

What can I do with an undergraduate degree in Sociology

SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH A SOCIOLOGY DEGREE

While this is not an exhaustive list, you will find below some of the transferrable skills that your education in Sociology may have helped you develop or enhance. Transferrable skills are aptitudes and understandings you have developed during your undergraduate degree that are essential to positions in various fields such as journalism, business communications, publishing, law, etc. Use the following list as an opportunity to reflect and identify the transferable skills you have acquired during your education as well as during work and volunteer experiences.

Analytical / Critical Thinking

- Use social theories to understand complex social changes, situations or problems
- Identify the different historical, political, social events, as well as policies that influence social situations and /or communities.
- Identify the factors that contribute to the different opinions concerning social situations or problems
- Understand the influence that factors such as culture, family or personal history, as well as social class and gender can have on personal situations
- Assess how changes in the broader political or social structure can influence individuals' daily lives
- Ability to read social policies, news and scientific articles analytically and critically to evaluate the quality and accuracy of the information provided
- Analyze and make an opinion on current ideas and issues that impact our society and daily living

Research

- Use various research techniques and information sources (books, scientific articles, interviews etc.) to find and gather relevant information on a topic
- Synthesize vast amounts of information to extract the most relevant information
- Evaluate and explain research results
- Consult up to date information and research articles to support your arguments and make decisions

Oral and written communication

- Present findings using the appropriate research structure (including sections such as literature review, methodology, etc.)
- Use proper grammar, syntax and vocabulary
- Ensure conciseness and clarity of written information
- Ability to select, interpret, organize and summarize information on a subject
- Ability to adjust written or presentation style, form and content to a particular audience
- Present and explain ideas or complex concepts effectively and clearly to others

“The benefits of the Bachelor's degree in Sociology are to understand the world and your place in it. The program allows students to develop the ability to communicate and listen to others while understanding their reality and situation firsthand without judging their experience or culture”.

Dr. Cheryl Gosselin

After completing the Honors program in Sociology and a major in Psychology, Kevin Mailloux went on to become a lawyer at the Borden Ladner Gervais Law Firm. Completing the Honors in Sociology allowed him to become aware of his environment and its impact on him. In addition, the program and the numerous philosophical readings piqued his intellectual curiosity. The Sociology Program gave him the opportunity to be intellectually stimulated and it gave him a taste for the academic world. He liked that sociology includes several social sciences such as psychology, business and marketing. In addition, this enabled him to acquire specific knowledge and develop skills that were needed to pursue his academic studies. The Honors in Sociology allowed him to develop skills such as the ability to structure, support and present his opinion in an understandable and credible way.

Pragmatic and creative thinking

- Analyze complex situations from different angles and theoretical approaches (cultural differences, religion, social beliefs, etc.) to generate new perspectives and solutions
- Draw on scientific knowledge and existing services to identify pragmatic and adapted solutions

Cross-cultural understanding

- Intercultural awareness and openness, especially regarding differences in values, perceptions, and approaches to different situations
- Perceive and recognize cultural differences, as well as work collaboratively within the context of cultural and other diversities

Teamwork

- Work collaboratively to design, plan, organize and implement projects and tasks within an allotted timeframe
- Identify and set priorities as well as delegate tasks according to the skills and interests of team members

The description of each profession presented in this document comes mostly from the information found on the Career Cruising Website www.careercruising.com and Repères (<https://reperes.qc.ca/asp/reperes.aspx> - password required)

CAREERS WITHOUT ANY FURTHER TRAINING

Your undergraduate degree has given you the basic knowledge and skills to meet the requirements and to accomplish the tasks related to the professions listed below. However, depending on the demand for such positions and the availability of skilled professionals in the area that you want to work in, you may need to gain more specialized skills or knowledge to enhance your candidacy (e.g.: by gaining work experience or by pursuing short specific training).

Activist

Activists are responsible for raising awareness about issues they care about, be they societal, political or environmental. They also aim to achieve positive change in regards to these issues. They can be found in various non-profit organizations. In order to be a successful activist you must acquire an in-depth knowledge of the cause you are advocating for, have good public relation skills and effectively utilize the different media available to inform the public and get their support. The tasks of an activist may vary greatly from one position to another, yet most of them will be involved in activities such as writing (speeches, articles, press releases, petition letters, etc.) and public speaking (meeting politicians, members of the community to get their support).

