

# SOCIOLOGY, PHD

The PhD is the highest degree conferred by the university and is distinguished by its emphasis on creative scholarship representing original research. Our PhD in sociology prepares students for research and teaching careers in colleges and universities, as well as research and policy positions in a wide variety of applied settings. Our doctoral students develop expertise in social systems and dynamics and quantitative and qualitative research skills.

The core course sequence for PhD students provides a strong foundation in sociological theory, research, and analysis, while elective courses and faculty mentoring help develop students' expertise in their chosen areas of sociological interest. Doctoral students pursue specialization within one of two broad focal areas—Social Inequalities (including race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and class) and Social Institutions (including politics, education, family, crime, work, organizations, health, science, and culture.) The Department works with students to develop advanced skills in both research and teaching.

Graduate students in the UWM Department of Sociology come from a wide variety of backgrounds. We welcome applications from prospective students with a Master's degree in sociology, as well as those with degrees in other fields who have developed a passionate interest in sociology. We also permit BA holders to directly apply to our PhD program; if such an application seems more appropriate for the MA program, we will move it to the MA applicant pool without requiring the student to pay an additional application fee. Please visit the **Graduate School's Future Students** webpage to learn about graduate study at UWM and life in Milwaukee.

## Admission Requirements

### Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/>) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (<https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>).

### Admission

New graduate students are admitted to the PhD Program in Sociology only for the fall semester. Completed applications should be received by the department no later than January 10th of the year the applicant intends to start, but if space permits we continue to review applications received until mid-April.

An applicant must meet the UWM Graduate School's requirements for admission to the PhD program in Sociology. In addition, applicants to the PhD program must:

1. Possess a master's degree in Sociology or be in the process of completing a master's degree at the time of application, with the expectation of completion of the degree prior to beginning the PhD program.
  - a. Students without a master's degree in sociology are eligible for admission to the PhD program if:
    - i. they have a bachelor's degree in sociology or a related field and they show exceptional preparation for graduate school or
    - ii. they have a master's degree in a closely related field.
  - b. In addition to the requirements for the PhD, all students must:

- i. complete the required courses for the master's degree in sociology or comparable courses from other institutions and
  - ii. earn or transfer 24 credits in graduate-level work in sociology or a closely related field. If fewer than 24 credits are ruled acceptable for the doctoral program, the student will have to make up those credits.
2. Submit a copy of the applicant's MA thesis or paper, or, if an applicant did not complete a thesis, a scholarly writing sample of original sociological research.
3. Provide three letters of recommendation from persons, preferably faculty, familiar with the applicant's scholastic achievement and potential.
4. Submit a reasons statement (statement of purpose) that explains your reasons for pursuing graduate study, describes your specific interests and background in the field, and lists any relevant skills, training, and academic awards or honors.

Submission of GRE (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/#gre>) scores is optional. GRE scores often enhance an application, so applicants are welcome to submit scores for consideration in the review of their application, but GRE scores are not required for an application to be reviewed.

### Financial Support

The major source of financial assistance for graduate students in sociology is employment as a teaching assistant. Assistantships are granted every academic year on a competitive basis and may be renewed for an additional three years and include a stipend, full tuition remission and eligibility for low-cost health insurance.

Graduate students also are eligible for fellowships awarded by the Graduate School on a competitive basis. Additional information on the types and availability of fellowships may be obtained directly from the Graduate School.

### Reapplication/Readmission

Students who receive the MA in Sociology from UWM must reapply to be considered for admission into the PhD program.

## Credits and Courses

The program will require 36 graduate credits of coursework at the post-master's level. We expect entering students to have completed the following courses or their equivalents in the process of earning a master's degree:

Code	Title	Credits
SOCIOL 715	Systematic Sociological Theory	3
SOCIOL 750	Research Methods in Sociology	3
SOCIOL 760	Advanced Statistical Methods in Sociology	3

Students who have not taken these courses prior to admission to the PhD program will be required to complete them in the first year of their pursuit of a doctoral degree. Credits earned in these courses will not count as part of the 36 credits required at the post-master's level.

At the PhD level, students must complete the following coursework:



Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core</b>		
SOCIOL 910	The Sociology of Inequality	3
SOCIOL 911	The Sociology of Institutions	3
SOCIOL 982	Advanced Quantitative Analysis	3
Select one additional elective course in social science methodology		3
<b>Specialization</b>		
Select three courses designated in one of the following specialty areas:		9
Social Inequalities		
Social Institutions		
<b>Electives</b>		
Select at least 9 elective credits		9
Select up to 6 dissertation credits		6
<b>Additional Requirement</b>		
Ph.D. students with Teaching Assistant positions must complete the following course (which is offered each spring):		0-2
SOCIOL 794	Proseminar: The Teaching of Undergraduates	
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>36-38</b>

Doctoral students may not accumulate more than 6 credits in U/G courses nor more than 6 credits of independent study without the approval of the Sociology Director of Graduate Studies. Of the 60 required credits, no more than 12 credits outside of Sociology may be counted toward the doctoral degree without the approval of the Sociology Director of Graduate Studies.

