



Second Year Sociology Handbook

Academic Year 2023–2024

**Department of Sociology &
Centre for the Study of Politics**

2nd Floor, Room 2.11

TSI Building, North Campuse

Maynooth University

Sociology.Department@mu.ie

A Message from the Head of Department, Prof. Mary Murphy

Dear Students,

My name is [Professor Mary Murphy](#) and as the Head of the Department of Sociology and Centre for the Study of Politics, I would like to welcome you to our department. Whether you are a first-year undergraduate, a returning student or beginning your postgraduate studies, we hope you have a rich and fulfilling life here in Maynooth University.

Our approach to the study of both Sociology and Politics is informed by our commitment to public sociology and to being engaged and relevant to the world we live in. Our approach is to be interested, creative, critical, and engaged active citizens interested in shaping the world we share. We encourage you while you are here to get involved with student life, sports, clubs and societies, and particularly to join the [MU Politics and Sociology Society](#) and to engage with us through social media (Twitter: [@MU_Sociology](#) and [@MU_Politics](#)).

As you get to know us, our work, and publications, you will find we [research](#) across a broad and diverse range of local, national and international topics. We bring this research to our teaching offering you a very broad choice of modules and subjects, enabling you to craft your own pathway through your degree programme. You can find out more about this year's choices and modules in our exciting [Undergraduate](#), [Masters](#) and [PhD](#) programmes through the relevant pages on our website - and also read about [what you can do with a degree in Politics or Sociology](#) as well as the work of our [Centre for the Study of Politics](#)

You will find all you need to know on the different sections of the website and through our social media. You can also email our incredible admin team (sociology.department@mu.ie), our accessible [lecturers](#) and tutors, and you can communicate through your class representative.

This year, all of our lectures and tutorials are live on-campus, and we will do all we can to ensure you are safe and comfortable. Our door is always open, talk to us and tell us what you are thinking and what you might need, we are happy to support you in any way we can.

Most of all enjoy your time here in Maynooth!

All the best

Mary

SOCIOLOGY & POLITICS @MU

OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY KEY PRINCIPLES



Our Department is a community of teachers and learners who endeavour to learn from each other

through relationships that are open respectful and engaging.



We are a diverse group of people who respect each other's varying experiences and perspectives.



We engage in active discussion and debate in an atmosphere of civility and mutual respect, in-person and online, inside and outside of the formal classroom and campus.



We respect others by avoiding disrupting their teaching and learning, we try to avoid talking during lectures, arriving late and/or leaving early from lectures, and other disruptive actions.



We respect the policies of each lecturer and tutor regarding classroom and module policies and practices, including the use of technology in the classroom.



We understand that the staff of the department are concerned for the welfare of all students, for integrity, fairness and inclusiveness in our work and overall to promote learning in the ways that are judged to be most effective.



We understand that we can bring concerns we might have to academic and administrative staff, and in particular to the Head of Department.



E: sociology.department@mu.ie
www.maynoothuniversity.ie
@MU_Sociology @MU_Politics

1. About the Maynooth University Department of Sociology

This handbook is intended to provide you with the information you need about our programme for the year and our policies.

You will find additional information about the Sociology Department on our website <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology>, and by following us on Twitter @MU_Sociology and @MU__Politics.

Further inquiries can be made to the department office - Room 2.11, 2nd Floor, TSI Building. It is accessible by stairs and by lift.

The Second year Co-ordinator this year is:

Dr. Brian Conway

Room 2.18, TSI Building

Phone: 01-708 4789

Email: brian.conway@mu.ie

In the next section of this handbook, we present the overall vision of how the sociology degree programme develops our students' base of knowledge and skills over its three-year course.


Apart from your undergraduate programme this year, you may be interested in other initiatives, talks and events that are run by, or in conjunction with, the Department of Sociology. These will be advertised on the department's notice boards and, on the department's, website.