Communications Specialist

Communications Specialists can be found in a wide variety of settings, such as the private or public sectors, as well as non-profit organizations. Their main task is to inform the general public, clients or employees of the company's services, actions or services. They are also responsible for identifying the most effective communication strategies to reach this objective (webpage, press release, internal memos, etc.). They may also take part in marketing committees or be involved in more administrative tasks such as writing official company documents (annual reports, procedures and policies, etc.).

Municipal Clerk

Carry out the different administrative tasks for a city or town, such as providing information on rules/regulations and municipal services to the public. They also administer and organize municipal documents and official records. Clerks can also provide support for official municipal activities, such as council and committee meetings.

Community Worker

Community Workers are employed by nonprofit organizations that offer social services to a specific clientele (e.g.: individuals dealing with isolation, homelessness, poverty, physical disability, or mental illness). Their tasks will vary from one organization to another according to the mission and the services provided by the organization (active listening, provide information, create and deliver workshops, evaluate the needs and situation of the client and help them get the right services for them, etc.). Non-profit organizations often have limited financial and human resources, therefore, Community Workers are expected to perform tasks that may not be part of their job description, but are necessary for the survival or functioning of the organization or services (fundraising events, administrative tasks, etc.).

Foreign Service Worker

Foreign Service Officers help to advise the government on foreign policies as well as on diplomatic matters. They are often required to travel and live in other countries. They are responsible for acting on the behalf of Canada in these other countries. Their tasks may vary greatly based on the area in which they work (e.g.: political and economic affairs, international trade, immigration or management and consular affairs). However, all Foreign Service Officers must be comfortable with administrative tasks, dealing with a wide variety of individuals and negotiating with government officials.

Humanitarian Aid Worker

Humanitarian Aid Workers help people who live in difficult conditions, due to poverty, wars or natural disasters, to survive and possibly improve their quality of life. Depending on their education and work experience, they may hold different positions, such as teacher, first aid respondent, project coordinator or sanitation worker. They need to have a good understanding of the social, political, cultural situation of the country/area they will work in. As well, they must be open and willing to adapt to cultural differences, willing to work with limited resources and able to handle emotionally intense situations.

Immigration Officer

Immigration Officers are responsible of reviewing and approving immigrants' applications to move or work in Canada by examining appropriate documents, conducting interviews and reviewing applications. They need to have a good knowledge of cultural differences, as well as knowledge of social and political issues of the country the immigrants are coming from. They must verify every application to ensure that they meet the admission criteria. Immigration officers also deal with visa applications from visitors, students, and temporary workers. They may also act as sources of information regarding immigration policies and regulations.

Insurance Underwriter

Insurance Underwriters are responsible for reviewing insurance applications and deciding whether a person or business should be insured. They do this by reviewing candidates' applications and by conducting background research on them (medical history, work experience, etc.). They are required to work with statistical data and company's guidelines to estimate risk potentials, as well as cost and coverage of the insurance policy. Insurance Underwriters can specialize in a specific area (e.g.: home or life insurance).

Market Researcher Analyst

Market Research Analysts can work for marketing research firms, public organizations such as Statistics Canada or large size companies. They are responsible for identifying consumers' interest in an existing or new product/service (market trends). Their tasks involves looking at various data concerning the product (e.g.: prices, sales, competitor pricing), as well as collecting information from the public and customers (survey, focus group) to identify marketing strategies, price of good/service or adjustments that need to be made to the product to adapt to customers' needs and interests. Market Research Analysts must also be comfortable presenting their findings in a variety of ways (e.g.: through a report or presentation).

Parole and Probation Officer

Probation/Parole Officers are responsible for supervising offenders who have received a probation sentence or are on parole. The officers make sure that these individuals comply to the conditions of their probation/parole by interacting with them, and key individuals of their network (counsellors, landlord, employer, etc.). They may also investigate the person's activities and whereabouts if they suspect that an offender has violated the terms of their probation/parole. The difference between both professions is that Parole Officers work with offenders that are completing their sentence in the community, whereas Probation Officers will usually work with individuals who have completed their sentence or need to do community service for the offence they did. As well, Parole Officers often work for the federal government. Finally, the Probation Officer may provide more support services to help the offender steer away from criminal activities.

