

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Master of Science Degree in Sociology

The Master of Science degree in Sociology is designed to prepare graduates with the skills necessary to enter the professional workforce as sociologists or to pursue further study at the doctoral level. Students have the opportunity to acquire a knowledge base in sociological methods, theory and in areas of growing community concern, including health, aging, civil-military relations, socioeconomic development, gender issues, and race and ethnic relations. They will have the necessary research skills to define social issues and problems, select data collection techniques, establish appropriate analysis methods, develop statistical reports, and undertake policy analyses for businesses, governmental agencies, and nonprofit organizations.

Program Admission Requirements. To qualify for unconditional admission, applicants must satisfy University-wide and College-wide graduate admission requirements, and be recommended for admission by the Graduate Program Committee. Applicants must have completed 18 semester credit hours of undergraduate courses, 12 of which must be at the upper-division level in sociology or related areas, including a course in research methods or statistics. Applicants who do not meet these requirements will be considered for conditional admission. Conditional applicants must submit indicators of preparation for graduate study, such as completion of additional undergraduate coursework to remove deficiencies, completion of 9 or more semester credit hours of graduate courses, and the achievement of a 3.0 grade point average (on a 4.0 scale). An applicant not eligible for either unconditional or conditional admission may be recommended for admission as a special graduate student. This does not guarantee subsequent admission as a degree-seeking graduate student; such students must reapply for degree-seeking status.

Degree Requirements. The minimum number of semester credit hours required for the degree, exclusive of coursework or other study required to remove deficiencies, is 36.

Degree candidates must complete the following requirements:

A. 6 semester credit hours of core courses:

SOC	5003	Sociological Theory
SOC	5013	Advanced Conceptualization and Measurement or
SOC	5033	Qualitative Research Methods

B. 18 semester credit hours of prescribed electives from the following courses:

SOC	5023	Quantitative Research Methods
SOC	5043	Evaluation Research
SOC	5103	Complex Organizations
SOC	5123	Family Contexts and Social Change
SOC	5133	Sociology of Health and Health Care
SOC	5143	Demography and Community Trends
SOC	5153	Sociology of Tourism and Leisure
SOC	5203	Social Stratification

SOC	5213	Race and Ethnic Relations
SOC	5223	Mexican Americans: Community, Culture, and Class
SOC	5233	Gender and Society
SOC	5253	Border Studies
SOC	5263	Cultural Studies
SOC	5323	Sociology of Childhood
SOC	5333	Language and Society
SOC	5343	Education and Reproduction of Inequality
SOC	5353	Crime and Delinquency
SOC	5363	Theory Building and Methods
SOC	5403	Social Movements
SOC	5423	Social Psychology
SOC	6043	Immigration and Society
SOC	6053	Political Sociology
SOC	6063	Health and Health Disparities
SOC	6143	Sociology of Religion
SOC	6903	Topics in Advanced Sociology
SOC	6973	Special Problems

C. 6 semester credit hours of additional electives in sociology or other approved discipline(s).

D. 6 semester credit hours of Internship or Thesis.

Internship option. Students may participate in an internship (the nonthesis option) after completion of 18 semester credit hours. Internships offer work-oriented experiences in local organizational settings where the principles, theories, concepts, and methods of the discipline can be applied. A research paper under the supervision of assigned faculty is required.

Thesis option. Students may select the thesis option after they have completed 24 semester credit hours.

E. Comprehensive examination. Degree candidates are required to pass both written and oral comprehensive examinations. Examinations are scheduled after a student has completed at least 30 semester credit hours in the program. Registration for SOC 6961 Comprehensive Examination is only required if the student is not registered for any other course in the semester he or she is taking the comprehensive examination.

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS
SOCIOLOGY
(SOC)

5003 Sociological Theory

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

The nature of sociological theory, the major varieties of theory, the theorists who developed them, and the social and historical contexts of theory development and construction. Issues concerning the relation of theory and research are also explored.

5013 Advanced Conceptualization and Measurement

(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: 3 semester credit hours of undergraduate research methods.

