

Free essay on the value of taking sociology as an elective course

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A specific sociology elective may seem extremely interesting or it may sound daunting and more difficult than other electives. While a fantastic professor and excellent course materials can certainly enhance the experience of taking a sociology course, the greatest benefit of opting to take a sociology elective is the valuable—and practical—knowledge and insight it allows a dedicated individual to gain. Additionally, sociology is an interesting topic. Introductory sociology electives may provide a learner's first insight into a unique way of viewing the world and society while higher-level sociology courses grant further exploration into diverse topics a student is already interested in. Relating some of the general principles of sociology to life and possible careers after college further highlights the benefits associated with taking sociology as an elective course.

Sociology, as the term would suggest, is a social science that holds the study of human populations, or society, at its center. Through sociology, conditions of society are evaluated and interpreted and sometimes changes are suggested or implemented. “ Common-sense” ideas that are widely believed to be true may, through structured sociological study, be confirmed or proven to be untrue. Studying sociology allows a student to gain greater understanding about why certain societies or groups may be doing or not certain things and gather information about an extremely diverse range of interesting topics that could include race relations, gender and sexuality, social stratification, drugs and alcohol, crime, urbanization, family, community, media or other aspects of culture and myriad others.

While a sociology elective in and of itself may seem interesting, a practically-minded student may look at elective course options based almost entirely on

scheduling and potential future applicability.

Career selection notwithstanding, sociology offers benefits for anyone interested in maximizing their position in a community or broader society. Large social forces shape everything from where an individual might meet a potential mate and neighborhood safety to the types of stores or services available in an area and societal action or inaction on large-scale problems like global warming. Understanding the social forces that are influencing an individual, family or community prepares an individual for success, as they are able to prepare themselves or work to alter social forces.

Another applicable principle of sociology is that people behave differently when they are in groups than they do individually. A manager or human resources worker at a large corporation that employs hundreds or thousands of workers may have to deal with a large group of disgruntled employees demanding raises or fewer work hours, a task that is much different than dealing with one employee.

A final principle of sociology that is applicable across many, if not all, careers, is, in regards to rules that are socially constructed, following the rules reaps rewards while breaking the rules results in penalties. A career-minded individual has to remain aware of these socially-constructed rules, occasionally evaluate them to make sure they are morally acceptable to them as an individual and obey them or choose to disobey them with the knowledge that there will be consequences. For example, although there are not necessary laws or prison sentences for repeatedly and loudly interrupting coworkers in meetings, breaking this socially constructed law will likely result in penalties ranging from chastisement by a supervisor to firing and

becoming unemployable.

In conclusion, a sociology elective offers valuable and practical information that prepares an individual to better understand the world around them and succeed in their chosen career path. Knowing that it is possible to scientifically study the ways that groups of people act and understanding the other basic principles of sociology helps to best prepare a student for work and life.

References

Ferrante-Wallace, Joan. (2005). *Sociology: A global perspective*. Belmont, CA: Thomson Wadsworth.