

Sociology

Degrees Offered

- Doctor of Philosophy

Nature of the Program

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology offers a Ph.D. in Sociology. All students entering the program will be enrolled as doctoral students.

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, law, and deviance;
- inequality, diversity, and equity;
- social psychology and group processes;
- sociology of religion.

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

PROFESSOR AND CHAIR

- Daniel Renfrew - Ph.D. (Binghamton University)

PROFESSORS

- Sharon R. Bird - Ph.D. (Washington State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Social Inequality (race/ethnicity/class/gender/LGBTQ+), Workplace equity, Research methods
- Henry H. Brownstein - Ph.D. (Temple University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Distinguished Research Professor. Drugs and society, Drug policy, Violence, Qualitative research methods
- Katie E. Corcoran - Ph.D. (University of Washington) Sociology
Theory, Organizations, Culture, Criminology, Religion, Social networks
- Walter S. DeKeseredy - Ph.D. (York University)
Anna Deane Carlson Endowed Chair of Social Sciences; Regular Graduate Faculty; Violence against women, Critical criminology, Masculinities and crime, Criminology theory
- R. Gregory Dunaway - Ph.D. (University of Cincinnati)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Criminology
- S. Melissa Latimer - Ph.D. (University of Kentucky)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Gender/race/ethnicity, Inequality/labor markets/welfare systems
- James J. Nolan, III - Ph.D. (Temple University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Criminal justice, Group and social processes
- Rachel Stein - Ph.D. (University of Akron) Sociology
Criminology, Victimization, Media and Crime
- Karen Weiss - Ph.D. (State University of New York-Stony Brook)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Criminology, Victimization, Gender/sexuality/culture
- Rachael A. Woldoff - Ph.D. (Ohio State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Community, Crime, Inequality/race/class
- Joshua Woods - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Social psychology, Media, Complex organizations, Sociology of risk

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Corey Colyer - Ph.D. (Syracuse University)
Regular Graduate Faculty; People processing systems, Agencies of social control
- Amy Hirshman - Ph.D. (Michigan State University)

Regular Graduate Faculty; Mesoamerican archaeology, Social complexity, Ceramics

- Jason Manning - Ph.D. (University of Virginia)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Conflict and social control, Violence, Sociology of knowledge
- Christopher P. Scheitle - Ph.D. (Pennsylvania State University)
Religion, Science in society, Crime, Organizations
- Jennifer Steele - Ph.D. (Pennsylvania State University)
Associate Graduate Faculty; Rural Sociology Natural resource sociology, Rural and community development
- Jesse Wozniak - Ph.D. (University of Minnesota)
Regular Graduate Faculty; Policing, Criminology, Deviance, State power

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Brandie Pugh - Ph.D. (University of Delaware) Sociology
Inequality, Corporate crime, Interpersonal violence, Philosophy of science
- Kirsten Younghee Song - Ph.D. (Rutgers University)
Culture, Transnationalism, Young adulthood, Inequality

TEACHING INSTRUCTORS

- Daniel Brewster - M.A. (West Virginia University)
- Douglas Sahady - M.A. (California University of Pennsylvania)
- Genesis Snyder - M.A. (Western Michigan University)

PROFESSORS EMERITI

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

Admissions for 2025-2026

PH.D. IN SOCIOLOGY

The program in Sociology only admits directly to the Ph.D. In addition to WVU's general admission requirements (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#classificationstext>), applicants to the Doctoral program must have minimum of a 3.0 overall GPA in the prior degree. Students will be directly admitted to the Ph.D. program. We do not admit students for the M.A. degree. On completion of the Ph.D. program of study, students will have earned only the Ph.D. degree. Students who fail to maintain satisfactory progress after two successive semesters working on any of the program's research-based benchmarks will be transitioned to the M.A. track. Students on this track will be required to complete one additional elective course, if they have not already completed a second-year research paper, in order to graduate with a terminal Masters degree in Sociology. The GRE is not required for admission to this program.

List of Admission Requirements:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>).
- Transcripts from all institutions attended.
- Three letters of recommendation from academic references.
- Curriculum Vitae.
- A statement of purpose (personal statement, approximately one page in length) that addresses the applicant's research interests and how they might add to the graduate program. The statement should also identify faculty members they might work with if they were admitted to the program.
- A writing sample that provides evidence the applicant can synthesize ideas and demonstrate critical thought. The sample might include a senior research paper or sections of a thesis project.

International Applicants:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>).
- International applicants should view additional requirements here (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#internationaltext>) and here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/information-for/international-students/>).
- Language proficiency is required in order to hold a graduate teaching assistantship. See here (<https://elli.wvu.edu/testing-resources/english-proficiency-gtas/>).

Application Deadlines:

- The Sociology program admits students for the Fall semester only.
- Completed applications should be received by January 15th.
- Students who apply by the deadline will receive priority consideration for funding.
- Applications may be reviewed past the deadline pending the availability of space.
- Exceptional applicants may be nominated by the Sociology program for competitive University Fellowships. Qualified applicants will be notified if they are nominated. More information on WVU fellowships can be found here (<https://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/finances/fellowships/>).

For questions, please contact: soca@mail.wvu.edu

Certain application requirements may be waived based on a preliminary review of an application by the program.

MA Major Code: 1470

PhD Major Code: 14B8

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Sociology, M.A.

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Sociology, Ph.D.

Degree Progress

All graduate students enrolled in at least one credit hour during the academic year must be provided with a written evaluation from their program following the end of each spring term. This requirement may be waived for students in good standing who are expected to graduate in spring or summer. Specific processes and timelines for each program's evaluation can be found in the graduate handbook. Annual evaluation may result in probation for students either not making adequate degree progress or failing to uphold professional standards.

DOCTORAL BENCHMARKS

- By the end of year 1, students should have identified an advisor.
- By the end of year 2, students should have completed core coursework, formed a committee and completed a second year research paper.
- By the end of year 3, students should have passed comprehensive exams.
- By the end of year 4, students should have presented their dissertation prospectus.
- By the end of year 5, students should have completed, defended, and submitted their dissertation.

Please see the Sociology Graduate Handbook for details (<https://soca.wvu.edu/students/graduate-students/graduate-handbook/>) about degree progress benchmarks.