



# **CAREERS IN SOCIOLOGY AND CRIMINOLOGY**

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## OVERVIEW

Sociology is the systematic study of the social world. Sociologists study a variety of things about the world including but not limited to: how families work, how individuals change over the life course, how norms and laws are made, broken, enforced, and changed, how inequalities of gender, class, and race emerge, continue, and change, how cities, regions, nations, and international institutions work as organized sets of relationships, how power is exercised and resisted, how individuals, groups, and organizations communicate or fail to communicate, how cultural meanings relate to patterned social relationships. Sociology thus creates theories about a broad range of human activity. Sociologists study these questions in two complementary ways. First, they gather data about large numbers of individuals to discover patterns of behaviour and interpret them through statistical analysis. Second, they gather in-depth data by interviewing and observing individuals and groups, and interpret these data through qualitative methods.

Criminology is informed by principles of sociology and other non-legal fields including psychology, economics, statistics, and anthropology. A variety of areas are studied, such as characteristics of people who commit crimes, reasons why people commit crimes, effects of crime on individuals and communities, and methods for preventing crime. Criminology, Law, and Society provides a broad foundation in knowledge of law, crime, and criminal justice. It is clearly connected to the legal profession, policing, parole, and provides an excellent background for working in government and public policy on criminal behaviour.

*Source: UTM Academic Calendar – [Sociology](#), [Maryville University](#), [Criminology](#), [Law and Society Booklet](#)*

## SKILLS DEVELOPED FROM A SOCIOLOGY/CRIMINOLOGY, LAW AND SOCIETY DEGREE

Before considering a particular career option, it is essential to identify any skills that you have developed. Such skills can be developed through experience you might have acquired, whether this be past jobs, volunteer positions, or education. It is important to understand that employers are looking for people that can transfer their skills to a particular job (i.e. transferable skills). They believe that specific requirements of a job can be taught, but it is most valuable to them if their employee takes the general skills that they have acquired, for instance time management skills in university, and uses them on the job.

Your education at university will have helped you develop many valuable skills. The Sociology and Criminology, Law and Society programs generally help students develop:

- **Communication** - develop and write research papers; articulate concepts and ideas; present data using graphs, tables and diagrams; summarize findings; public speaking; actively listen and engage in discussions.
- **Research & technical** - plan and conduct research using appropriate methodologies; collect data ethically; analyze quantitative and qualitative data; use statistical software packages.

- **Critical thinking & problem-solving** - analyze crime, societal concerns and legal structures; evaluate criminological and socio-legal concepts, theories and debates; reflect on historical and contemporary issues; synthesize information; identify problems and develop solutions.
- **Organizational** - identify goals; manage time; multitask; and work independently and collaboratively with others.
- **Analytical** – investigating components of problems/ideas, critically analyzing data and problem solving, synthesizing information, reasoning logically
- **Quantitative skills** – applying scientific concepts to problems, use of statistical software; utilizing statistical tests to predict outcomes, interpreting results
- **Research** – planning long-term projects/experiments and developing project/experiment designs, gathering and organizing data, surveying and sampling
- **Related knowledge** – knowledge of legal structures, broad understanding of criminal justice system, awareness of societal concerns and population dynamics, understand how power operates across different levels of society
- **Investigation skills** – identifying problems and developing solutions, defining expected/potential results, hypothesis testing, understanding societal development

Source: UTM Career Centre's *Careers by Major for Sociology, and Criminology, Law, and Society and Career Navigator for Sociology*

## FOR WHAT CAREERS MIGHT STUDIES IN SOCIOLOGY/CRIMINOLOGY, LAW, AND SOCIETY PREPARE ME?

A sample of the types of positions that Sociology and Criminology, Law and Society graduates have gone on to includes:

- **Government**
  - ie. Public Policy Analyst, Foreign Service Officer, Human Rights Officer
- **Community Affairs**
  - ie. Employment/Career Counselor, Housing Support Worker
- **Research**
  - ie. Market Research Analyst, Demographer, Social Welfare Research Officer
- **Corrections/Law/Courts**
  - ie. Correctional Officer, Probation Officer, Youth Court Worker
- **Teaching/Education**
  - ie. Education Policy Analyst, Child Development Worker, School Counsellor
- **Business/Communications**
  - ie. Public Relations Specialist, Communications Specialist
- **Forensic Science**
  - ie. Criminologist, Polygraph Specialist, Victim Services Personnel

- **Media and Communications**
- **Human Resources**
- **Sales**
- **Business Operations**

Of course, this is not an exhaustive list as there are many other careers available. Many positions require additional education or experience. Some graduates pursue further studies in professional programs and/or graduate studies. However, while these are all options, the reality is that many Criminology, Law and Society and Sociology graduates might find challenging and rewarding employment in fields unrelated to their major. This is true for graduates of many Arts and Science programs. When thinking about career prospects, students must realize that many skills acquired at university are transferable in the sense that they are useful in many different situations and they are often the skills which employers seek. Students should regard their studies as an opportunity to develop and refine these skills.

