Sociology

Degrees Offered

• Master of Arts
• Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology offers an M.A. and Ph.D. in Sociology. All students entering the program will be enrolled as doctoral students. Students entering the program with a BA/BS will be dually enrolled in the M.A. and Ph.D. programs until they complete the M.A. requirements.

The Ph.D. program is designed for students who are interested in working as professional sociologists in teaching and research. The curriculum emphasizes foundational coursework in sociology, including theory, methods and statistics, as well as courses and independent research in an area related to the department’s specializations in crime, community, and culture.

The department is strongly committed to teaching, mentoring, and collaborative research with students. Members of the faculty have received major research grants, won national teaching and research awards, published several books and numerous academic articles, and served as the editor or editorial board members of prestigious journals. In many cases, students have worked as research collaborators with faculty and co-authored publications.

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
• 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
• 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

SERVICE 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
• 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
• Cheryl Dennis - J.D. (West Virginia University)
  Law and society, Inequalities, Political sociology
• Susanna Donaldson - Ph.D. (University of Iowa) Anthropology
  Anthropology of work, Identity, Appalachian cultures
• Lindsay L. Kahle - Ph.D. (Virginia Tech) Sociology
  Youth inequality, School violence, Sexual orientation and criminology
• Kirsten Younghee Song - Ph.D. (Rutgers University) Sociology
  Culture, Transnationalism, Young adulthood, Inequality

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

Admissions
The program in Sociology only admits directly to the PhD. Admission to the Doctoral program requires a 3.0 overall GPA in the prior degree. Students who enter the program with a Bachelor’s degree or a non-thesis Master’s degree are required to complete the MA degree (http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/ebrycollegeartsandsciences/sociologyandanthropology/#masterstext) as part of their progress toward the PhD. 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 GRE should be taken within two years of the application submission.

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-intlep) for more information.

Application Deadline
The application deadline is February 1 for fall admission. Students are not admitted in the spring semester.
Master of Arts

Degree Requirements

- **Credit Hours:** Students must complete 32 hours of coursework. This includes 17 hours of required coursework in SOCA, 6 hours of thesis, and 9 hours of electives in SOCA.

- **Grade Point Average:** Students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75, and a GPA of 3.00 in all courses applied to the graduate program.

- **Graduation Requirement:** In addition to completing required coursework, students must complete a thesis following the journal article model. This is a research report intended for publication in a peer-reviewed academic journal and presentation at a professional sociology conference.

- **Benchmarks:** In addition to maintaining GPA requirements, students must receive acceptance of their thesis proposal no later than November 20 of the third semester of the M.A. program (see Sociology Graduate Handbook for details).

Curriculum Requirements

### Required Core Coursework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 600</td>
<td>Becoming a Sociologist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 601</td>
<td>Professional Research/Writing</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 610</td>
<td>Advanced General Sociology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 615</td>
<td>Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 616</td>
<td>Sociological Data Analysis and Interpretation 2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 620</td>
<td>Sociological Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 630</td>
<td>Classical Social Thought</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 698</td>
<td>Thesis or Dissertation</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Electives* 9

**Total Hours** 32

* Includes SOCA courses at the 600 or 700 level. Excludes the following: 695, 697, 698, 699, 795, 797, 798, 799.

Doctor of Philosophy

Degree Requirements

- **Credit Hours:** Students must complete 50-59 credit hours in the doctoral program. In addition to the requirements shown below, students who enter the PhD program with a BA or non-thesis MA must complete 6 thesis hours. Further, all students on funded graduate teaching assistantships must complete SOCA 710, Teaching Sociology.

- **Grade Point Average:** Students must earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.75, and a GPA of 3.00 in all courses applied to the graduate program.

- **Graduation Requirements:** In addition to completing required coursework, students must pass written and oral comprehensive examinations and successfully defend a dissertation. Students can choose from two dissertation models. They can follow the traditional model, which takes the form and substance of a scholarly monograph, or the manuscript model, which consists of three interrelated papers on a single topic.

- **Comprehensive Examination:** The Comprehensive Exam has two parts, the written and an oral. The Written Examination is intended to assess students' broad competencies in a specialized area of sociology with specific focus on understanding sociological theory and methods as they relate to the student's chosen specialization. The exams also test students' writing skills and their ability to think creatively and carry out independent research. In most cases, the student will be asked to give a brief summary of their written comprehensive exam work for the Oral Exam, but the primarily emphasis is on a question and answer session.