Post-Secondary Education Administration Officer

Post-Secondary Education Administration Officers are responsible for the daily operations of colleges and universities. Their exact duties will vary based on the department in which they work (e.g.: admissions, registration, financial aid, etc.). However, regardless of their department, they must be comfortable interacting with various individuals, such as students, professors, staff and other administration professionals. They will also often be called upon to plan presentations, write reports and deal with various administrative tasks.

Rehabilitation Counsellor (Workers Compensation Board, CSST)

The main objective of the Rehabilitation Counsellor is to help injured workers overcome their physical, mental or emotional obstacles in order to return to the workforce as soon as possible. They work with the client, employer and professionals involved in the case to identify the services required by the client and the action plan that will help them reintegrate the workforce. They often work as the liaison between all parties involved. Rehabilitation Counselors must also do a lot of research and record keeping tasks. They must have a good understanding of the labour laws and be comfortable informing their clients and other parties about these laws, as well as their rights and responsibilities.

Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer Coordinators help recruit, train, supervise volunteers, as well as coordinate their work. Their main objective is to help non-profit organizations that depend on volunteers to provide services to run smoothly. Their tasks may involve writing grant proposals and year end reports, contacting potential donors and keeping statistics on volunteers and activities.

CAREERS WITH ADDITIONAL TRAINING (graduate certificate or master's degree)

Archivist

Archivists will usually work for government agencies, libraries, museums or large companies. They are responsible for collecting and organizing various types of records. In government, these records mostly concern legislation, historical and political events or artifacts. In libraries or museums, they will mostly deal with valuable and rare books or papers. In corporate settings, they will work primarily with the company's historical, financial and operational records.

Border Services Officer

Border services officers' main responsibility is to ensure that all people and goods entering Canada are legal and respect our laws. Their main tasks involve intercepting individuals at the border to verify their identity, question them on their whereabouts and the goods they are carrying. They can inspect luggage, goods, car, etc. if they suspect illegal or prohibited goods and will also inform the public and manufacturers about customs' laws and regulations. Border Service Officers also perform clerical tasks such as filling reports.

College/Cégep Teacher

A Teacher at the collegial level is responsible for preparing and giving courses on specific topics related to their field of expertise. They often need to identify the lesson plan, prepare their presentation, select the scientific articles or books required for the course, as well as develop and grade exams and assignments. Science Teachers may also need to prepare the different laboratory exercises that students will perform during class. Most College or Cégep Teachers will also be required to participate in different administrative/academic committees and will be encouraged to do research as well as publish articles and books.

Counsellor

The main purpose of Counsellors is to help individuals deal with present life issues that affect their health, mental health, relationships or well being. Counsellors will usually help a specific population (e.g.: women or children), or help individuals overcome a specific issue (e.g.: homelessness, eating disorders, etc.). Counsellors tasks will vary significantly from one organization to another and can include: one on one counselling services, planning and leading group therapy sessions, creating and providing workshops on various topics, training volunteers and administrative tasks. They can be found working mostly in community organizations, but occasionally in the public or private sector.

- *Abuse Counsellor:* Works primarily in women's shelters to help individuals facing domestic violence
- *Crisis Counsellor:* Works primarily for crisis hotlines or centers to help individuals deal with various crises, such as suicidal thoughts, homelessness
- *Addictions Counsellor:* Helps individuals overcome various addictions. They can also work for early prevention programs. They will often work in rehabilitation centers
- *Child/Youth Worker:* Assists children or adolescents dealing with a wide range of issues. They often work for youth shelters or community organizations

Gerontologist

Gerontologists are professionals that focus on the well-being of elders. Their tasks will vary from one job to another. However, most Gerontologists will be involved in either research or in the conception and delivery of services adapted to the needs of elders. They can also meet elders and their family to help them identify the right services for them or their parents or to help them better understand illnesses related to aging, such as Alzheimer. They can be found in community organizations, research institutes and the public sector, to name a few.

Human Resources Specialist

Human Resources Specialists can hire, train or fire employees. Depending in the size of the organization and its Human Resource department, they may be asked to focus on one or the multiple facets of human resources. They may assist in determining the requirements for new positions and interviewing candidates. They may also be involved in internal work conflicts to support both parties involved and identify solutions. The Human Resource Specialists may also be responsible for identifying or creating career/ management development programs. In all cases, they must keep detailed records about employees in order to keep track of their salary, their vacations, sick days, etc.

