listed below are some postgraduate programmes to which graduates of sociology at the University of Limerick can apply. Please note that a major in sociology may be required to apply for these programmes.

Listed below are some postgraduate programmes to which graduates of sociology at the University of Limerick can apply. Please note that a major in sociology may be required to apply for these programmes. Most programmes will require a minimum of a 2.2. or a 2.1. degree award. Where we are aware of additional eligibility criteria these are listed.

Name of programme	Length	Offered by	For further information
M.A. Sociology (Applied Social Research)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/sociology/ma.html
M.A. in Women's Studies (FT)	1 year full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. Peace and Development	1 year full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. Community Development	2 years full-time	NUIG	http://www.go4th.ie/socpol/ma_comm_dev.html
Graduate Diploma / Masters in Health Education and Promotion	2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
Graduate Diploma/ M.A. in Journalism (FT/PT)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
Graduate Diploma/ M.A. in Technical Communication (FT/PT)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
MA in Humanistic and Integrative Psychotherapy (Sociology graduates may be required to first complete foundation level training in counselling skills)	3 years part-time	UL	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/College%20of%20Education/MA%20in%20Humanistic%20and%20Integrative%20Psychotherapy%20(3%20years%20PT)
Graduate Diploma/ M.A. in Partnership Studies (FT/PT)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
Graduate Diploma/ Masters in Public Administration (FT/PT)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
Bachelor of Laws (Graduate Entry) (LLB) (FT)	2 years full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/

			ourses/ http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. in European Integration (FT)	1 year full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. in Language, Culture and Globalisation (FT)	1 year full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. in International Studies (FT)	1 year full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. in Peace and Development Studies (FT)	1 year full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. in E-Learning Design and Development (FT/PT)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. in International Tourism (FT/PT)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.Sc. in Work and Organisational Psychology (FT/PT) Applicants should also have Psychology.	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
Graduate Diploma in Business Administration (FT)	1 year full time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
Graduate Diploma in Computing (FT)	-	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
Graduate Diploma in Localisation Technology (FT/PT)	1 year full time 2 years part-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.Sc. / MA in Interactive Media (FT)	1 year full time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20School/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.Sc. in Occupational Therapy (FT)	2 years full-time	U.L.	http://www.ul.ie/web/WWW/Services/Research/Graduate%20Sch

			ool/Postgraduate%20Courses/
M.A. (Health Promotion [full-time])	1 year full-time, 2 years part-time	NUIG	http://www.go4th.ie/healthpromotion/
M.A. (Journalism)	1 year full-time	NUIG	http://www.go4th.ie/ma_journalism.html
M.A. (Literature & Publishing)	1 year full-time	NUIG	http://www.go4th.ie/english/ma_lit_pub.html (check)
M.A. (Social Work)	2 years	NUIG	http://www.go4th.ie/socpol/msw.html
M.A. (Gender, Globalisation, and Rights)	1 yr full-time 2 years part-time	NUIG	http://www.go4th.ie/womens_studies/
M.A./Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (Digital Media)			http://go4th.ie/filmschool/ma_digital.html
M.A./Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (Public Advocacy and Activism)	1 year full-time	NUIG	http://www.go4th.ie/filmschool/ma_public.html
M.A. in Contemporary Migration and Diaspora Studies	1 year full-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKE72/
M.A. Women's Studies	1 year full-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKE03/
M. Plan Planning and Sustainable Development	2 years full-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKE69/
H.Dip. Social Policy	1 year full-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKA02/
Postgraduate Diploma in Social Work	2 years full-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKC06/
M.Soc.Sc. in Social Policy	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKE62/
H.Dip. Psychology (Conversion Course)	2 years full-time 4 years part-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKA01/
M.A. Sociology	1 year full-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKE55/
MA Sociology of Development and Globalisation	1 year full-time	UCC	http://www.ucc.ie/en/CKE56/
M.A. in Cultural Differences & Transitional Processes (CREOLE)	2 years full-time	NUIM	http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/prospective/MAinCulturalDifferencesTransitionalProcessesCREOLE.shtml
M.A. in Sociology	1 year full-time	NUIM	http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/prospective/toughtsociology.shtml
M.A./H.Dip in Anthropology of Ireland in a European and Global Context	1 year (HDip) 2 years (MA)	NUIM	http://graduatestudies.nuim.ie/prospective/HDipinAnthropologyofIrelandinEuropeanGlobalContext.shtml
Masters in American Studies	1 year full-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/amerstud/ma.html
M.A. in Cultural Policy and Arts Management	1 year full-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/arthistory/postgraduate_ma_culturalpolicy.htm
Higher Diploma in Social Policy	1 year full-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/appsocsc/postgraduate/hdip_socpol.htm

