

Sociology

Degrees Offered

- Master of Arts
- Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology offers a Ph.D. in Sociology with an area of specialization in Crime, Community, or Culture. The program trains students in the core areas of sociology, including research design, quantitative and qualitative methods, data analysis, theory, and sociological writing. It also teaches a range of professional skills designed to help graduates enter the academic or non-academic job markets. Emphasis is placed on writing and presentation skills, knowledge of statistical software, teaching ability, and the ability to communicate and apply sociological theory. In addition to coursework, students will have an opportunity to work with faculty who are actively engaged in research.

The M.A. program serves as a foundation for students who wish to pursue doctoral studies or move on to a research-oriented career in government, universities, or private industry. Students who are accepted into the Ph.D. program in Sociology will receive the M.A. degree upon completion of 38 credit hours of core requirements and a thesis manuscript.

FACULTY

CHAIR

- Jeralynn S. Cossman - Ph.D. (Florida State University) Sociology
Demography, Health, Inequalities

PROFESSORS

- Walter S. DeKeseredy - Ph.D. (York University) Sociology
Anna Deane Carlson Endowed Chair of Social Sciences. Violence against women, Critical criminology, Masculinities and crime, Criminology theory
- R. Gregory Dunaway - Ph.D. (University of Cincinnati) Sociology
Dean of the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences
- S. Melissa Latimer - Ph.D. (University of Kentucky) Sociology
Gender/race/ethnicity, Inequality/labor markets/welfare systems
- Lawrence T. Nichols - Ph.D. (Boston College) Sociology
Criminology, Theory, Business
- James Nolan, III - Ph.D. (Temple University) Sociology
Criminal justice, Group and social processes
- Rachael A. Woldoff - Ph.D. (Ohio State University) Sociology
Community, Crime, Inequality/race/class

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Corey Colyer - Ph.D. (Syracuse University) Sociology
People processing systems, Agencies of social control
- Amy Hirshman - Ph.D. (Michigan State University) Anthropology
Mesoamerican archaeology, Social complexity, Ceramics
- Daniel Renfrew - Ph.D. (Binghamton University) Anthropology
Environmental and political anthropology, Social movements, Latin American cultures
- Rachel Stein - Ph.D. (University of Akron) Sociology
Criminology, Victimization, Media and crime
- Karen Weiss - Ph.D. (SUNY-Stony Brook) Sociology
Criminology, Victimization, Gender/sexuality/culture
- Joshua Woods - Ph.D. (Michigan State University) Sociology
Social psychology, Media, Complex organizations, Sociology of risk

CLINICAL ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

- Jennifer Steele - Ph.D. (Pennsylvania State University) Rural Sociology
Natural resource sociology, Rural and community development

TEACHING ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

- Adam Dasari - Ph.D. (Oklahoma State University) Sociology
Social stratification, Globalization, Environmental sociology, Theory

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Katie E. Corcoran - Ph.D. (University of Washington) Sociology
Theory, Organizations, Culture, Criminology, Religion, Social networks
- Lisa M. Dilks - Ph.D. (University of South Carolina) Sociology
Social psychology, Group processes, Law and society, Quantitative methods
- Jason Manning - Ph.D. (University of Virginia) Sociology
Conflict and social control, Violence, Sociology of knowledge
- Christopher P. Scheitle - Ph.D. (Pennsylvania State University) Sociology
Religion, Science in society, Crime, Organizations
- Heather M. Washington - Ph.D. (Ohio State University) Sociology
Community, Crime, Family, Inequality
- Jesse Wozniak - Ph.D. (University of Minnesota) Sociology
Policing, Criminology, Deviance, State power

TEACHING ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Susanna Donaldson - Ph.D. (University of Iowa) Anthropology
Anthropology of work, Identity, Appalachian cultures
- Amanda Hall-Sanchez - Ph.D. (University of Hawaii at Manoa) Sociology
Violences against women, Incarcerated individuals, Victimology, Deviance, Feminist theory & methodologies
- Cheryl Johnson-Lyons - J.D. (West Virginia University)
Law and society, Inequalities, Political sociology

PROFESSOR EMERITUS

- Ronald C. Althouse - Ph.D. (University of Minnesota) Sociology
Theory, Work, Occupational safety and health

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS EMERITI

- Ann L. Paterson - Ph.D. (Michigan State University) Sociology
- Patricia C. Rice - M.A. (Ohio State University) Anthropology
- Joseph J. Simoni - Ph.D. (University of Notre Dame) Sociology
- William I. Torry - Ph.D. (Columbia University) Anthropology

Admission

Applications must include official transcripts from all colleges and universities previously attended, references from at least three people familiar with the student's academic record and potential for graduate study, a writing sample, a personal statement, a non-refundable application fee, and an official statement of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores.

