Positions Advertised in the ASA Job Bank in 2018

American Sociological Association
Department of Research, Professional Development, and Academic Affairs

This brief analyzes the position advertisements in the American Sociological Association (ASA) Job Bank in 2018.[1] Before 2016, data focused only on academic positions, so trend analysis in this report is limited to the academic sector.

The ASA Job Bank is a primary source for job advertisements that may be of interest to sociologists, particularly for tenure-line and full-time visiting academic positions. However, it does not represent the universe of jobs available to sociologists; contingent faculty positions and jobs outside of academia are underrepresented. Thus, these data represent the jobs advertised in the ASA Job Bank in 2018, not the jobs available for MA-level and PhD-level sociologists more broadly.

Figure 1 plots trend lines for the number of tenure-system positions advertised in the ASA Job Bank from 2009 to 2018. The total number of tenure-system jobs advertised in the ASA Job Bank grew steadily from 2009 to 2016, when 526 tenure line positions were advertised, and then declined in 2017 and 2018. The number of positions advertised at the assistant professor level peaked at 351 in 2013 and declined to 269 in 2018. This decline could be a result of fewer institutions advertising positions for tenure-track assistant

Figure 1. Tenure System Positions Advertised in the ASA Job Bank, 2009-2018
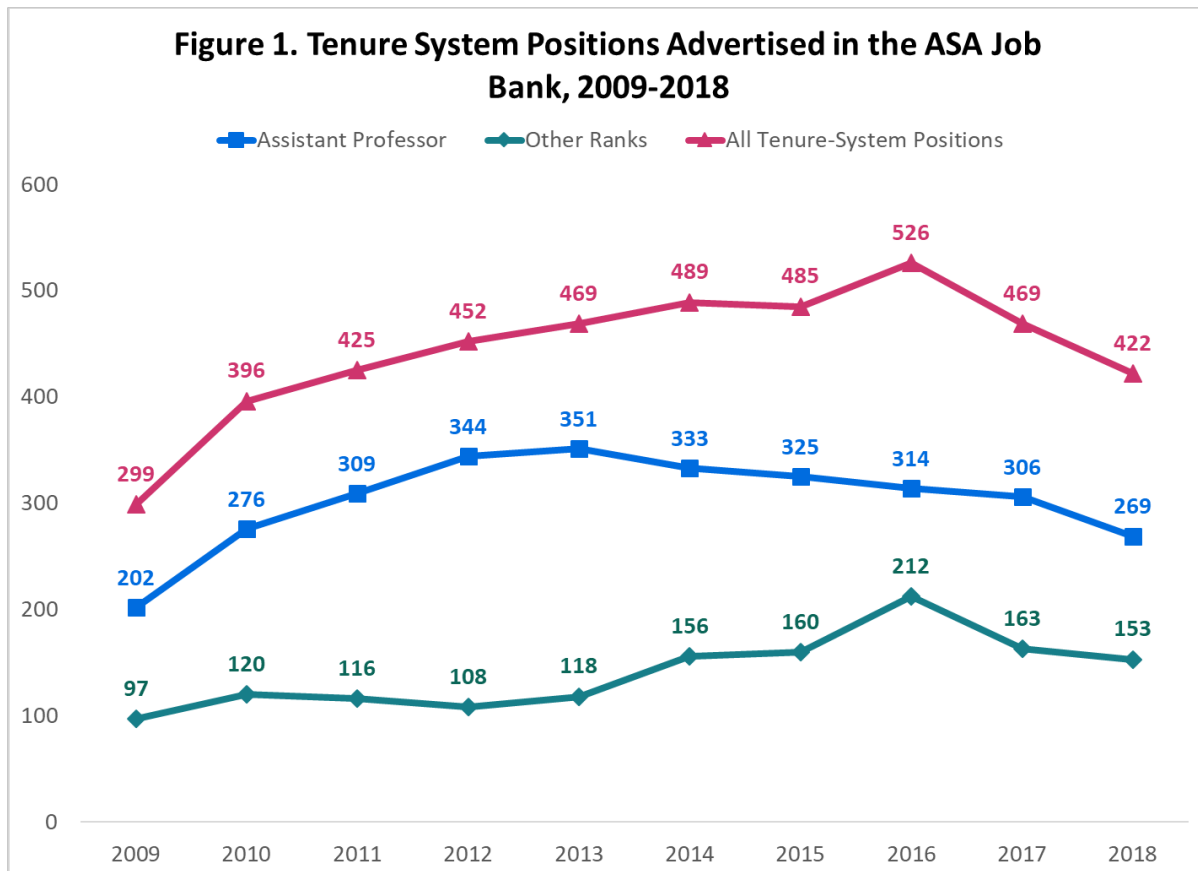
professors in sociology and related fields or from more institutions advertising these positions in places other than the ASA Job Bank (or both).