In addition to catering for over eight hundred students across our undergraduate programme, a further thirty students are engaged in postgraduate studies in the Department. We encourage you to consider furthering your studies with us in our taught M.A. programmes. Deadlines for applications are in June each year and staff are happy to discuss the programmes earlier in the year. More details are available on our website at: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/sociology/ma-programmes>

We also offer supervision for research postgraduates including M.Litt (2 years) and PhD degrees (4 years approx.). If you are interested in doing a research postgrad, please talk to the postgraduate co-ordinator Prof. Mary Corcoran (mary.corcoran@mu.ie) and take a look at the specialist areas of interest of the members of the Department on the Our People page.

The subject matter of politics and sociology is diverse, and our programme at Maynooth University reflects the varied interests of the members of the Department which can be viewed also on the Our People page

2. The Sociology degree at Maynooth University



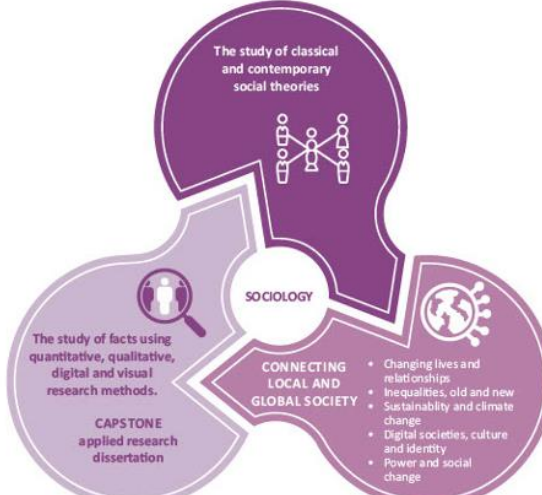
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SOCIOLOGY & POLITICS

WHAT IS SOCIOLOGY?

Sociology is the quest for understanding of human social life. From studies of local communities through to global transformations, it uses a wide range of systematic research methods to understand our lives and to explain the institutions and forces that are transforming them.



The study of classical and contemporary social theories

The study of facts using quantitative, qualitative, digital and visual research methods.

CAPSTONE applied research dissertation

CONNECTING LOCAL AND GLOBAL SOCIETY

- Changing lives and relationships
- Inequalities, old and new
- Sustainability and climate change
- Digital societies, culture and identity
- Power and social change

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
<p>What is Sociology? What can we learn from it?</p> <p>SEMESTER ONE</p> <p>The sociological imagination and everyday life</p> <p>SEMESTER TWO</p> <p>Sociological concepts and contemporary Ireland</p>	<p>Learn the key ideas. Learn the craft of research.</p> <p>SEMESTER ONE</p> <p>Classical social theory. Social research methods. FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS Choose one from 4-5 choices.</p> <p>SEMESTER TWO</p> <p>Structures of inequality. Social research methods: fieldwork, survey, online. FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS 1 elective from choice of 5.</p>	<p>Develop the key ideas. Become a researcher.</p> <p>SEMESTER ONE</p> <p>Contemporary social theory. Special Topic Research Project. Choose your own research question. FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS Choose one from 4-5 choices.</p> <p>SEMESTER TWO</p> <p>Special Topic Research Project FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS 2 electives from 7 choices.</p>

3. Teaching and Learning Formats 2023-2024

Welcome to our Department. We strive to ensure our communication with students is clear and consistent. Our ‘**Undergraduate Information and Learning Hub**’ on the department website will be updated regularly with relevant departmental teaching and learning information, as well as useful resources and supports.

