

# SOCIOLOGY

## Associate Professor and Head of Department

KD Helliker, BA(Hons) (Rhodes),  
MA(Newfoundland),PhD(Rhodes)

### Professors

LJW van der Walt, BA, BA Hons(Wits), PhD (Wits)

### Associate Professors

MD Drewett, BA(Hons), MSocSc, PhD(Rhodes)

GG Klerck, BA(Hons), MA, LLB(Natal),  
PhD(Rhodes)

JJ Roodt, BA(Hons)(Rhodes), MA(Wits), PhD(Rhodes)

### Lecturers

HB Sishuta, BA(Hons)(UFH), MSocSc,

MA(Rhodes)

JKC Chisaka, BSocSc(Hons), MA(Rhodes)

C Martínez-Mullen, BA(Buenos Aires),

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B Magoqwana, BSocSc(Hons), MSocSc(Rhodes),

PhD(Rhodes)

T Alexander, BSocSc(Hons), MSocSc(Rhodes)

**Sociology** is a three-year major subject which may be studied for degree curricula in the Faculties of Humanities and Commerce.

Industrial and Economic Sociology is a two-year major subject which may be studied for degree curricula in the Faculties of Humanities and Commerce.

Sociology 1 is a compulsory requisite for both Sociology 2 and Industrial and Economic Sociology 2. Industrial and Economic Sociology and Sociology may not be taken together. A non-continuing pass in Sociology 1 will not meet the entrance requirements for Industrial and Economic Sociology 2 or for Sociology 2.

The first semester courses are written in June and the second semester courses are written in November. At first year level only, there is a rewrite for the June exam for those who wish to improve their mark – the rewrite takes place during the November exam period.

### Sociology 1

Sociology 1 introduces students to the concepts (i.e. language) used by sociologists as well as the perspectives they employ when analysing society. Social inequality, institutions (such as the state, the family, education and the economy) and social

change are discussed. Also included in Sociology 1 are topical themes which might include deviance, social change, work and leisure, population, urbanisation, environment, sexuality, poverty, sub-cultures, the media in society, religion and other relevant issues. Due attention is given to South African and global examples throughout this course.

### Sociology 2

Consists of the following courses:

**THEORY AND SOCIETY:** This course begins by introducing students to the theorising process in sociology. The central concerns and ideas of the major classical theorists are discussed. The focus is on ideas and theories developed to understand and explain major social changes brought about by earlier economic, social and political transformations up to and including events of the early 20th century. The relevance of these theories for contemporary societies is addressed.

**SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS:** This is an introductory course to social research methods, which are critical to the work of sociologists as any understanding of human society must be rooted ultimately in empirical investigations. The basic dimensions of the research process, including research design and research techniques, are discussed.

In addition, two other specialised area of study is selected from areas such as: **SOCIOLOGY OF DEVELOPMENT; RACE AND CLASS; CRIME AND DEVIANCE; SOCIOLOGY OF POLITICS; FAMILY SOCIOLOGY; SOCIOLOGY OF LANGUAGE; ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY; MASS COMMUNICATION; MIGRANT STUDIES; EDUCATION; SOCIOLOGY OF HEALTH AND ILLNESS; POPULAR CULTURE; CRITICAL ISSUES.** NOTE: The department decides which of these courses is offered in a particular year.

### Sociology 3

Consists of the following core courses:

**CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL THEORY:** This course includes contemporary theories and covers modern debates on the theorising process as well as the status of the different systems of thought in the discipline.

**SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS:** This is an advanced social research methods course which builds upon the second year course on social research. It provides a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the research process and the many complexities and challenges faced in undertaking social research.

In addition, two specialised areas of study are selected from areas such as: DEVELOPMENT STUDIES; SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION; RACE AND ETHNICITY; GENDER STUDIES; SOCIOLOGY OF RELIGION; STATE AND SOCIETY; POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY; SOCIOLOGY OF LAW; ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETY; POPULAR CULTURE; CRITICAL ISSUES. As far as possible these courses will provide an African and global focus. NOTE: The department decides which of these courses is offered in a particular year.

**Industrial and Economic Sociology 2**

Consists of the following core courses:

**INDUSTRY, ECONOMY AND SOCIETY:** This course provides a conceptual and theoretical foundation for Industrial and Economic Sociology and thus lays the basis for all other courses that follow. It examines the historical rise of capitalist societies and developments in the economies and politics during the 20th and 21st centuries. Both classical and contemporary thinkers are covered in the course.

**TRADE UNIONS AND COMPARATIVE LABOUR HISTORY:** In this course, classical and contemporary theories of trade unions are reviewed. This is followed by a comparative and historical study of trade union movements in selected countries. A primary focus is on the nature and functions of trade unions, their relationship to political parties and the state, their organisation and politics, and their structures and tactics. In addition, we consider issues such as the historical shifts in trade union tactics, the role of the trade union movement in democratic change, and the strategic challenges faced by the trade union movement.

**SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS:** This is an introductory course to social research methods, which are critical to the work of sociologists as an understanding of human society must be rooted

ultimately in empirical investigations. The basic dimensions of the research process, including research design and research techniques, are discussed.

**SOCIOLOGY OF THE LABOUR MARKET:** This course offers a distinctively sociological understanding of labour markets in capitalist societies. It examines the power structures and inequalities that underpin labour markets. And it traces the important changes in the typical employment contract that have taken place under neo-liberal restructuring.

Other specialized areas of study that are sometimes on offer, as decided by the department, could include: GENDER AND WORK; INDUSTRIAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH; ORGANISATIONAL STUDIES; LABOUR IN THE WORLD ECONOMY; CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN THE WORKPLACE.