Table 1 reports the number and percent of all jobs advertised in the ASA Job Bank. In 2018, 745 positions in the U.S. were advertised. This is 2.2 percent less than the 762 positions advertised in 2017 and 8.9 percent less than the 815 positions in 2016. More than three-quarters of the 2018 positions were for jobs in the academic sector: 56.6 percent were for tenure-track positions, 16.4 percent were for non-tenure track academic positions, and 4.3 percent were for academic administrator positions. Among the tenure track positions, 63.7 percent were for assistant professors and 16.1 percent were open rank. For the non-tenure track academic positions, about half (50.8 percent) were at the visiting assistant professor level, and 41 percent were instructors or lecturers. Academic administrators include both department chairs and heads (46.9 percent of the category) and other administrators (53.1 percent), which includes deans, program directors, and other administrative positions in the academic sector.

Fellowships, primarily post-doctoral fellowships, make up 17.7 percent of the positions advertised. Finally, five percent of the positions in the Job Bank in 2018 were for jobs in sociological practice, including research scientists, policy analysts, statisticians, and center directors. This is likely an undercount of the number and kinds of positions available to PhD sociologists in the non-academic sector. According to the Survey of Earned Doctorates, about 12 percent of new sociology PhD recipients in 2017 had jobs in practice settings, making up a fifth of new PhDs with definite employment.[2]

Areas of Specialization

Figure 2 shows the ten areas of specialization sought most frequently in advertisements for academic positions, both tenure-track and non-
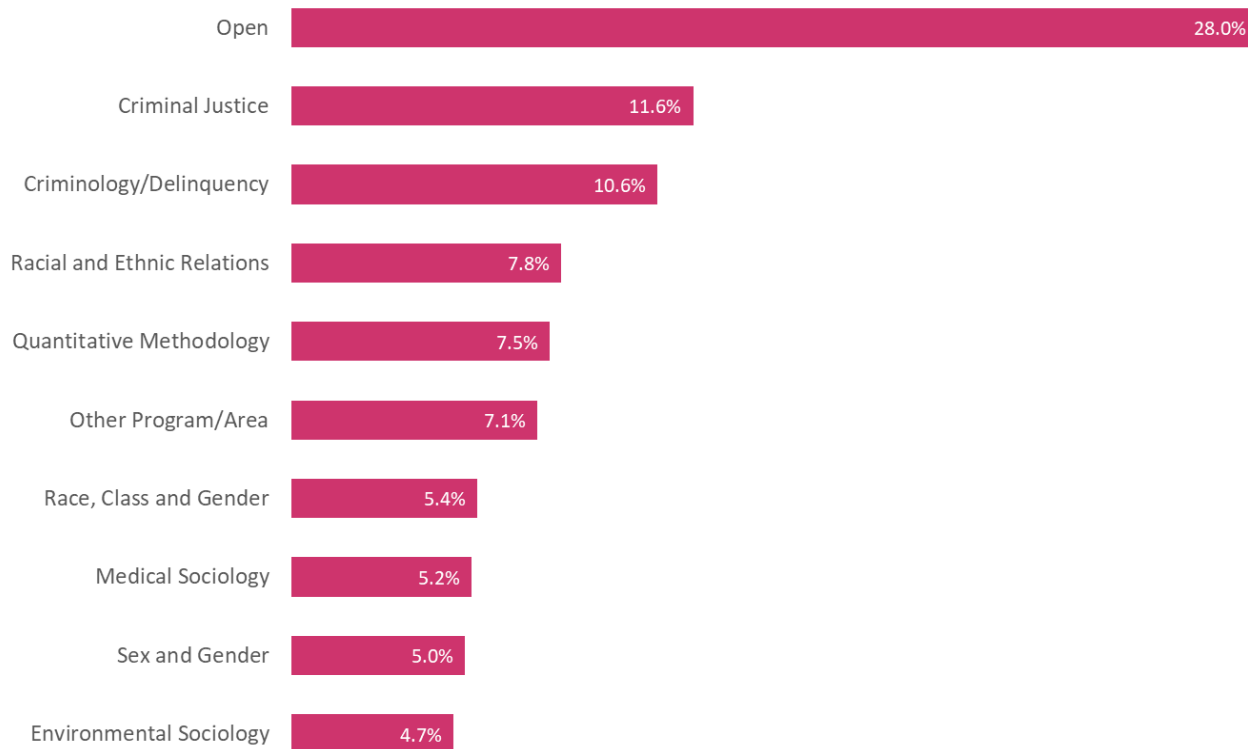
Table 1: All Listings in the ASA Job Bank by Category, 2018