4. Timetable

Semester 1

25th September 2023 – 22nd December 2023

COMPULSORY MODULES:	Credits
SO201 Classical Social Theory Prof. Jane Gray/ Prof. Seán Ó Riain	5
SO202 Introduction to Social Research (plus tutorials) Dr. Delma Byrne	5
SO208 Media and Society Dr. Paul Ryan	5
SO210 Social Worlds of Children Dr. Rebecca King O’Riain	5
SO211 Urban Sociology Dr. Mary Benson	5
SO215 Social Movements and Revolutions Prof. Laurence Cox	5
SO221 Marx on Ireland Dr. Eamonn Slater	5
SO241 Critical Race and Ethnic Ireland Dr. Rebecca King O’Riain	5

Semester 2

6th February 2024 – 10th May 2024

COMPULSORY MODULES:	Cred
SO203 Structures of Inequality: Class, Race & Gender (plus tutorials) Dr. Rebecca King O’Riain	5
SO225 Research Design and Survey, Fieldwork & Documentary Methods Dr. Delma Byrne Dr. Brian Conway (Research Design & Survey) Dr. Clark Powers (Documentary) TBC (Fieldwork)	5
OPTIONAL MODULES: Select 1 module from the following group:	
SO344 Nature Tourism: Romancing Nature as a Leisure activity Dr. Eamonn Slater	5
SO214 Northern Irish Society Prof. Colin Coulter	5
SO223A Environmental Sociology and Climate Change Dr. Eoin Flaherty	5
SO352 Sociology of Gender Dr. Pauline Cullen	5
PO304 Society and State Nessa Ni Chasaide	5

Please refer to the online Timetable for up-to-date information on venues and times.

<https://apps.maynoothuniversity.ie/timetable/>

Keep in Mind Programme Requirements!

Double Major: as above 30 credits (SO2DM)

Please note the following arrangements regarding research methods in the first semester:

Students taking Criminology and Sociology take PO224 and have an extra option in Sociology.

Students taking Politics and Sociology take PO223 and have an extra option in Sociology.

Students taking Sociology but neither Criminology nor Politics take SO202.

Major with Minor: 40 credits:

Term 1: Must take SO201, SO202 and 2 elective modules

Term 2: Must take SO203 and 3 elective modules (SO2MJ)

Minor: 20 credits:

Term 1: Must take SO201 and one elective module

Term 2: Must take SO203 and one elective module (SO2MI)

Please see page 29 for information on Maynooth University Elective Streams available to students in Second Year. You may substitute 10 CREDITS in your two subjects for a 10 CREDIT elective stream of your choice.

5. Module Descriptions

[See our second-year sociology module descriptions here.](#)

6. Tutorials

Weekly one-hour tutorials will accompany SO202 (semester 1) and SO203 (semester 2). Students must attend their weekly tutorial. Tutorials offer students the opportunity to develop the skills that are inherent in the work of sociologists. Further details on tutorials will be given at the beginning of lectures.

IMPORTANT: You can sign up for a tutorial through the module Moodle sites, on a first-come, first-served basis. Please attend lectures and monitor the departmental website and notice-boards for further information.

Students must enrol themselves in SO202 tutorials through the SO202 Moodle site. More details on times are available on the SO202 Moodle page. Before selecting a group, ensure you choose from times that do not clash with times for your other subjects/ modules.

SO202 Tutorial sign-ups will commence on the SO202 Moodle page on Wednesday 27nd September 2023 at 9am and will run until 11am on Tuesday 3rd October 2023.

Tutorials begin week commencing 9th October 2023.

PLEASE NOTE THAT YOU WILL NEED TO KEEP THIS TUTORIAL TIME FREE FOR SEMESTER 1 AND SEMESTER 2 TUTORIALS.

7. Assessment

See [Results Information](#) for further information on grading.

Details of assessment will be provided through modules with an overview on the website in due course.

Essay assessment

The main criteria in assessing an essay are:

- level of understanding of the issue
- number of readings and the use which is made of such readings
- logical development of the discussion
- awareness and discussion of alternative arguments or viewpoints
- clarity of the writing and citation style.

A first-class essay or paper will show an excellent understanding of the issue; demonstrate an ability to use analytical reasoning; mobilise a good range of readings; and it will be written in a clear and concise style. An essay will fail if it does not address the question; reveals a fundamental lack of understanding of the issue; or is based on far too limited a range of readings.

