The goal of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology is to develop students’ insights into the nature of society, the diversity of cultures around the world, and the similarities that all peoples and societies share. The training that students receive in methods of social research also helps to prepare them for a broad range of future endeavors.

The department provides a thorough grounding in the major branches of social theory and various critiques of social structures. Since many of the topics of interest to sociologists and anthropologists have important public policy implications, students are encouraged to explore issues of policy and practice while pursuing their studies.

Courses in the department deal with such basic aspects of society as gender, family, law and justice, race and ethnicity, health and illness, politics, population, technology and society, media, and the interrelationship of human societies and the environment. They cover the evolution of human societies and the nature of social change. A number of anthropology and sociology courses also focus on particular cultural areas, including the Arctic, Africa, South Asia, Latin America, and China.

Course enrollment limits range from fifty (introductory sociology and anthropology) to thirty-five (2000-level, intermediate courses) and sixteen (first-year and 3000-level advanced seminars). In recent years, there have been approximately sixty sociology majors and minors, and thirty-five anthropology majors and minors per year.

### Research Opportunities

Students may participate in sociological and anthropological research by working with department faculty on ongoing projects. Opportunities for such work include paid student research assistantships and occasional collaboration with faculty in joint research projects. Recent topics on which students did research work with faculty include gay soldiers in the military, the nature of family life in China, the archeology of Labrador, the use of mediation by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, relationships between servants and their employers in South India, an update of The New Our Bodies, Ourselves, and the archeology of state formation in Cameroon.

### Major and Minor Programs

The department offers two major programs and two minor programs. Courses in the majors cover both theory and research.

The major in sociology consists of ten courses, including Sociology 1101, 2010, 2030, and 3010. One or two of the ten courses may be advanced courses from anthropology (or, if approved by the department chair, from related fields to meet the student’s special interests), or off-campus study courses (with departmental approval). In all cases, at least seven of the courses counted toward the major must be Bowdoin sociology courses. Sociology 2010 should be taken in the sophomore year.

The minor in sociology consists of five sociology courses, including Sociology 1101, and four other courses at or above the 2000-level. One of the elective courses may be from anthropology (at or above the 2000-level) or from off-campus study.

For the major program, two semesters of independent study may be counted, while for the minor program one semester may be counted.

The core courses in sociology (1010, 2010, 2030, and 3010) and the core courses in anthropology (1101, 1150, 2010, 2030, and 3010) must be taken at Bowdoin. Courses that will count toward the major or minor must be taken on a graded basis (not Credit/D/Fail). In order for a course to fulfill the major or minor requirements in sociology or anthropology, a grade of C- or above must be earned in that course.

### Facilities and Resources

- **Bowdoin College, Seth Adams Hall** now houses the Environmental Studies Program, the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, and the Africana Studies Program. The building was renovated in 2008 and now provides classrooms and faculty offices, a computer lab, an anthropology classroom, and a student study area with computer stations.

- The Peary-MacMillan Arctic Museum houses collections relating to the history of Arctic exploration and includes natural history specimens as well as artifacts and drawings made by Inuit and Indians of Arctic North America. The museum has large collections of ethnographic photographs of Native Americans that were taken on the expeditions of Admiral Donald B. MacMillan (Class of 1898) and Robert Bartlett. Diaries, logs, and correspondence relating to the museum’s collections are housed in the special collections section of the Bowdoin library. The Arctic Studies Center, established in 1985, links the resources of the museum and library with teaching and research efforts, and hosts traveling exhibitions, lectures, workshops, and educational outreach projects.

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The major in anthropology consists of ten courses, including five core courses (Anthropology 1101, 2010 or 2020, 2030, 3010) and five electives. One elective must be a 3000-level course other than 3010, and one elective must focus on a geographical area. Only one elective below the 2000-level will be counted toward the major. One or two of the ten courses may be taken from the advanced offerings in sociology and/or, with departmental approval, from off-campus study programs. In all cases, at least eight of the ten courses must come from offerings of Bowdoin College.

Students often combine a major in sociology or anthropology with majors or minors in other fields ranging from biology, chemistry, and mathematics to government, history, and languages. The department works particularly closely with the programs in Africana studies, Asian studies, environmental studies, Latin American studies, and gender and women’s studies.

The department also offers minors in sociology and anthropology, each consisting of three specified courses and two electives.

**Honors Program**

Many students undertake their own independent research under close faculty supervision. Majors who maintain an honors average and complete a publicly presented thesis are eligible for departmental honors. Honors projects typically involve two semesters of independent study that allow students to work creatively and independently and to synthesize diverse theoretical, methodological, and substantive materials.

**Faculty**

**Greg Beckett**, assistant professor of anthropology, B.A., M.A. (Western Ontario), Ph.D. (Chicago), specializes in ethnographic and archival research on the relationship between environmental, urban, and political crises in Port-au-Prince, Haiti. His research projects examine the ethical and political dimensions of international intervention and emergency response following the 2010 earthquake in Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

**Susan E. Bell**, A. Myrick Freeman Professor of Social Sciences, A.B. (Haverford), A.M., Ph.D. (Brandeis), specializes in the sociology of health and illness and the visual and performative representations of the politics of cancer, medicine, and women’s bodies.


**Susan Kaplan**, professor of anthropology and director of the Peary MacMillan Arctic Museum and Arctic Studies Center, A.B. (Lake Forest), A.M., Ph.D. (Bryn Mawr), specializes in anthropology and archaeology of the North American eastern Arctic, particularly Labrador.

**Marcos Lopez**, assistant professor of sociology, B.A., M.A., Ph.D. (California–Santa Cruz), specializes in labor and labor movements, Latina/o studies, race and ethnicity, immigration, United States/Mexico border, political ecology, comparative/historical sociology, ethnography, and qualitative methods.


**H. Roy Partridge Jr.**, visiting assistant professor of sociology and special assistant to the president for multicultural affairs, A.B. (Oberlin), M.S.W., M.A., Ph.D. (Michigan), M.Div. (Harvard), specializes in race and ethnicity.

**Nancy E. Riley**, professor of sociology, B.A. (Pennsylvania), M.P.H., M.A. (Hawaii’), Ph.D. (Johns Hopkins), specializes in population, gender, and family, with a focus on China.

**Ingrid Nelson**, assistant professor of sociology, B.A. (Weill Cornell), M.A., Ph.D. (Stanford), specializes in educational inequality, out-of-school time, and youth development.


**After Bowdoin**

Course work, independent study, and collaborative research work with faculty in the department all provide a basis for later graduate study in sociology or anthropology or for professional school study, as well as for a wide variety of occupations upon graduation.

Sociology and anthropology majors at Bowdoin often go on to professional and research careers in the field; many undertake further academic work at the graduate level. Most recently these graduate programs have included Michigan, Chicago, Washington, Syracuse, Cambridge, and Penn State.

A major in sociology or anthropology also provides strong preparation for careers in urban planning, public policy, civil service, social work, business or personnel administration, social research, law enforcement and criminal justice, the health professions, journalism, secondary school teaching, and development programs.