	Count	Percent
Academic: Tenure Track Positions		
Assistant Professor	269	63.7%
Associate Professor	31	7.3%
Full Professor	10	2.4%
Assistant or Associate Professor	44	10.4%
Open Rank	68	16.1%
Subtotal	422	100.0%
Percentage of Total Positions Advertised		56.6%
Academic: Non-Tenure Track Positions		
Instructor/Lecturer	50	41.0%
Assistant Professor	62	50.8%
Other	10	8.2%
Subtotal	122	100.0%
Percentage of Total Positions Advertised		16.4%
Academic: Administrators		
Chair/Head	15	46.9%
Other Administrator	17	53.1%
Subtotal	32	100.0%
Percentage of Total Positions Advertised		4.3%
Fellowships		
Pre-doctoral	3	2.3%
Post-doctoral	119	90.2%
Other	10	7.6%
Subtotal	132	100.0%
Percentage of Total Positions Advertised		17.7%
Sociological Practice		
Researcher/Statistician	18	48.6%
Director/Assistant Director	2	5.4%
Program Manager	1	2.7%
Other	16	43.2%
Subtotal	37	100.0%
Percentage of Total Positions Advertised		5.0%
Total U.S. Positions Advertised	745	100.0%

tenure-track, in 2018. (For a complete list of the 67 areas that were sought in the advertisements, see Appendix A.) Like in previous years, open area positions were mentioned most frequently. When employers listed a specialization, criminal justice was the most frequently sought, followed closely by criminology/delinquency. Other areas that were frequently sought in advertisements for academic positions were race and ethnic relations; quantitative methodology; "other areas"; race, class, and gender; medical sociology; sex and gender; and environmental sociology. Together, 64.9 percent of academic position advertisements in 2018 were seeking

Figure 2. Ten Most Frequent Areas of Specialization for Academic Positions

Percent of advertisements for academic positions in the ASA Job Bank, 2018

Area	Percent
Open	28.0%
Criminal Justice	11.6%
Criminology/Delinquency	10.6%
Racial and Ethnic Relations	7.8%
Quantitative Methodology	7.5%
Other Program/Area	7.1%
Race, Class and Gender	5.4%
Medical Sociology	5.2%
Sex and Gender	5.0%
Environmental Sociology	4.7%

sociologists with expertise in at least one of these nine topical areas.

