

Sociology

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This department has graduate programs leading to the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy degrees in sociology.

Admission Criteria

An applicant is required to have completed prerequisite undergraduate courses in statistics, sociological theory, and sociological methodology. The applicant must submit

1. a completed application form for graduate study at MSU;
2. official transcripts from previous institutions;
3. a GPA of 3.00 on the last two years of baccalaureate work;
4. an academic writing sample in English [a sample of the student's choice];
5. General Graduate Records Examination [GRE] scores;
6. three letters of recommendation [from people who know the student's academic abilities and potential];
7. a statement of purpose [explaining why the student wishes to study Sociology at MSU and how the program at MSU will assist the student in attaining goals].

Provisional Admission

A student who has not fully met the requirements stipulated by the University and the Sociology program for admission may be granted admission as a degree-seeking graduate student with provisional status. The student must have as his or her initial objective advancement to regular status. The provisional student must receive a 3.00 GPA on the first 9 hours of graduate-level courses on the program of study taken at Mississippi State University (courses with an S grade, transfer credits, or credits earned while in Unclassified status cannot be used to satisfy this requirement) in order to achieve regular status. If a 3.00 is not attained, the provisional student will be dismissed from graduate study. While in the provisional status, students are not eligible to hold a graduate assistantship.

Academic Performance

Continuous enrollment in the M.S. program in Sociology is dependent upon a satisfactory evaluation of academic performance and progress toward completion of the degree. Unsatisfactory performance will result in dismissal from the program. A student's performance is deemed unsatisfactory if one or more of the following occurs:

- More than two letter grades below a B in a student's graduate coursework
- Failure to maintain a cumulative 3.00 GPA for two consecutive semesters
- More than one unsatisfactory U grade for thesis research
- Two failures on the M.S. Exit Examination or two failures on the M.S. Thesis Defense

Continuous enrollment in the Ph.D. program in Sociology is dependent upon a satisfactory evaluation of academic performance and progress toward completion of the degree. Unsatisfactory performance will result in dismissal from the Ph.D. program. A student's performance is deemed unsatisfactory if one or more of the following occurs:

1. More than two letter grades below a B in a student's graduate coursework
2. More than one letter grade below a B in a student's graduate Core I coursework
3. Failure to maintain a cumulative 3.00 GPA for two consecutive semesters
4. More than one unsatisfactory U grade for dissertation research
5. Two failures on the Ph.D. Qualifying Examination
6. Two failures on the Ph.D. Preliminary Examination
7. Two failures on the Ph.D. Dissertation Defense

All graduate students' progress will be monitored by the graduate coordinator and/or the student's major advisor. If a student's performance borders on unsatisfactory or if a student is not making timely progress, he or she will be formally notified of the situation and advised accordingly.

Master of Science in Sociology - Thesis

SO 8103	Graduate Theory I	3
SO 8213	Research Design	3
SO 8274	Graduate Social Statistics I	4
Additional coursework ¹		14
SO 8000	Thesis Research/ Thesis in Sociology	6
Total Hours		30

¹ A minimum of 12 GPA credit hours of graduate coursework must be taken at the 8000 level.

Upon the completion of coursework for a student's program of study, a student must defend a thesis proposal. Once the thesis proposal is accepted by the student's thesis committee, the student may proceed to carry out the thesis research in close consultation with his or her thesis committee. After the thesis committee unanimously agrees that the thesis is defensible the student must pass a public defense of the thesis.

NOTE: Thesis and dissertation research are subject to review and approval by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Master of Science in Sociology - Non-Thesis

SO 8103	Graduate Theory I	3
SO 8213	Research Design	3
SO 8274	Graduate Social Statistics I	4
Additional coursework ¹		26
Total Hours		36

¹ A minimum of 15 GPA credit hours of graduate coursework must be taken at the 8000 level.

A student must take an exit examination. The exit examination may be taken during the semester that all coursework for a student's program of study is completed or the semester immediately following completion of the coursework. The exit examination is a five hour, in-class exam which covers social theory, social research methods and statistic, and general sociology.

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology

SO 8213	Research Design ¹	3
SO 8103	Graduate Theory I ¹	3
SO 8113	Graduate Theory II ¹	3
SO 8274	Graduate Social Statistics I ¹	4
SO 8284	Graduate Social Statistics II ¹	4
Sociology theory, methods, statistics (tools) coursework		4
General sociology coursework		9
Area of specialization coursework		15
Electives		9
SO 9000	Dissertation Research /Dissertation in Sociology	20
Total Hours		74

¹ After completing the six courses, a Ph.D. student is required to pass a Ph.D. qualifying examination in the areas of theory, methods, and statistics. The student typically takes the qualifying exam during the third or fourth semester of study.

After completing all coursework, the student takes a comprehensive preliminary examination in the area of specialization. Areas of specialization include

1. Social Demography;
2. Criminology/Social Disorganizational/Criminal Justice;
3. Rural Sociology/Social Change and Development; and
4. Social Inequality and Stratification.

After the completion of coursework for a student's program of study, the successful completion of the Ph.D. Qualifying examination, and the Ph.D. Preliminary examination, a student is admitted into doctoral candidacy. A doctoral candidate must defend a dissertation proposal. Once the dissertation proposal is accepted by the student's dissertation committee, the candidate may proceed to conduct dissertation research in close consultation with his or her dissertation committee. After the dissertation committee unanimously agrees that the dissertation is defensible, the candidate must pass a public defense of the dissertation.

NOTE: Thesis and dissertation research are subject to review and approval by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Minor in Sociology

Graduate minors in Sociology must complete 12 hours of graduate courses in sociology and pass a written examination prepared by the minor professor. A minor committee member must serve on the student's graduate committee.