8. Key Dates for Students for the Academic Year 2023/24

https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/system/temporary/filefield_paths/Key%20Dates%20Students%202023%20-2024%20%2824-08-2023%29.pdf

9. Consultation

It is vital that we are made aware, as soon as possible of any difficulties you may have in relation to your work or with any aspect of the third-year programme. If you have a problem or question which relates generally to the third-year programme, or to your participation in it, please contact the second-year co-ordinator Dr. Brian Conway brian.conway@mu.ie

If you have a query in relation to a particular lecture course, please contact the lecturer who is giving that course. Staff members are available for consultation at various hours during each week of term. It is difficult to hold regular in person office hours during these times but staff will post contact times on the module Moodle sites. Alternatively, you may make an appointment by email or by contacting the department administration team - Sociology Department, Room 2.11, 2nd Floor, The Technology, Society and Innovation Building (TSI), North Campus Tel: 01 708-3659.

In addition to consulting with individual lecturers or the second-year administrator, students may communicate with the Sociology Department through the Staff Student Consultative Committee. The purpose of this body is to provide a forum where the concerns and interests of students can be raised. The committee consists of the staff year co-ordinators and student representatives of the various years who will be elected by students after the beginning of term.

Should you wish to raise a matter at the Staff-Student Consultative Committee you can do so in the following ways:

1. Talk to the staff member who has administrative responsibility for second year (Dr. Brian Conway)
2. Talk to your second-year student representative once he/she is elected.

For more information on contacting staff in the department and university, please go to: Undergraduate Learning & Information Hub | Maynooth University and click on the *Who Should I Contact?*

10. Communications

It is assumed that you will attend your module. It is also assumed that you will check the relevant departmental webpages once every two or three days.

You are responsible for familiarising yourself with announcements or notices provided during periods of time that are absent from class or from campus. It is assumed that you check your MUMAIL email account every two to three days (even if you primarily use another email account) and that you check module Moodle sites regularly.

All Lecturer and Department announcements go to your Maynooth University email account only. Please make sure that you check your Maynooth University email account every two to three days (even if you primarily use another email account). Please also enable your Moodle account to receive messages from the sociology department and check your module Moodle sites regularly.

You are responsible for keeping up to date with announcements or notices provided during periods of time that you are absent from class or from campus.

11. Support Services

Maynooth University provides a wide range of support services to its students. A document listing and describing these services can be accessed through the Undergraduate Information and Learning Hub page of the Department's website or by searching the Maynooth website.

12. Deadlines, Late Work and Penalties

We understand that students will face multiple challenges this year and we will do whatever we can to facilitate your completion of all your work and your programme as a whole. However, our approach is to work to the programme deadlines, more or less as usual, and then provide accommodations and supports as needed. Otherwise, it will become very difficult to manage all the competing demands on your studies. We encourage you to manage your schedule of assessment, as well as of teaching and learning, very carefully. We will provide resources at the Undergraduate Learning and Information Hub to help you do this.

[Our policy on extensions for all undergraduate modules \(including for special topics\) can be found here.](#)

13. Requirements for Autumn Supplemental Examination

Details of Autumn resit assessment will be provided during the year, depending on the changing circumstances. However, the basic principles will remain that assessment completed during the year can be carried forward towards the resits. All continuous assessments to be submitted on Moodle by 31st July 2024 as part of the repeat process.

14. Plagiarism and academic integrity

Plagiarism involves an attempt to use an element of another person's work, without appropriate acknowledgement in order to gain academic credit. It may include the unacknowledged verbatim reproduction of material, unsanctioned collusion, but is not limited to these matters; it may also include the unacknowledged adoption of an argumentative structure, or the unacknowledged use of a source or of research materials.