As noted in Table 1, fewer fellowships and sociological practice positions are advertised in the ASA Job Bank. Appendix B and Appendix C list the areas of specialization for these positions. For fellowships, 69 of the positions were coded by employers as open and another 18 were "other area." Eleven fellowship positions were in environmental sociology, ten were in human ecology (all at the same organization), and ten were in medical sociology. Nineteen of the 37 positions in sociological practice were advertising for open areas of specialization. Criminal justice was mentioned in six of the advertisements, as was demography.

Although we do not have measures for the areas of expertise of graduate student job seekers, the sociology interest areas identified by student members of ASA could be a proxy measure. Appendix D presents these data. In 2018, the top five areas of interest for student members of ASA were race, class, and gender; sex and gender; cultural sociology; racial and ethnic relations; and political sociology. Notably, the high frequency of position advertisements looking for specialists in criminal justice, criminology/delinquency, medical sociology, environmental sociology, and quantitative methods is not matched by the popularity of these areas among ASA student members. Similarly, the high proportion of student members interested in cultural sociology in 2018 is not reflected in the position advertisements. A similar mismatch was evident in previous years.

Regions

Table 2 shows the geographic distribution of the academic, fellowship, and practice

Table 2: All Listings in the ASA Job Bank by US Region, 2018

	Count	Percent
Academic Positions		
Northeast	163	28.3%
South	132	22.9%
Midwest	160	27.8%
West	120	20.8%
All US Regions	1	0.2%
Total	576	100.0%
Fellowships		
Northeast	67	50.8%
South	12	9.1%
Midwest	21	15.9%
West	31	23.5%
All US Regions	1	0.8%
Total	132	100.0%
Sociological Practice		
Northeast	18	48.6%
South	4	10.8%
Midwest	3	8.1%
West	9	24.3%
All US Regions	3	8.1%
Total	37	100.0%

positions advertised in the ASA Job Bank in 2018. The regions are based on U.S. Census Bureau definitions. Each region had at least 20 percent of advertised academic jobs. The highest proportions were in the Northeast (28.3 percent) and Midwest (27.8 percent).

Compared to academic jobs, fellowships and practice jobs advertised in the Job Bank are more heavily concentrated in the Northeast. About half of these positions were in the Northeast (50.8 percent of fellowships and 48.6 percent of positions in practice settings), and about a quarter were in the West (23.5 percent of fellowships and 24.3 percent of practice positions).

Methodological Notes

The data used in this report come from an export of all positions advertised in the ASA Job Bank in 2018. Information for the Job Bank is entered by employers, including department chairs, human resource professionals, and administrative staff. From these administrative data, an analytical dataset with one record for each advertisement was created; each record included the job titles, descriptions, position ranks, areas of expertise, tenure status, and regions that were provided by the employers. Additional cases were added to the dataset for any job descriptions advertising more than one position (17 percent of the ads) to ensure each available position would be included in the analysis. Any positions based outside of the U.S. or that were identified as duplicate advertisements were removed from the dataset.

Employers were required to select a position-rank from a dropdown menu of 25 options: Academic Positions: All; Academic Positions: Instructor; Academic Positions: Lecturer; Academic Positions: Assistant Professor; Academic Positions: Associate Professor; Academic Positions: Full Professor; Academic Positions: Other; Academic Positions: Assistant/Associate Professor; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: All; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Researcher; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Director; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Assistant Director; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Training; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Program Manager; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Statistician; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Human Relations/Personnel; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Clinical Work; Sociological Practice/Applied/Other: Other; Fellowships/Post-docs: All; Fellowships/Post-docs: Pre-doctoral; Fellowships/Post-docs: Post-doctoral; Fellowships/Post-docs: Other; and Open. When the position-rank chosen by the employer from the dropdown was inconsistent with the job title as entered by the employer, the job description was used to

determine the position-rank to include in the analysis. In addition, every position labeled "open" was reviewed and recoded into one of the other categories as appropriate; 12 were academic positions (10 open rank and 2 other) and 12 were positions in the practice sector.