Advanced quantitative research methods. Topics may include index construction and scaling, analysis of variance, multiple correlation, and regression, with use of applicable computer programs to analyze local, state, and/or national data sets.

5023 Quantitative Research Methods

(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: SOC 5013.

Analyses are pursued using a variety of multivariate statistical techniques developed to meet specialized research problems. Topics may include log-linear analysis, factor analysis, path analysis, discriminant function analysis, logistic regression, and/or LISREL.

5033 Qualitative Research Methods

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Qualitative strategies and techniques used in social science research, including field methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviews, and the collection of documents. Emphasis is on understanding the ways people interpret their experiences and construct and share their reality.

5043 Evaluation Research

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Theory and practice of evaluation of public policy and social service programs. Evaluation theories, models, and key evaluation studies are reviewed. Practical and political issues involved in the design and implementation of evaluations are addressed. Evaluation of a social agency or program may be included.

5103 Complex Organizations

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Structure and dynamics of large organizations, with emphasis on outcomes related to varying organizational contexts. The influence of culture and society on organizational behavior is also examined.

5123 Family Contexts and Social Change

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Family system organization and process within the broader context of community and society. Emphasis is on the changing historical roles of families, as well as cross-cultural, socioeconomic, race and ethnic, and gender variability in the family. The impact of education, the economy, and politics is also considered.

5133 Sociology of Health and Health Care

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

The relation of social behavior to health status, epidemiology, and the social organization of medicine in the United States and cross-culturally. Emphasis is on the development of the health care industry and problems associated with the delivery of health care services.

5143 Demography and Community Trends

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Basic demographic perspectives and data; methods of analysis of population size, distribution, and composition; determinants and consequences of population trends. Applications of computer programs for demographic analysis may be included.

5153 Sociology of Tourism and Leisure

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Interdisciplinary survey of current theories and research on leisure activity. Leisure trends and their effects on tourism and economic development are examined.

5203 Social Stratification

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Theory and research pertaining to structures of social inequality—their causes, forms, and consequences. Emphasis is on the distribution of power, prestige, and economic privilege, and patterns of social mobility in the United States.

5213 Race and Ethnic Relations

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Dominant-subordinate relations between various racial and ethnic groups from cross-cultural theoretical perspectives. Models of assimilation, cultural pluralism, and colonialism are investigated, as are their implications for minority and majority group members.

5223 Mexican Americans: Community, Culture, and Class

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Sociological focus on the Mexican American population. Emphasis is on the theories used to interpret the experiences of this group, particularly those oriented to issues of stratification and social mobility.

5233 Gender and Society

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Interdisciplinary survey of theory and current research on gender and gender-related issues. Gender-based theories are examined and compared to explanations for other forms of social stratification. Implications for family dynamics, the labor force, and the economy are explored.

5253 Border Studies

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

An examination of borders in an era of globalization, with emphasis on the United States–Mexico border. Themes may include a theoretical criticism of American mainstream border studies and its more important representatives.

5263 Cultural Studies

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

A study of the significance of culture in society, including the relationship between culture, consciousness, the economy, identity, and history. The development of the field and crucial debates in the literature will be examined. The relationship of Cultural Studies with Critical Theory, feminist theory, multicultural theory, and media studies will be explored.

5323 Sociology of Childhood

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Explores concepts, theories, and empirical research focusing on childhood and children. Topics may include social structure and its consequences for children's lives, and how circumstances, meanings, and representations of childhood differ across cultures.

5333 Language and Society

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

An examination of the work of important scholars in the study of language and social behaviors.

5343 Education and Reproduction of Inequality

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Examines the relation between types of societies and systems of education, the connection between schooling and societal stratification, and how schooling contributes both to social mobility and to the reproduction of the prevailing social order.

5353 Crime and Delinquency

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Analyzes the role of crime and delinquency in society. A consideration of the relationship among data, theory, and policy as integral components of crime and delinquency forms a central theme of this course. Independent empirical work is required.