- **Dissertation:** The dissertation requirement ensures that students have the ability to carry out a major independent research project. Students can choose from two dissertation models. They can follow the traditional model, which takes the form and substance of a scholarly monograph, or the manuscript model, which consists of three interrelated papers on a single topic. The quality and contribution of each paper should reach the level of articles published in peer-reviewed scholarly journals. The manuscript model must also include an introductory chapter that clarifies the dissertation theme and situates the work as a whole in the sociological literature, as well as a concluding chapter that synthesizes and integrates the three papers.

- **Benchmarks:** Comprehensive exams should take place in the last semester of coursework or the first semester following the completion of coursework. Students might complete comprehensive exams and a dissertation proposal defense in the same semester, provided they complete the comprehensive exam process by mid-semester (see the Sociology Graduate Handbook for details).

Curriculum Requirements

### Required Core Coursework

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<td>Becoming a Sociologist</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes SOCA courses at the 600 or 700 level. Excludes the following: 695, 697, 698, 699, 795, 797, 798, 799.
### SOCA 601
Professional Research/Writing 1

### 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 630
Classical Social Thought 3

#### Doctoral Required Coursework

### SOCA 721
Qualitative Methods 3

### SOCA 730
Sociological Explanation 3

#### Area of Specialization Course

Select One of the Following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 740</td>
<td>Theories of Crime and Deviance</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 760</td>
<td>Space, Place, and Community</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 780</td>
<td>Individual and Society</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Methods III 3

Select One of the Following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 720</td>
<td>Sociological Survey Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 726</td>
<td>Ethnographic Investigation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 727</td>
<td>Demographic Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 728</td>
<td>Content Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 729</td>
<td>Experimental Design and Analysis for Sociology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 550</td>
<td>Geographic Information Science</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCA 798</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Electives 12

**Total Hours 50**

- Non-SOCA courses require pre-approval.

- Includes SOCA courses at the 600 or 700 level. Excludes the following: 695, 697, 698, 699, 795, 797, 798, 799.

### Degree Progress

**MASTERS**

In addition to maintaining GPA requirements, full-time students must receive acceptance of their thesis proposal no later than November 20 of the third semester of the M.A. program (see the Sociology Graduate Handbook for details).

**DOCTORAL**

Comprehensive exams should take place in the last semester of coursework or the first semester following the completion of coursework. Students might complete comprehensive exams and a dissertation proposal defense in the same semester, provided they complete the comprehensive exam process by mid-semester (see the Sociology Graduate Handbook for details).

### Major Learning Outcomes

**SOCIOLOGY**

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

1. Effectively communicate, orally and in writing, the current state of knowledge, research, and needs in the field of sociology
2. Conduct independent and original research of publishable quality
3. Develop a research program to evaluate social issues using sociological theories and methodological skills
4. Critically analyze the canonical literature in one of the three specialty areas (crime, community, or culture)
5. Explain professional practice and ethics as they relate to sociology
COURSES

SOCA 515. Comparative Research Methods. 3 Hours.

SOCA 522. Contemporary Sociological Theory. 3 Hours.


SOCA 591. Advanced Topics. 1-6 Hours.
PR: Consent. Investigation of advanced topics not covered in regularly scheduled courses.

SOCA 593. 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/Write. 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 691. Advanced Study. 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 693. 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.

SOCA 790. Teaching Practicum. 1-3 Hours.
PR: Consent. Supervised practice in college teaching of sociology. Note: This course is intended to insure that graduate assistants are adequately prepared and supervised when they are given college teaching responsibility. It will also present a mechanism for students not on assistantships to gain teaching experience. (Grading may be P/F.).

SOCA 795. Independent Study. 1-9 Hours.
Faculty supervised study of topics not available through regular course offerings.

SOCA 797. Research. 1-15 Hours.
PR: Consent. Research activities leading to thesis, problem report, research paper or equivalent scholarly project, or a dissertation. (Grading will be S/U.).

SOCA 798. 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 799. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 Hours.
SOCA 799. Graduate Colloquium. 1-6 hr. PR: Consent. For graduate students not seeking coursework credit but who wish to meet residency requirements, use 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 of the rights and privileges of duly enrolled students. Grading is normal; colloquium credit may not be counted towards credit requirements for masters programs.