The application process is online. Please see the Graduate Admissions website (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu>) for more information and the University Graduate Application.

International students for whom English is not a native language are required by the University to submit the Test of English As a Foreign Language (TOEFL). WVU accepts either the TOEFL or the IELTS for this purpose. Please see English Language Proficiency Requirements (<https://admissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/international-students/#anchor-intelp>) for more information.

Application Deadline

The application deadline is February 1 for fall admission. Students are not admitted in the spring semester.

Students who are accepted to the Ph.D. program will receive the M.A. degree upon completing 23 credit hours of Master's required coursework, 9 hours of electives, and 6 credit hours of thesis as shown below, as well as a completed thesis manuscript. The thesis may follow either a journal article or applied report model. Students will be dually enrolled in the M.A. and Ph.D. programs until they complete the M.A. requirements.

Master's Required Coursework

SOCA 610	Advanced General Sociology	3
SOCA 615	Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 1	3

SOCA 616	Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 2	3
SOCA 620	Sociological Research Methods	3
SOCA 720	Sociological Survey Methods	3
or SOCA 721	Qualitative Methods	
SOCA 725	Introduction to Evaluation Research Methods	3
or SOCA 726	Ethnographic Investigation	
or SOCA 727	Demographic Research Methods	
or SOCA 728	Content Analysis	
or SOCA 729	Experimental Design and Analysis for Sociology	
or GEOG 550	Geographic Information Science	
SOCA 630	Classical Social Thought	3
SOCA 600	Becoming a Sociologist	1
SOCA 601	Professional Research/Writing	1
SOCA 698	Thesis or Dissertation	6
Electives		9
Total Hours		38

Students are accepted into the Ph.D. program upon their entry into the department and are formally admitted to doctoral candidacy upon completion of the M.A. requirements. Students who move on to the doctoral program are required to take two additional core courses, five additional courses in one of the three areas of specialization, and nine hours of dissertation credits, as shown below. Doctoral students must pass comprehensive examinations and successfully defend a dissertation.

Master's Required Coursework

SOCA 610	Advanced General Sociology	3
SOCA 615	Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 1	3
SOCA 616	Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 2	3
SOCA 620	Sociological Research Methods	3
SOCA 720	Sociological Survey Methods	3
or SOCA 721	Qualitative Methods	
SOCA 725	Introduction to Evaluation Research Methods	3
or SOCA 726	Ethnographic Investigation	
or SOCA 727	Demographic Research Methods	
or SOCA 728	Content Analysis	
or SOCA 729	Experimental Design and Analysis for Sociology	
or GEOG 550	Geographic Information Science	
SOCA 630	Classical Social Thought	3
SOCA 600	Becoming a Sociologist	1
SOCA 601	Professional Research/Writing	1
SOCA 698	Thesis or Dissertation	6

Doctoral Required Coursework

SOCA 700	Navigating the Job Market	1
SOCA 730	Sociological Explanation	3

Areas of Specialization

15

Crime Specialization

SOCA 740 Theories of Crime and Deviance

Crime Specialization Elective Courses

Select four of the following:

SOCA 741 Theories of Violence

SOCA 742 Sociology of Violence

SOCA 743 Victimology

SOCA 744 Violence Against Women

SOCA 745 Gender and Crime

SOCA 746 Police and Culture Socialization

SOCA 747	Rural Criminology	
SOCA 748	Community, Crime, and Disorder	
SOCA 749	Race, Crime, and Community	
SOCA 750	Cultural Criminology	
SOCA 761	The Sociology of Conflict	
Community Specialization		
SOCA 760	Space, Place, and Community	
Community Specialization Elective Courses		
Select four of the following:		
SOCA 747	Rural Criminology	
SOCA 748	Community, Crime, and Disorder	
SOCA 749	Race, Crime, and Community	
SOCA 761	The Sociology of Conflict	
SOCA 762	Community Development	
SOCA 763	Global Communities	
SOCA 764	Health in Society	
SOCA 765	Environmental Sociology	
SOCA 766	Urban Sociology	
SOCA 767	Rural Sociology	
SOCA 768	Environmental Justice	
SOCA 781	Group Processes	
Culture Specialization		
SOCA 780	Individual and Society	
Culture Specialization Elective Courses		
Select four of the following:		
SOCA 746	Police Culture and Socialization	
SOCA 750	Cultural Criminology	
SOCA 768	Environmental Justice	
SOCA 781	Group Processes	
SOCA 782	Sociology of Culture	
SOCA 783	Social Psychology	
SOCA 784	Symbolic Interactionism	
SOCA 785	Situational Social Psychology	
SOCA 786	Media and Society	
Disseration Research		9
SOCA 798	Thesis or Dissertation	
Electives		9
Total Hours		66

