

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL SOCIOLOGY, B.S.

Community and environmental sociology explores the communities in which people live and the relationships between people and their natural environments. Using an integrative approach, the major provides students a broad view of the societal factors involved in issues of environment, food systems, health, and community development, as well as strategies for promoting a more just and sustainable world.

Through core courses, students receive foundational knowledge in sociology and select from a wide range of electives covering environmental stewardship, resource conflicts, public health, social change, social justice, agroecology, rural development, labor, science and technology, colonialism, and globalization.

Graduates go on to a wide variety of careers in environmental conservation, community and international development, food systems, law, public policy, sociology, and public health – in the private, public, and non-profit sectors. A Community and Environmental Sociology major also provides excellent preparation for graduate school. Alumni hold positions as directors, managers, administrators, policy makers, data analysts, planners, consultants, researchers, teachers, health care workers, and civil servants.

Learn through hands-on, real-world experience

Students can apply their course learning to real life through internships, field courses, and research projects. During their final year, majors complete a senior capstone course where they work with local community groups to address specific challenges or explore social and environmental problems through case studies.

Build community and networks

Students get to know faculty and instructors through departmental courses and social activities, and they can build their networks by participating in student organizations, internships, and research experiences.

Customize a path of study

In addition to a set of core courses, students choose from a wide array of electives to explore their areas of interest within the major. Many choose to add a certificate or double major to their degree. Common certificate options include global health, food systems, organic agriculture, science and technology policy, and environmental studies. Common second majors include environmental sciences, nutritional sciences, agronomy, biology, and wildlife ecology.

Make a strong start

An introductory course provides an overview of topics such as community organizing, local food systems, energy transitions, environmental justice, resource dependence, and sustainable development.

Gain global perspectives

Majors learn about different cultures, communities, and environments through the classes they take, and many choose to study abroad to further

expand their perspectives. Majors can choose semester-long programs or summer opportunities at top universities in Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America, or shorter faculty-led study abroad experiences. Students can explore studying abroad as a Community and Environmental Sociology major by utilizing the Community and Environmental Sociology Major Advising Page. Students work with their advisor and the CALS study abroad office to identify appropriate programs.