## **Who Employs Sociology/Criminology, Law, and Society Graduates?**

Examples of employers of sociology/criminology, law, and society graduates:

- Government Departments
- Municipalities
- Policy Organizations
- Court Systems
- Police Services Educational Institutions
- Non-Profit Organizations
- Business in all sectors
- United Nations Research Groups

Examples of government departments and agencies include:

- Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA)
- Correctional Service Canada (CSC)
- Ontario Public Service – Internship Program
- Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS)
- Department of Justice Canada
- Department of National Defence
- Health Canada

Source: *Careers by Major – Sociology, Careers by Major – Criminology, Law, and Society*

## **Graduate Programs**

A Sociology/Criminology, Law, and Society degree equips students with the research, writing, and analysis skills for a variety of academic next steps, including graduate programs in:

- Sociology, Law, Social Work, Education, Health Administration
- Counselling, Library and Archival Studies, Community and Regional Planning
- Business Administration, Journalism, Public Policy, Human Resources
- Criminology and Sociolegal Studies, Forensic Psychology

### **Sample Graduate Programs**

- *University of Toronto*, Sociology, Master of Arts
- *University of Windsor*, Communication and Social Justice, Master of Arts
- *Laurentian University*, Interdisciplinary Health, Master of Arts
- *University of Toronto*, Collaborative Specialization in Development Policy and Power, Master of Arts/Master of Science/Master of Environmental Science
- *University of Toronto*, Criminology, Master of Arts
- *University of Guelph*, Criminology and Criminal Justice Policy, Master of Arts
- *Ryerson University*, Criminology and Social Justice, Master of Arts

Source: [\*Careers by Major – Sociology\*](#), [\*Careers by Major – Criminology, Law, and Society\*](#), [\*Career Navigator, UniversityStudy\*](#)

### **Sample Career Profile:**

#### **Intelligence Officer (IO), Canadian Security Intelligence Service**

An Intelligence Officer is required to conduct investigations, perform research, analyze information, and must be able to prepare clear and concise reports on national security-related matters. The Service is looking for motivated individuals who possess strong interpersonal skills and an ability to take the initiative; individuals who are empathetic and sensitive to the cultural mores of a changing Canadian society, are adaptable and embrace new experiences with confidence. Individuals considering applying for this position should have a proven ability to work both independently and as a member of a team. Proficiency in both Official Languages is an asset, as are foreign language capabilities and computer literacy.

To be considered for employment as an Intelligence Officer, you must be a Canadian citizen with a university degree, and possess a valid driver's license, and agree to relocate anywhere in Canada, depending on the requirements of the Service, throughout one's career. Intelligence Officers are on probation for an initial period of five years as part of their Career Progression program. The estimated starting salary is \$38,000-62,000 during the probationary period, based on successful completion of training, attaining the required experience and on performance. The recruitment process is lengthy and consists of several interviews and examinations. You should be aware that significant personal information will have to be provided.

More information on the profession and a detailed breakdown of the recruitment process can be derived from the Canadian Security Intelligence Service website:

## How to Gain Experience

Start early by seeking relevant summer, part-time and volunteer opportunities. This will help you gain experience and develop the skills that employers want. There are several opportunities both on and off campus that can help you gain the pertinent work/volunteer experiences. Visit the [Career Centre](#) online to access all summer, part-time, volunteer and full time job postings. Check out the '[Careers by Major](#)' section of our web site for more ideas on gaining experience.

## On-Campus Opportunities

### Work-Study Program

Work Study Program provides students with an opportunity to work on-campus during the academic year and gain academic/career related experience. Further information on complete eligibility requirements and information about consideration for special circumstances can be found at <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/work-study-students>. Remember to start looking for these jobs early on during the academic year, as they are posted on the Career Centre site in early September. UTM students are eligible for positions at all 3 campuses.

### Part-Time and Summer Jobs

If you are not eligible for OSAP, you can still find part-time work on campus. This can be achieved by visiting <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/jobs/campus-opportunities> and checking job postings on [CLNx](#).

### UTM Clubs

Another ideal way to gain experience is to join clubs around campus. While joining any kind of club will help you build on your leadership and general transferable skills, the [Sociology and Criminology Society](#) would be a relevant choice.

## Off-Campus Opportunities

### Off-Campus Summer and Part-Time Positions

Samples of recent part time and summer job listings from the Career Centre website include:

- **Support Worker** – Family Services Association of Toronto
- **HYPE Program Coordinator** – Our Place Peel
- **Criminal Law Research Assistant** - Lao Law, Legal Aid Ontario
- **Client Service Representative** - Law Society of Upper Canada
- **Instructor Therapist** – Autism Partnership
- **Protective Services Officer** - CN Tower (Summer Employment)
- **First Line Worker and Child and Youth Worker** - Hastings Children's Aid
- **Research Assistant** – Centre for Addiction and Mental Health

There are also several programs that can help one gain relevant work/internship opportunities:

**Federal Student Work Experience Program** ([visit here](#))

FSWEP is the primary vehicle through which federal departments and agencies recruit students for some 7,000 temporary student jobs/internships each year.

### **Canada Student Border Services Officer ([visit here](#))**

As a Student Border Services Officer (SBSO) you will promote compliance with Canada's border, trade and tax legislation and regulations through responsible enforcement, quality service and education; intercept contraband goods, including drugs, firearms and other prohibited goods from entering Canada by various modes of transport and be responsible for assessing duties and taxes.

### **Ontario Summer Experience Program ([visit here](#))**

The summer Experience Program provides a variety of summer positions in the Ontario Public Service, its related agencies, and community groups. Jobs are available in critical government activities related to fish and wildlife programs in provincial parks, administration of justice and law enforcement, public safety, and others.

### **Professional Associations**

Each industry has affiliated associations. There are many benefits of becoming a member of an association, such as stating your affiliation on your resume. In addition to your experiences and the completion of your university degree, a student membership in an association is one way to get an edge in the job market. It also furthers your knowledge of a particular field. Relevant associations include:

- Canadian Sociological Association ([CSA](#))
- Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers ([OCSWSSW](#))
- [Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences](#)
- The Canadian Criminal Justice Association ([CCJA](#))
- Canadian Law and Society Association ([CLSA](#))
- Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences ([ACJS](#))

Source: *Careers by Major – Sociology, Careers by Major – Criminology, Law, and Society*