Major Learning Goals

SOCIOLOGY

Students graduating with a Ph.D. in Sociology will be able to:

1. Apply sociological theories and methodological skills to evaluate social issues and develop a research program.
2. Critically analyze the canonical literature in one of the three specialty areas (crime, community, or culture).
3. Explain professional practice and ethics as they relate to sociology.
4. Describe the current state of knowledge, research, and needs of sociology as a discipline.

COURSES

SOCA 511. Survey Research Methods. 3 Hours.

PR: Intended for majors only. Provides students with an overview of survey research including problem definition, research design, sampling, measurement, instrument construction, project management, ethical considerations, and report writing.

SOCA 515. Comparative Research Methods. 3 Hours.**SOCA 522. Contemporary Sociological Theory. 3 Hours.**

Review of recent trends and orientations in sociology. Theory construction, topologies, models, and the relationship between theory and research. Review of current literature.

SOCA 591A. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.

PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

SOCA 593A-Z. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.

A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

SOCA 600. Becoming a Sociologist. 1 Hour.

The purpose of this seminar is to socialize students into the discipline and profession of sociology. Students will receive instruction and practical experience in the skills needed to become a professional scholar and independent researcher. Students are required to take this course during their first semester in the program.

SOCA 601. Professional Research/Writing. 1 Hour.

PR: SOCA 600. This course is focused on the successful completion of independent research. Topics include selecting a major professor/committee, navigating the IRB approval process, understanding how to write a scholarly journal article, expectations for conference presentations, and time management skills for successful completion of a research project.

SOCA 610. Advanced General Sociology. 3 Hours.

This course orients students to the field of sociology, providing them with an understanding of the breadth of the field. With a solid foundation in the field, students will be better prepared to conduct their own research and teach their own introduction to sociology class. Students are required to take this course in their first semester of the program.

SOCA 615. Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 1. 3 Hours.

Univariate, bivariate, and multivariate analyses of social science data. Topics include descriptive statistics, elementary statistical inference, and linear regression. The use of statistical software to conduct data analysis is also explored.

SOCA 616. Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 2. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 615. Advanced regression-based analysis of social science data. Topics include nonlinear regression, mediation and path analysis, methods for analyzing panel data, and techniques for examining categorical dependent variables. The use of statistical software is also explored.

SOCA 620. Sociological Research Methods. 3 Hours.

Focuses on the logic of framing and designing social research: Philosophical foundations, connections between theory and methods, narrowing research questions, and making design and data collection decisions. Emphasis on reading and critiquing published studies.

SOCA 630. Classical Social Thought. 3 Hours.

This course introduces students to the general concepts, principles, and perspectives used in the study of social reality, with an emphasis on the highly influential works that were important in founding the field of sociology.

SOCA 689. Field Work. 1-6 Hours.

PR: Departmental consent. Supervised field work.

SOCA 690. Teaching Practicum. 1-3 Hours.

PR: Consent. Supervised practice in college teaching of sociology and anthropology. Note: This course is intended to insure that graduate assistants are adequately prepared and supervised when they are given college teaching responsibility. It also provides a mechanism for students not on assistantships to gain teaching experience. (Grading will be P/F.).

SOCA 691A. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.

PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

SOCA 692. Directed Study. 1-6 Hours.

Directed study, reading, and/or research.

SOCA 693A-Z. Special Topics. 1-6 Hours.

A study of contemporary topics selected from recent developments in the field.

SOCA 694. Seminar. 1-6 Hours.

Special seminars arranged for advanced graduate students.

SOCA 695. Independent Study. 1-6 Hours.

Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

SOCA 696. Graduate Seminar. 1 Hour.

PR: Consent. Each graduate student will present at least one seminar to the assembled faculty and graduate student body of his or her program.

SOCA 697. Research. 1-15 Hours.

PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading may be S/U.).

SOCA 698. Thesis or Dissertation. 1-6 Hours.