For job descriptions with two ranks indicated, a standard set of recategorization rules was applied. Jobs that were at the assistant or associate level are coded in their own category; jobs at the associate or full level are included in the associate category; and jobs that were at the instructor or assistant level, where the title depends on the highest degree held by the employee (e.g., employees with a PhD are assistant professors and employees without a PhD are instructors), are categorized at the rank of assistant professor. In total, 148 position-ranks were recoded.

Employers could describe the tenure status of the position by selecting one of the following categories from a dropdown menu: tenure-track, tenured, tenure eligible, not tenure track, and not applicable. For all academic positions, the tenure status item was reviewed. If the status chosen by the employer was inconsistent with the job title entered by the employer (e.g., a "Visiting Assistant Professor" position was listed as tenure track), tenure status was changed to reflect the information in the job description. If the description was ambiguous, tenure status was left as the employer submitted it. In addition, all jobs with the status "tenure eligible" were reviewed and recoded into other categories based on title and description. The status was left as "tenure eligible" for two postdoc positions that were described as having the potential to convert to tenure stream. In all, tenure status was recoded for 67 of the 745 positions. The tenure-track category in the analysis includes both tenure track and tenured positions.

The academic administrator category was created based on job title, position-rank, and job description. Administrators who are also professors (e.g., department chairs) are not included in the professor counts.

Employers are required to select one area of expertise from a dropdown list of 82 areas of specialization in sociology; they have the option to select a second area as well. The areas of "teaching and learning in sociology," "education," and "sociological practice" are sometimes chosen by employers to describe the sector or type of employment, rather than the area of sociological specialization for the position. Advertisements that had one of these three areas as the first area of expertise were reviewed: when the job description indicated an area of specialization that was inconsistent with the one chosen by the employer, it was recoded to be consistent with the description. This was the case for 8 of the 17 positions labeled with "education." In addition, all 17 positions labeled "sociological practice" (which the descriptions revealed were actually academic positions, not positions in practice settings) and all 4 of the positions labeled as "teaching and learning in sociology" were also recoded to reflect the descriptions.

Counts for areas of specialization are based on the number of times the area was selected as the first or second area of specialization for all positions. Percentages report the proportion of advertisements that mention that area.

When joining or renewing their ASA membership, sociologists are asked to identify their areas of interest from among the same list of 82 areas. The areas of interest selected by ASA student members was used as a proxy measure of interest area supply.

The geographic location of each position was recoded into Census categories based on the regions selected by employers and the location of the employer.

[1] Analysis for previous years can be found at http://www.asanet.org/research-and-publications/research-sociology

[2] See the Profile of 2017 PhDs in Sociology from the Survey of Earned Doctorates (https://www.asanet.org/research-and-publications/research-sociology/research-snapshots)

Appendix A. All Areas of Specialization or Expertise for Academic Positions Advertised in the ASA Job Bank, 2018