Journalist

Journalists write articles for a variety of outlets, such as newspapers, magazines or online publications. They must be able to think creatively and find an interesting angle to their article. Journalists spend a large amount of time conducting research on their story and on finding pertinent sources. They also need to possess very good interviewing skills in order to obtain relevant and interesting information from their sources. They must also be able to work under pressure and strict deadlines.

Lawyer

Lawyers are responsible for helping their clients during legal procedures by advising them and representing them. They must be comfortable with doing large amounts of reading, writing and researching. For example, they must be able to prepare legal documents such as contracts and they must be able to research various regulations and previous cases. They need to think creatively and analytically, since they are often called upon to interpret the law and find ways to apply it to their client's situation. Lawyers often focus on a certain area of the law (e.g.: criminal law, civil law, corporate law). They may also specialize in either trials or settlements.

Librarian

Librarians have many responsibilities. They organize, develop and manage the library's print and electronic inventory. They are responsible of cataloguing and classifying new books and they may also be in charge of reviewing and selecting new materials according to the library's priorities and budget. Finally, they help clients find relevant articles, books, and may show them how to use various search resources.

Mediator

Mediators help people resolve various types of disputes outside of court, either business-related or personal. Mediators must be skilled at using conflict resolution strategies and facilitating communication. They must have a good knowledge of the law that concern their client, as well as remain calm and objective in emotionally intense situations. They tend to work independently but can often be found in mediation firms. Mediators must also be comfortable dealing with various administrative tasks, such as billing and writing reports.

Public Policy Analyst

Public Policy Analysts are responsible for studying a wide range of statistics, policies, laws, to evaluate the effectiveness of current government policies and programs and propose recommendations. They must be familiar with the government or their company's position on the topics they are working on. They often work in a team and therefore, must regularly inform others of their findings (presentations, reports). As well, their tasks may involve interacting with the media, writing different documents on behalf of their department or organization. Public Policy Analysts can be found working in either the federal or provincial government, but they can also work in the private sector for lobbying or consulting firms.

Insurance Adjusters

Insurance Adjusters investigate insurance claims to validate its veracity, assess the damage and gather proofs as well as determine compensation the company will pay to the claimant according to its policy. Their tasks involve meeting the claimant and other concerned parties to have a thorough assessment of the situation. They may need to do some research to identify the cost of repair or replacement of goods damaged. As well, this position involves a lot of report writing for each insurance claim they investigate.

Social and Community Service Manager

Social and Community Service Managers oversee the administration and delivery of community services. Their tasks may vary from one organization to another according to the size of the organization and the financial and human resources available. They definitely need to be aware of the latest issue, research, policy or law that may impact the organization or the services it's providing. They will also perform different management tasks such as hiring new staff, writing different reports to get financial support from government. They will also work in collaboration with their staff to identify best practices, ways to promote and deliver their services, etc. Finally, they will often represent the organization on different committees.

Social Worker

Social Workers' main objective is to help improve the quality of life or well-being of individuals or communities. Social Workers can work in a wide range of settings, such as schools, hospitals and community organizations, and with a variety of clientele. Therefore, their specific tasks may vary significantly. They may offer emotional support, deliver workshops, refer clients to other resources or professionals, etc. Most Social Workers will interview clients in order to gain a better understanding of their situation and problems and will meet with them regularly to monitor the situation and identify the right services for this person. Social Workers' responsibilities may also involve advocating for the rights or better quality of life of individuals.

Unemployment Agent

Unemployment Agents make decisions concerning the eligibility of a person for unemployment insurance. They verify the causes of the loss of employment. They ensure the payment and they make sure that there is no abuse of the system or any fraud.