PR: Consent. This is an optional course for programs that wish to provide formal supervision during the writing of student reports (698), or dissertations (798). Grading is normal.

SOCA 699. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.

PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use of the University's facilities, and participate in its academic and cultural programs. Note: Graduate students who are not actively involved in coursework or research are entitled, through enrollment in their department's 699/799 Graduate Colloquium to consult with graduate faculty, participate in both formal and informal academic activities sponsored by their program, and retain all the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is P/F; colloquium credit may not be counted against credit requirements for masters programs. Registration for one credit of 699/799 graduate colloquium satisfies the University requirement of registration in the semester in which graduation occurs.

SOCA 700. Navigating the Job Market. 1 Hour.

This course is designed to help students successfully navigate the job market. There are four main topic areas covered in this course. These include 1) getting started, 2) the interview process, 3) getting the job, and 4) surviving the first year as a faculty member. Students will take this class in the same semester they defend their dissertation proposal.

SOCA 710. Teaching Sociology. 3 Hours.

Students will engage in the literature on teaching and learning, exploring the major issues involved in teaching at the university level. Each student will work with an instructor in the activities that constitute the teaching enterprise in an apprenticeship role for the semester. Students are expected to develop a course plan by the end of the semester.

SOCA 711. Writing in Quantitative Methods. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 615 SOCA 616. This course provides students with the resources to write a polished quantitative paper that is suitable for submission to a peer-reviewed journal. The students will revise the paper they have completed as part of the requirements for SOCA 615/616, a research paper from a substantive course, or a paper that is part of a research or grant project.

SOCA 715. Advanced Statistical Methods for Sociology. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 615 and SOCA 616. Course covers statistical methods beyond basic descriptive and inferential analysis. Topics may include categorical analysis, structural equation modeling and/or hierarchical linear models. The use of statistical software is also discussed.

SOCA 720. Sociological Survey Methods. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 620. Provides students with tools to critically evaluate and design survey research projects in sociology. Key topics include relationships among sampling, questionnaire construction, and mode choice. Course designed around types of error in surveys and ways to minimize.

SOCA 721. Qualitative Methods. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 620. Provides students with tools to critically evaluate and design qualitative research projects. Focuses on philosophical foundations and researcher/subject roles, considerations associated with data collection, and data analysis methods.

SOCA 725. Introduction to Evaluation Research Methods. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 620. This course serves as an introduction to evaluation methodology and to the evaluation tools commonly used to assess effectiveness of a wide variety of programs and policies.

SOCA 726. Ethnographic Investigation. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 620. This seminar offers training in theories and practical application of ethnographic methods. The focus is on understanding the types of questions best answered by ethnographic investigations, why such methods are appropriate, and hands-on training in various styles of ethnography. Students will be expected to perform original ethnographic research using the concepts and tools gained in this course.

SOCA 727. Demographic Research Methods. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 620. This course will comprise an overview of demographic data and methods commonly used by professionals in public health practice and research. The course is a graduate level seminar.

SOCA 728. Content Analysis. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 620. Advanced introduction to the analysis of textual content for social insight; surveys classic approaches and recent advances in quantitative and qualitative content analysis; students design and execute projects that analyze textual data for social inference.

SOCA 729. Experimental Design and Analysis for Sociology. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 620. This course examines how to design, carry out, and analyze experiments. Various designs are discussed and their respective differences, advantages, and disadvantages are noted. The use of statistical software to conduct analysis is also explored.

SOCA 730. Sociological Explanation. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 630. Addresses the development and application of sociological theory to empirical research questions. Includes the logic of theory, strategies and steps in constructing theories, and strengths and limitations of theories.

SOCA 740. Theories of Crime and Deviance. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 610. This seminar offers a graduate-level foundation of theory and new empirical research in sociological criminology. Our focus is definitive statements from important theoretical traditions and critical empirical tests of these theories. In addition, we consider critiques of the theories or the research generated by them and attempts to translate theories into policy and action.

SOCA 760. Space, Place, and Community. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 610. This course presents sociological based ideas about space, place and community, discussing the theoretical contributions in these areas, assessing the methodological contributions to the discipline and linking them all to sub-areas within community, including urban, rural, medical and environmental sociology.

SOCA 780. Individual and Society. 3 Hours.

PR: SOCA 610. This course provides the foundation for understanding culture, as defined according to three main areas of inquiry: the study of how systems of ideas interact with, reproduce, and transform other social structures and social identities; the study of cultural products, including media; and analysis of the patterns of social interaction of groups of people.