For example, when you directly copy another person's text without placing it in quotation marks and without acknowledging the source, you are plagiarising. The same is true when you present someone else's original idea, research or argument as though it were your own.

Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. It reveals an unwillingness to think for oneself and is both unethical and illegal under copyright laws. Please do not make the mistake of assuming that we won't recognise plagiarised material – we know how to use Google too. It is almost always possible to identify text that has been professionally copy-edited, or is different in

style from your own. The direct copying of passages (including illustrations) from a book, an article or the Internet without adequate references is a serious breach of academic trust and practice. Submitting essays or projects written by anyone other than yourself will also result in heavy penalties – including receiving a 0 (zero). As your final assessment is partly based on written assignments, plagiarism is equivalent to cheating at examinations.

Maynooth University considers plagiarism to be a serious academic misconduct, deserving of academic penalties. This document sets out the procedures for dealing with cases of plagiarism or suspected plagiarism in taught programmes of the University.

The Department of Sociology operates an “early warning” system. If a student is suspected of plagiarism, the student is required to meet with the appropriate lecturer to discuss the problem. If this is a first instance, the student will receive a warning but will be allowed to resubmit their work.

Second and subsequent instances of this kind will be dealt with strictly in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Maynooth University Policy on Plagiarism.

The Maynooth University policy guidelines on plagiarism are available at:

[Maynooth University Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity 28 Sept 23.docx \(live.com\)](#)

You should note that when you submit work you sign a cover sheet statement that this work is original and does not constitute plagiarism under the Maynooth University Policy on Plagiarism. Any thesis found to be plagiarized in part or whole will be given a mark of zero (0).

The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (e.g., ChatGPT, etc.) is strictly forbidden on all assignments, assessments, and academic work that you do within the department unless otherwise specified by your professor. To take credit for another person’s or machine-generated words, writing and thoughts, and to present that as your own work, is plagiarism and will be subject to the policies of the university on plagiarism. The department reserves the right to ask students for an in-person meeting to account further for the assessment. Use of Artificial Intelligence in one module **does not give permission for its use in any other assessment or modules.**

15. Guidelines for citation

The Department has prepared specific guidelines for citation, please see here:

[Harvard Referencing Guide for MU Soc Pol Dept 1 September 2022.pdf \(maynoothuniversity.ie\)](#)

You may also find the library helpful in finding, using and citing sociological resources. They also have printers, laptops and other helpful resources on avoiding plagiarism.

USEFUL LINKS:

Library homepage: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/library>

Sociology library guide: <http://nuim.libguides.com/sociology>

LIST online: <http://nuim.libguides.com/list-online>

Undergraduate library contact: Áine Carey, aine.carey@mu.ie & Niall O'Brien, niall.obrien@mu.ie

16. Venues and Locations, Maynooth University

A comprehensive list of all classroom locations and venues, including timetable codes, can be found at:

<https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/campus-services/theatres-classhalls-av-equipment>

17. Experiential Learning

The routes available to Maynooth students to experience more from their degree programme are diverse, enabling the development of rich learning experiences that connect classroom content with real-world experience. The Experiential Learning Office connects Maynooth students to a range of opportunities in the following areas.

Professional Development and Employability

Experiential learning professional development and employability modules are available to eligible second year students. The key purpose of these modules, involving a number of employers, is to facilitate students in their academic, personal and professional career development, so that they will be well equipped to secure internships and to successfully enter the graduate labour market.

See Skills for Success EX201 and EX202 for more details

Community Based Service Learning

Community Based Service Learning presents a credit-bearing academic experience that empowers students to engage with their surrounding communities, which often results in enhancing student's academic, civic, social and personal development, whilst they contribute to the common good. The experiential learning office facilitates academic staff in offering community-based service-learning experiences with their students.

For further information, refer to:

Website: <https://www.maynoothuniversity.ie/experiential-learning-office>

Email: Aisling.Flynn@mu.ie

Tel: + 353 1 4747760