Area	Count	Percent	Area	Count	Percent
Open	161	28.0%	Political Economy	3	0.5%
Criminal Justice	67	11.6%	Socialization	3	0.5%
Criminology/Delinquency	61	10.6%	Teaching and Learning in Sociology	3	0.5%
Racial and Ethnic Relations	45	7.8%	Animals and Society	2	0.3%
Quantitative Methodology	43	7.5%	Biosociology	2	0.3%
Other Program/Area	41	7.1%	Children and Youth	2	0.3%
Race, Class and Gender	31	5.4%	Religion	2	0.3%
Medical Sociology	30	5.2%	Social Organization	2	0.3%
Sex and Gender	29	5.0%	Sociological Practice	2	0.3%
Environmental Sociology	27	4.7%	Disabilities	1	0.2%
Urban Sociology	22	3.8%	Ethnography (Anthropology)	1	0.2%
Public Policy	19	3.3%	History of Sociology/Social Thought	1	0.2%
Statistics	19	3.3%	Knowledge	1	0.2%
Organizations, Formal and Complex	17	3.0%	Labor and Labor Movements	1	0.2%
Social Psychology	17	3.0%	Leisure/Sports/Recreation	1	0.2%
Latina/o Sociology	16	2.8%	Mathematical Sociology	1	0.2%
Law and Society	15	2.6%	Military Sociology	1	0.2%
Economic Sociology	14	2.4%	Occupations/Professions	1	0.2%
Global and Transnational Sociology	14	2.4%	Policy Analysis	1	0.2%
Demography	12	2.1%	Inequality and Poverty	1	0.2%
Migration/Immigration	12	2.1%			
Asians/Asian-Americans	11	1.9%			
Community	11	1.9%			
Family	10	1.7%			
Qualitative Methodology	10	1.7%			
Education	9	1.6%			
Social Welfare/Social Work	9	1.6%			
Cultural Sociology	8	1.4%			
Stratification/Mobility	8	1.4%			
Political Sociology	7	1.2%			
Work and Labor Markets	7	1.2%			
Development	6	1.0%			
Science and Technology	6	1.0%			
Sexualities	6	1.0%			
Aging/Social Gerontology	5	0.9%			
Communication and Information Technologies	5	0.9%			
Theory	5	0.9%			
Applied Sociology/Evaluation Research	4	0.7%			
Collective Behavior/Social Movements	4	0.7%			
Mental Health	4	0.7%			
Rural Sociology	4	0.7%			
Social Change	4	0.7%			
Human Rights	4	0.7%			
Alcohol and Drugs	3	0.5%			
Deviant Behavior/Social Disorganization	3	0.5%			
Human Ecology	3	0.5%			
Peace, War, World Conflict, & Conflict Resolution	3	0.5%			

Note: Employers can select up to two areas of specialization. Counts indicate the number of times each area was selected. The percentage indicates the proportion of the 576 ads for academic positions that select the area.

Appendix B: All Areas of Specialization or Expertise for Fellowship Positions Posted in the ASA Job Bank, 2018

Area	Count	Percent
Open	69	52.3
Other Program/Area	18	13.6%
Environmental Sociology	11	8.3%
Human Ecology	10	7.6%
Medical Sociology	10	7.6%
Demography	8	6.1%
Racial and Ethnic Relations	8	6.1%
Quantitative Methodology	7	5.3%
Race, Class and Gender	7	5.3%
Sex and Gender	7	5.3%
Education	5	3.8%
Science and Technology	5	3.8%
Cultural Sociology	4	3.0%
Political Sociology	4	3.0%
Qualitative Methodology	4	3.0%
Aging/Social Gerontology	3	2.3%
Asians/Asian-Americans	3	2.3%
Criminology/Delinquency	3	2.3%
Economic Sociology	3	2.3%
Work and Labor Markets	3	2.3%
Public Policy	2	1.5%
Religion	2	1.5%
Social Change	2	1.5%
Global and Transnational Sociology	2	1.5%
Biosociology	1	0.8%
Collective Behavior/Social Movements	1	0.8%
Comparative Sociology/Historical Sociology	1	0.8%
Criminal Justice	1	0.8%
Family	1	0.8%
Law and Society	1	0.8%
Migration/Immigration	1	0.8%
Occupations/Professions	1	0.8%
Policy Analysis	1	0.8%
Political Economy	1	0.8%
Social Networks	1	0.8%
Social Psychology	1	0.8%
Statistics	1	0.8%
Stratification/Mobility	1	0.8%
Urban Sociology	1	0.8%
Human Rights	1	0.8%

Note: Employers can select up to two areas of specialization. Counts indicate the number of times each area was selected. The percentage indicates the proportion of the 132 ads for fellowships that select the area.

Appendix C: All Areas of Specialization or Expertise for Practice Positions Posted in the ASA Job Bank, 2018

Area	Count	Percent
Open	19	51.4%
Criminal Justice	6	16.2%
Demography	6	16.2%
Statistics	4	10.8%
Public Policy	3	8.1%
Aging/Social Gerontology	2	5.4%
Applied Sociology/Evaluation Research	2	5.4%
Law and Society	2	5.4%
Qualitative Methodology	2	5.4%
Disabilities	1	2.7%
Education	1	2.7%
Religion	1	2.7%
Science and Technology	1	2.7%
Social Networks	1	2.7%
Other Program/Area	1	2.7%

Note: Employers can select up to two areas of specialization. Counts indicate the number of times each area was selected. The percentage indicates the proportion of the 52 ads for practice positions that select the area.