## Additional Requirements

### Major Professor or Advisor

Each new student will be assigned an initial advisor from among the department's faculty. By the second year in the program, students will be expected to select their own major advisor and, in consultation with this advisor, a committee for preliminary examinations and the dissertation. The major advisor for each student, assisted by the student's dissertation committee and the director of graduate studies, will take primary responsibility for guiding the student successfully through the program and into the labor market and career opportunities.

### Preliminary Examination

All doctoral students are required to complete preliminary examinations in two specialty areas after completing 27 credits at the post-master's level. The areas are selected by the doctoral candidate in consultation with the student's advisor and other members of the graduate faculty. Examination areas are limited to those subfields or subdisciplines that are within the student's area of specialization and widely recognized areas within sociology. The disciplinary subfields must be broader than, but related to, the focus of the student's dissertation and must be approved by the Department's Graduate Studies Committee. Examinations will consist of the student answering three or more questions from a list containing at least five, as determined by the student's committee. Candidates write their answers on one full day in September and March.

An empirical or substantive paper may be substituted for one preliminary examination. The empirical paper is read and evaluated by two members of the graduate faculty in sociology, in addition to the student's major

professor. The length and quality of the paper should be similar to that of a journal article. Students should use the format for the journal to which they would like to submit the paper. The paper also may be in the style of a full length Annual Review of Sociology piece or similar article.

Students who do not pass an examination on the first attempt will be provided feedback on their performance and be allowed to take the exam a second time but must do so within 9 months of the administration of the first exam. Students who do not complete the examination successfully upon the second attempt will not be allowed to continue in the program.

## Dissertation

The dissertation is a major piece of original research representing a substantial contribution to sociological scholarship. In order to become eligible for dissertation status the student must complete a successful oral defense of a dissertation proposal before the student's doctoral committee.

The dissertation itself, under the supervision of the major professor and in collaboration with a dissertation committee, must demonstrate the ability of the candidate to formulate a research topic and pursue independent and original research representing a substantial contribution to sociological scholarship. The practices necessary for completion of the dissertation will conform to the guidelines established by the UWM Graduate School. The dissertation committee shall be composed of the major professor and three additional graduate faculty members (at least two of whom must be from the UWM Department of Sociology graduate faculty). The dissertation committee is responsible for assessing the dissertation project, which involves approving the dissertation proposal, reviewing working drafts of research in progress, and, finally, evaluating the candidate's ability to defend decisions made during the course of research and the results of the research. After submission of a reading copy of the dissertation to the faculty dissertation committee, the candidate and the major professor will schedule a committee meeting for the purpose of undertaking an oral defense of the dissertation work by the candidate. At the conclusion of the candidate's oral remarks, the dissertation committee will vote on passing the candidate's dissertation work. A majority of the committee must vote to approve the dissertation and recommend granting of the Doctor of Philosophy degree.

## Time Limit

All components of the PhD program must be completed within 10 years of matriculation.

## Sociology PhD Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from the PhD program in Sociology should be able to:

- Demonstrate mastery of the foundational areas of sociology and expert knowledge in their chosen subfield or subfields, with an ability to apply the field's theoretical and methodological tools to develop sociological research questions and sufficient expertise to conduct original research that contributes to the sociological literature and engages in intellectual interaction with other professional sociologists.
- Clearly articulate a creative and original research problem or question, its significance, and the nature of the intellectual contribution that research on it would make to the field.



- Command the relevant literature and summarize, synthesize, and critique scholarly work in support of their research's aims, design, methods and contribution to sociology.
- Design a study and select appropriate research methods that address their research problem or question in a manner that meets contemporary professional standards in sociology, including clearly describing their study's design, methods, and measurement of key concepts.
- Carry out and report data analyses with sufficient skill, accuracy, creativity, and clarity to withstand the scrutiny of peer review by contemporary sociologists.
- Make appropriate and accurate interpretations of research findings and draw conclusions that illuminate the research problem or question, add to the field's knowledge, and recognize the limitations of the research, with insightful suggestions for further application of findings and for future research.
- Convey ideas through clear, organized, and accurate writing whose professional quality is consistent with publication in recognized scholarly outlets.
- Orally present research findings with accuracy and in a style that meets the field's professional standards, with responses to questions about the research showing deep understanding of both the study's findings and the relevant literature.