**Industrial and Economic Sociology 3**

Consists of the following papers:

**THE SOCIOLOGY OF WORK:** This course explores in detail the question of work in industrial society, and considers the related areas of technological development and managerial strategies. It examines both classical and contemporary theoretical views on work. Included the course is a discussion of the debates on the changing labour process. More contemporary forms of industrial restructuring and the future of work are also covered.

**SOCIAL RESEARCH METHODS:** This is an advanced social research methods course which builds upon the second year course on social research. It provides a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the research process and the many complexities and challenges faced in undertaking social research.

**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS:** This course provides an introduction to the processes and institutions of industrial relations. The role in collective bargaining of trade unions, employers' organizations and the state are explored in some detail. Aspects of labour law, such as discipline, retrenchment and dismissal, are covered. The final part of the course deals with the nature of industrial conflict and the various models and mechanisms for dispute resolution.

**THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF CONTEMPORARY CAPITALISM:** This course explores contemporary capitalism, with specific reference to neo-liberal restructuring, locating South African developments within larger global and historical processes. It provides an introduction to economic sociology and political economy, an examination of the theory underlying, and the causes and effects, of neo-liberal models; it also considers the impact of competing state policies and state capacity – and class struggles – on those policies. The course also examines alternative models, and considers the question of whether there are alternatives to neo-liberalism.

Other specialised areas of study sometimes on offer, as decided by the department, could include: DEVELOPMENT AND INDUSTRIALISATION; STATE, LAW AND LABOUR; CONTEMPORARY CAPITALISM AND GLOBALISATION; SOCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL POLICY; POLITICAL ECONOMY OF THE INDUSTRIAL STATE; ECONOMIC SOCIOLOGY; LABOUR AND THE LEFT.

### **Honours Degree**

An Honours degree may be taken in Industrial and Economic Sociology, Sociology or Development Studies. Candidates will be registered in the faculty in which the undergraduate degree was completed.

### **Industrial and Economic Sociology**

The degree consists of four courses and a compulsory research dissertation on a topic approved by the department. The four courses to be offered in a particular year are at the discretion of the department, and would include four of the following, the courses on offer in a given year to be decided by the department.

Advanced sociology of work  
Economic and industrial policy  
Human resource development and management  
Industrial relations  
Labor market studies  
Globalization, flexible labor and the criminal economy  
Labor law  
Philosophy of the social sciences  
Trade unions and comparative labor studies  
Any other specialised paper

### **Sociology**

The degree consists of four courses and a compulsory research dissertation on a topic approved by the department. The four courses to be offered in a particular year are at the discretion of the department, and would include four of the following, the courses on offer in a given year to be decided by the department.

Gender studies  
Land and agrarian studies  
Philosophy of the social sciences  
State and society  
Sociology of health  
Sociology of identities  
Sociology of Race  
Theory  
Any other specialised paper

### **Development Studies**

The degree consists of four courses and a compulsory research dissertation on a topic approved by the department. The four courses to be offered in a particular year are at the discretion of the department, and would include four of the following, the courses on offer in a given year to be decided by the department.

Development theory  
Environmental sociology  
Land and agrarian studies  
Philosophy of the social sciences  
State and social accountability  
Social policy in development  
Any other specialised paper

In the case of all three honours programmes, candidates may, with the approval of the head of department, take no more than one paper in other departments.

### **Interdisciplinary Honours Degrees**

See Interdepartmental Studies.

This Department participates in the Interdisciplinary Honours degree offerings in Industrial Relations, Development Studies, Gender Studies, and South African Cultural Studies. The Development Studies Interdisciplinary Honours degree differs from the Development Studies Honours course in the department, in that the former degree allows for the undertaking of courses in up to four different departments.

### **Master's Degrees**

See the General Rules.

A Master's Degree may be taken in Sociology, Industrial and Economic Sociology, and Development Studies by thesis or by coursework/thesis. The thesis programme normally takes two years, and the thesis/coursework programme takes place over one year. Students will not be accepted for a Master's Degree by thesis if they have not completed a research paper in their honours programme, or submitted a satisfactory long essay with their Master's application. Candidates may be registered in Humanities or Commerce, depending on the faculty in which the Honours degree was completed.

\* Masters by thesis: this degree involves research only, and the production, within two years, of a thesis of 50,000 words. Proposals should be submitted to the Faculty within 9 months of registration.

\* Masters by coursework: this degree takes place over twelve months, and consists of three courses, plus a mini-thesis of 30,000 words. The courses on offer are to be determined by the Department on an annual basis, and might include:  
Advanced social theory  
Advanced research methods  
Development studies  
Industry, Economy and Society

Land and Agrarian studies

Any other specialised paper

The course will normally begin one week before the first term. Proposals for the thesis must be submitted to the Faculty mid-year, at a date announced by the Department, and the final thesis is due within 12 months of registration.

### **Doctoral Degrees**

See the General Rules.

A Doctoral Degree (PhD) in Sociology is taken by thesis. The faculties in which the degree may be registered are Humanities or Commerce. Proposals should be submitted to the Faculty within 9 months of registration.

### **Memorandum of understanding**

All postgraduate students, including Honours, Masters by coursework, Masters by thesis, and PhDs, are required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with their supervisors, to be filed in the Department. The Memorandum outlines the responsibilities of both student and supervisor.

### **Unit of Zimbabwean Studies**

Within the department is a Unit of Zimbabwean Studies, focusing on research as well as theses by post-graduate students. Associate Professor Helliker can be contacted for further information about this.