Appendix D: ASA Student Member Interest Areas, 2018

Interest Area	Count	Percent	Interest Area	Count	Percent
Race, Class and Gender	778	21.5%	Marxist Sociology	104	2.9%
Sex and Gender	587	16.2%	Knowledge	104	2.9%
Cultural Sociology	559	15.4%	Body and Embodiment	102	2.8%
Racial and Ethnic Relations	497	13.7%	Human Rights	101	2.8%
Political Sociology	458	12.6%	Deviant Behavior/Social Disorganization	100	2.8%
Stratification/Mobility	452	12.5%	Community	95	2.6%
Education	441	12.2%	Asians/Asian-Americans	95	2.6%
Medical Sociology	433	12.0%	Applied Sociology/Evaluation Research	92	2.5%
Migration/Immigration	367	10.1%	Communication & Information Technologies	89	2.5%
Urban Sociology	352	9.7%	Statistics	89	2.5%
Family	337	9.3%	Peace, War, World Conflict, & Conflict Resolution	76	2.1%
Social Psychology	327	9.0%	Disabilities	70	1.9%
Qualitative Methodology	324	8.9%	Rural Sociology	66	1.8%
Collective Behavior/Social Movements	313	8.6%	Policy Analysis	65	1.8%
Theory	308	8.5%	Emotions	59	1.6%
Quantitative Methodology	297	8.2%	Altruism, Morality and Social Solidarity	58	1.6%
Global and Transnational Sociology	291	8.0%	Mass Communication/Public Opinion	58	1.6%
Economic Sociology	291	8.0%	Consumers and Consumption	57	1.6%
Criminology/Delinquency	275	7.6%	Social Control	56	1.5%
Sexualities	243	6.7%	Alcohol and Drugs	53	1.5%
Environmental Sociology	237	6.5%	Other	47	1.3%
Comparative/Historical Sociology	223	6.2%	Mathematical Sociology	44	1.2%
Organizations, Formal and Complex	219	6.0%	Social Welfare/Social Work	43	1.2%
Demography	218	6.0%	Animals and Society	41	1.1%
Religion	212	5.9%	Art/Music	41	1.1%
Social Networks	204	5.6%	Penology/Corrections	38	1.0%
Law and Society	202	5.6%	Socialization	37	1.0%
Science and Technology	196	5.4%	Visual Sociology	33	0.9%
Work and Labor Markets	195	5.4%	History of Sociology/Social Thought	32	0.9%
Mental Health	188	5.2%	Social Organization	29	0.8%
Public Policy	177	4.9%	Language/Social Linguistics	28	0.8%
Political Economy	164	4.5%	Military Sociology	26	0.7%
Children and Youth	162	4.5%	Small Groups	25	0.7%
Criminal Justice	162	4.5%	Biosociology	24	0.7%
Development	157	4.3%	Leisure/Sports/Recreation	22	0.6%
Ethnography (Anthropology)	142	3.9%	Ethnomethodology/Conversational Analysis	22	0.6%
Aging/Social Gerontology	136	3.8%	Human Ecology	14	0.4%
Teaching and Learning in Sociology	134	3.7%	Sociological Practice	13	0.4%
Social Change	128	3.5%	Rational Choice	8	0.2%
Latina/o Sociology	112	3.1%	Evolution and Society	7	0.2%
Labor and Labor Movements	107	3.0%	Clinical Sociology	6	0.2%
Occupations/Professions	105	2.9%	Microcomputing	2	0.1%
			Total Student Members	3621	

Source: American Sociological Association Membership Database, 2018

Note: Members may select up to four areas of "sociological interest" on their membership forms.