

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

To apply to either degree program, the applicant must submit the following.

1. A completed application packet 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).

Academic Performance

Master of Science

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
- Two failures on the M.S. thesis defense

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. The student must pass a public defense of the thesis.

Doctor of Philosophy

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 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 dissertation research
- Two failures on the Preliminary Examination

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

Master of Science in Sociology - Thesis

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

Sociological Tools ¹		23
SO 8213	Research Design ¹	
SO 8103	Graduate Theory I ¹	
SO 8113	Graduate Theory II ¹	
SO 8223	Advanced Quantitative Methods	
SO 8233	Qualitative Analysis	
SO 8274	Graduate Social Statistics I ¹	
SO 8284	Graduate Social Statistics II ¹	
Area of Specialization Coursework		15
Electives		12
SO 9000	Dissertation Research /Dissertation in Sociology	20
Total Hours		70

¹ After completing the seven 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 the following.

1. Criminology
2. Rural Sociology
3. Social Demography and Population Studies
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.