5363 Theory Building and Methods

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Explores the role of theory building and methodology in sociology. The philosophy of science and sociology of knowledge and of science are used to understand the scientific dynamics of sociology. Theory building, methodology, and research design are explored.

5403 Social Movements

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Involves evaluation of dominant theoretical perspectives and research strategies in social movements and organized protests. Contrasts classic theoretical models with more recent scholarship emphasizing the cultural dimensions of social movement dynamics. Case studies may include the American Civil Rights Movement, Labor Unionization, the Feminist and Environmental Movements.

5423 Social Psychology

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Provides the student with foundation in the theoretical background of sociology social psychology as well as exposure to contemporary empirical examination of the theories and concepts utilized in this perspective. Topics for study may include socialization, social roles, aggression, pro-social behavior, interpersonal attraction, group dynamics, and collective behavior.

6043 Immigration and Society

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Analyzes theoretical explanations and social, economic, cultural, and ideological features of migration. May include topics such as border dynamics, transnationalism, incorporation of immigrants, remittances, and the impact on sending and receiving countries.

6053 Political Sociology

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Focuses on forms of economic, political, social, scientific or knowledge based power. Discussion compares Marxism, elitism, and pluralist theories to understand variations in the use of concepts such domination, exploitation, and influence. Course may include modern American and European societies and how these theories are used to explain power structures and processes in Latin America and the former colonial world.

6063 Health and Health Disparities

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

Explores issues related to disparities in population health. Health care based on racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds in the United States and other nations will be analyzed. Discussions may include differences in health and health care at the local, national or international level.

6143 Sociology of Religion

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

A seminar to provide a theoretical and methodological appraisal of contemporary research in the sociology of religion. Classic texts will be considered with emphasis on current trends in the field. May include topics such as religion and health, religion and globalization, new religious movements, religion and politics, religion and family and the immigrant religious experience. Theoretical debates from the secularization thesis to rational choice approaches will be considered.

6903 Topics in Advanced Sociology

(3-0) 3 hours credit.

A seminar offering the opportunity for specialized study not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. Topics may include social gerontology, deviance, social psychology, religion, mass communications, and research applications. May be repeated for credit when topics vary.

6943 Prerequisite Directed Study

3 hours credit.

Restricted to students who have been conditionally admitted. Directed study under the supervision of a faculty member designated by the Graduate Advisor of Record to supplement deficiencies in a student's background for graduate work. May require the student to audit undergraduate courses. Requires written work under the faculty member's supervision. May be repeated.

6951-3 Independent Study

1 to 3 hours credit. Prerequisites: Graduate standing and permission in writing (form available) of the instructor and the Sociology Graduate Advisor of Record.

Independent reading, research, discussion, and/or writing under the direction of a faculty member. For students needing specialized work not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master's degree.

6961 Comprehensive Examination

1 hour credit. Prerequisite: Approval of the Sociology Graduate Program Committee to take the Comprehensive Examination.

Independent study course for the purpose of taking the Comprehensive Examination. May be repeated as many times as approved by the Sociology Graduate Program Committee. Enrollment is required each term in which the Comprehensive Examination is taken if no other courses are being taken that term. The grade report for the course is either "CR" (satisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination) or "NC" (unsatisfactory performance on the Comprehensive Examination).

6963,6 Internship

3 or 6 hours credit. Prerequisites: Consent of instructor and 18 semester credit hours of graduate work.

Work-oriented experience within a local organizational setting where the principles, theories, concepts, and methods of the discipline can be applied. A research paper under the supervision of assigned faculty is required.

6973 Special Problems

(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.

An organized course offering the opportunity for specialized study not usually available as part of the regular course offerings. Special Problems courses may be repeated for credit when topics vary, but not more than 6 hours, regardless of discipline, will apply to the Master's degree.

6983,6 Master's Thesis

3 or 6 hours credit. Prerequisites: Permission of the Graduate Advisor of Record and thesis director, and 24 semester credit hours of graduate work.

Thesis research and preparation. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 6 hours will apply to the Master's degree. Credit will be awarded upon completion of the thesis. Enrollment is required each term in which the thesis is in progress.