RESSOURCES

Association des Archivistes du Québec : <http://www.archivistes.qc.ca/>

Association of Canadian Archivists: <http://archivists.ca/>

Association of Canadian Publishers : <http://publishers.ca/>

Canadian Association of Second-Language Teachers: <http://caslt.org/>

Canadian Association of Social Workers: <http://www.casw-acts.ca/>

Canadian Independent Adjusters' Association: <http://www.ciaa-adjusters.ca/>

Canadian Institute of Underwriters: <http://www.ciu.ca/>

Canadian Library Association: www.cla.ca/

Canadian Media Production Association: <http://www.cmpa.ca/>

Canadian Museum Association: www.museums.ca

Canadian Public Relations Society: <http://www.cprs.ca/>

Canadian Teacher's Federation: <http://www.ctf-fce.ca/en/Pages/default.aspx>

Canadian Theatre Critics Association : <http://canadiantheatre critics.ca/>

Cultural Human Resources Council: <http://www.culturalhrc.ca/>

Editors' Association of Canada : <http://www.editors.ca/>

Market Research Association: <http://www.marketingresearch.org/>

National Case Management Network: <http://www.ncmn.ca/>

Professional Writers Association of Canada: www.pwac.ca

Quebec Library Association: <http://abqla.qc.ca>

Quebec Writers' Federation: <http://www.qwf.org/>

SHORT ADDITIONAL UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

As mentioned earlier, depending on the profession you want to pursue or the employment requirements and perspectives of this profession, it may be in your best interest to get specialized knowledge or skills in this field. The following table contains examples of undergraduate or graduate certificates that can be paired with your bachelor's degree to enhance your candidacy or allow you to specialize in a specific field while developing new skills. Some programs may require previous field experience. This list is not exhaustive but it is a good place to start your research.

ADDITIONAL PROGRAM IDEAS		
Adult Education	Digital Archives Management	Playwriting
Archival Studies	Edition (Editing)	Political Science
Art History	Human Resources Management	Professional Communication
College Teaching	Industrial Relations	Translation
Communication	Library and Information Studies	Advanced Counselling Skills
Community Service	Linguistics	Grief and Bereavement Studies
Communication Studies	Technical and Professional communication	Littérature pour la jeunesse
Creative Non-Fiction	Mass Communication and Media Studies	Muséologie et patrimoine
Creative Writing	Modern Languages	Muséologie et diffusion de l'art
Cultural and Media Studies	Teaching English as a Second Language	Intervention jeunesse

ADDITIONAL GRADUATE PROGRAMS

There are several masters' programs that can be paired with your Bachelor's degree in Sociology. Their goal is to offer specialization in a field of study and/or gain research abilities. Depending on the masters' program, the university may require that you take additional undergraduate courses. This may range from a couple courses to a full year (qualifying year) to gain the knowledge you may be missing to pursue the graduate program you are interested in. They may also require that you gain relevant work/volunteer experience. Here are some examples of program titles that can be found in certain universities across Canada. This list is not exhaustive but it is a good place to start your research.

MASTER'S PROGRAMS	
Communication Studies	Political Science
Addictions and Mental Health	Comparative Literature
Archival Studies	Adult Education and Community Development
Museum Studies	Social Work
Public Policy and Public Administration	Educational Psychology
Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership	Law and Social Work
Rehabilitation Science	Gerontology
International Political Economy	

REFERENCES

McGill University- CAPS, What can I do with a degree in Sociology?:

http://www.mcgill.ca/caps/files/caps/major_sociology.pdf

Carleton University- Co-op and Career Services, What can I do with my degree in Sociology?:

<http://carleton.ca/cc/career/resources/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/sociology/>

Simon Fraser University- Career Services, What can I do with a degree in Sociology? :

<http://www.sfu.ca/career/WCID/fass/sociology.html>

University of Toronto-Mississauga- Career Planning, Careers by major:

<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/careers-by-major-sociology>

York University- Career Centre, What can I do with my degree in Sociology?:

<http://careers.yorku.ca/my-degree/sociology/>

Université Laval- Répertoire de sites Web des associations et ordres professionnels:

<https://www.spla.ulaval.ca/imt/associations-ordres-professionnels>

Universities Canada- Program database : [http://www.universitystudy.ca/search-](http://www.universitystudy.ca/search-programs/?k=&program_level_merged=Undergraduate+level+certificate%2Fdiploma&program_language=E)

[programs/?k=&program_level_merged=Undergraduate+level+certificate%2Fdiploma&program_language=E](http://www.universitystudy.ca/search-programs/?k=&program_level_merged=Undergraduate+level+certificate%2Fdiploma&program_language=E)
NGLISH

Queen's University-Major Map for Undergraduates, Sociology:

<http://careers.queensu.ca/sites/webpublish.queensu.ca.cswww/files/files/Major%20Maps/2015/Sociology%20Major%20Map%20WEB.pdf>

Red Deer College- Counselling and Career Services, What can I do with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology? : [http://rdc.ab.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/53882/ba-sociology-updated-april-](http://rdc.ab.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/53882/ba-sociology-updated-april-2015.pdf)

[2015.pdf](http://rdc.ab.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/documents/53882/ba-sociology-updated-april-2015.pdf)