Master of Urban and Regional Planning	2 years full-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/gp/gpinfo/degrees/mrup.html
M.A. in Women's Studies	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/werrc/postgraduate.html#ma_grad_dip
M.Sc. in Equality Studies	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/esc/html/postgrad.html#msc_dip_cert
M.Soc.Sc. in Sociology	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/sociology/postgraduate/masters_home.html#sociology
M.Soc.Sc. Migration, Race and Ethnicity	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/sociology/postgraduate/masters_home.html#sociology
M.Soc.Sc. Health and Illness	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	UCD	http://www.ucd.ie/sociology/postgraduate/masters_home.html#sociology
M.Phil Ethnic and Racial Studies	1 year full-time	TCD	http://www.tcd.ie/Graduate_Studies/prospectivestudents/courses/taught/coursepg.php?course_id=36
M.Sc. Applied Social Research	1 year full-time	TCD	http://www.tcd.ie/Graduate_Studies/prospectivestudents/courses/taught/coursepg.php?course_id=33
Grad Dip/MSc in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy	3 years part-time (Grad dip) 4 years part-time (MSc)	DCU	http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=GDP&mode=full
Graduate Diploma/ M.Sc. in Counselling (Couples and Relationships)	2 years part-time (Grad dip) 3 years part-time (MSc)	DCU	http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=GD&mode=full
Graduate Diploma/M.A. in Intercultural Studies	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	DCU	http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=GD&mode=full
M.A. in Film and Television Studies	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	DCU	http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=MTV&mode=full
M.A. in Globalisation	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	DCU	http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=MAG&originating_school=62
M.A. in Journalism	1 year full-time	DCU	http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=MAJ&mode=full
M.A. in Political and Public Communication	-	DCU	http://www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php

			?classname=MAP&mode=full
MA in Journalism	1 year full-time	DIT	http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/graduate/courses/dt319.html
MA in International Journalism	1 year full-time	DIT	http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/graduate/courses/Int.journalism.html#entry
MA in Public Affairs and Political Communication	1 year full-time	DIT	http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/graduate/courses/dt207.html
MA in Public Relations	1 year full-time	DIT	http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/graduate/courses/dt305.html
MA in Criminology	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	DIT	http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/graduate/courses/DT568.html#entry
MA in Child Family and Community Studies	1 year full-time 2 years part-time	DIT	http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/graduate/courses/Child_family_Studies.html
MA Media Studies	2 years part-time	DIT	http://www.dit.ie/DIT/study/graduate/courses/a354.html#entryrequirement
MA in Social Policy and Criminology	-	Open University	http://www3.open.ac.uk/courses/bin/p12.dll?Q01F18
MA in Social Justice and Public Policy	-	All Hallows	http://www.allhallows.ie/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=198&Itemid=201

"The MA in sociology allowed me to develop my undergraduate training. The training I received by completing the MA helped me to utilize my training more practically in the workforce. The course ensures that you receive a certain level of training for both qualitative and quantitative training. This has proved invaluable to me. Although I went on to specialise in qualitative research if it were not for my quantitative training it is unlikely that I would have secured my current position".

- Sarah Meaney, Grad MA Soc, Dept. of Epidemiology, UCC

"Three years on from completing a degree in sociology at UL I can clearly see how this dynamic programme has been fundamental to my personal and professional development.

The learned, passionate and supportive Sociology Department presented challenging interpretations of the world as it is, as it was and as it might be, while constantly defending the critical space increasingly fragile elsewhere.

The progressive sociology programme presented me with the opportunity to embark on a study exchange in New York, opening up an unimaginable array of cultures and experiences which would have a profound effect on my future.

Additionally, the insight gained by working in the Department of Foreign Affairs' Irish Aid while studying sociology at UL has had a definitive impact on my growth as an individual and my career to date. During this time not only did I achieve a privileged view of the inner workings of governmental bi-lateral assistance but through representative trips to Brussels for European Union meetings and Malawi for appraisal of Irish funded projects I acquired deeper perspectives of international development processes.

The contacts and experience I attained at this time consequently led me to carry out research on Uganda at master's level which I was selected to present at the Development Futures Conference 2007 at NUI Galway. It also inspired me to become involved in human rights activities while studying Arabic in Syria. Most recently I have been offered the chance to undertake further studies at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

Without doubt the motivation, skills and understanding I garnered through studying sociology at UL has been fundamental to achieving this. As an encouraged member of UL's extended social scientific community it is palpable to me that the Sociology Department there is consistently moving in constructive and challenging ways".

- Joseph Burke, Postgraduate Student, London School of Economics.



For further information on sociology at UL see: www.ul.ie/sociology

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