SOCIOLOGY, PH.D.

The Department of Sociology and the Department of Community and Environmental Sociology conduct a combined graduate program in sociology designed to prepare students for scholarly research, teaching, or applied work. The program leads to the Master of Science degree with a major in sociology and the Doctor of Philosophy degree in sociology. It also offers a minor to students earning a doctoral degree in other departments. All major areas of sociological inquiry are represented in the curriculum. The program consistently ranks at or near the top in studies of U.S. doctoral programs.

Distinguished faculty, outstanding students who learn from and support each other, an increasingly multi-ethnic student body, a curriculum covering a broad spectrum of sociological interests, thriving research projects in many areas, and a stimulating campus environment make UW–Madison an excellent choice for students interested in sociology and/or community and environmental sociology.

Members of the departments also participate in a number of interdisciplinary programs. Faculty and students are involved with several research institutes, including the Applied Population Laboratory, the Center for Demography & Ecology, the Center for Demography of Health & Aging, the Center for Integrated Agricultural Systems, the Center on Wisconsin Strategy, the Holtz Center for Science & Technology Studies, the Institute for Research on Poverty, the Institute on Aging, the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, the Wisconsin Center for Education Research, and the University of Wisconsin Survey Center. Further information about faculty and areas of study is available on the department websites: Department of Sociology (http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/soc), and Department of Community and Environmental Sociology (http://dces.wisc.edu).

DEGREES AND CAREER GOALS

The sociology graduate program admits students who intend to earn a Ph.D. Students complete a Master of Science degree on the way to the Ph.D. or receive a waiver of the program’s master’s requirements based on their having written a thesis and obtained a master’s degree previously. A few students leave the program after completing the master’s degree and pursue careers in the public and private sectors. Of those who graduate with the Ph.D., a majority obtain university teaching and/or research positions; others take research and/or administrative positions in government organizations, non-profit organizations, or private firms.

ADMISSIONS

The program receives a large number of applications each fall from highly qualified individuals, requiring the admissions committee to be extremely selective. There is a very strong preference for students planning to pursue a Ph.D.; students whose goal is a master’s are rarely accepted. A cohort of approximately 20 students is ideal, in terms of providing mentoring and training to all admitted students as well as making financial support available to them. Total graduate enrollment in the program is roughly 140 students. An undergraduate major in sociology is not a prerequisite. The admissions committee conducts a holistic assessment of each applicant’s qualifications. Faculty members look for academic excellence as indicated by undergraduate GPA and Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores, a writing sample, and references, along with interest in and motivation for graduate study in sociology as indicated by the statement of purpose. (Note that a weakness in one indicator can be balanced by evidence of strong abilities in others.) In particular, committee members look for students with the ability or potential to define a research question succinctly and to use empirical evidence to address significant sociological issues. They also make an effort to identify individuals who demonstrate the potential for a creative approach to investigating empirical and conceptual social science issues.

To apply, please submit an online application, all transcripts, a statement of reasons for graduate study, writing sample, recommendations, and tests scores. GRE scores (general test only) are required of all applicants; international applicants are required to submit English Proficiency test scores—either TOEFL, MELAB, or IELTS—as well. The application deadline is December 15 for the subsequent academic year.

GRADUATE SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Graduate admissions is a two-step process between academic degree programs and the Graduate School. Applicants must meet requirements of both the program(s) and the Graduate School. Once you have researched the graduate program(s) you are interested in, apply online (https://grad.wisc.edu/admissions).

FUNDING

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES

Resources to help you afford graduate study might include assistantships, fellowships, traineeships, and financial aid. Further funding information (https://grad.wisc.edu/funding) is available from the Graduate School. Be sure to check with your program for individual policies and processes related to funding.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The departments guarantee five continuous years of funding to all incoming students. Sources of funding include teaching assistantships, project assistantships, research assistantships, traineeships, and fellowships. In addition, some admitted students arrive with outside fellowships such as National Science Foundation or Fulbright awards. International applicants admitted to the program must complete a financial statement that provides evidence of sufficient funds to support themselves for their first year and the intent for support to continue throughout the duration of study. Even though departmental funding is guaranteed, international students often must submit additional financial support documentation, demonstrating that they can cover the gap between the amount the departments provide and the amount the U.S. State Department requires. Additional information about international student expenses can be found here (http://grad.wisc.edu/international).

REQUIREMENTS

MINIMUM GRADUATE SCHOOL REQUIREMENTS

Review the Graduate School minimum academic progress and degree requirements (http://guide.wisc.edu/graduate/ #policiesandrequirementstext), in addition to the program requirements listed below.
MAJOR REQUIREMENTS

MODALITY OF INSTRUCTION

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<tr>
<th>Mode of Instruction</th>
<th>Face to Face</th>
<th>Evening/Weekend</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>Hybrid</th>
<th>Accelerated</th>
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<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
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Mode of Instruction Definitions

- **Evening/Weekend:** These programs are offered in an evening and/or weekend format to accommodate working schedules. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses and personal connections, while keeping your day job. For more information about the meeting schedule of a specific program, contact the program.
- **Online:** These programs are offered primarily online. Many available online programs can be completed almost entirely online with all online programs offering at least 50 percent or more of the program work online. Some online programs have an on-campus component that is often designed to accommodate working schedules. Take advantage of the convenience of online learning while participating in a rich, interactive learning environment. For more information about the online nature of a specific program, contact the program.
- **Hybrid:** These programs have innovative curricula that combine on-campus and online formats. Most hybrid programs are completed on-campus with a partial or completely online semester. For more information about the hybrid schedule of a specific program, contact the program.
- **Accelerated:** These on-campus programs are offered in an accelerated format that allows you to complete your program in a condensed time-frame. Enjoy the advantages of on-campus courses with minimal disruption to your career. For more information about the accelerated nature of a specific program, contact the program.

CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS

**Minimum Credit Requirement**
- **Graduate Residence Credit Requirement:** 32 credits

**Required Courses**

- **SOC 301** Introductory Proseminar for Graduate Students
- **SOC 361** Research Methods in Sociology
- **SOC 362** Statistics for Sociologists II
- **SOC 363** Statistics for Sociologists III
- **SOC 370** Introductory Proseminar for Graduate Students
- **SOC 700** Research Methods in Sociology
- **SOC 750** Intermediate Classical Theory
- **SOC 773** Environmental Sociology

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

A Graduate Program Handbook containing all of the program’s policies and requirements is forthcoming from the program.

PRIOR COURSEWORK

Graduate Work from Other Institutions

With program approval, students may count up to 19 credits of graduate coursework from other institutions toward the minimum 51-credit degree requirement and the minimum 50% graduate coursework requirement. Coursework completed ten or more years prior to admission to the doctoral program may not be used to satisfy either of these requirements.

UW–Madison Undergraduate

With program approval, students may count up to 7 credits earned in an undergraduate degree program at UW–Madison toward the Ph.D. degree requirements. If the courses are numbered 300–699, the credits may count toward the minimum 51-credit requirement. If the courses are numbered 700–999, the credits may also count toward the minimum 50% graduate coursework requirement. Coursework completed ten or more years prior to admission to the doctoral program may not be used to satisfy either of these requirements.

UW–Madison University Special

With program approval, students may count up to 15 credits taken as a Special Student toward the Ph.D. degree requirements. If the courses are numbered 300–699, the credits may count toward the minimum 51-credit degree requirement and the minimum 50% graduate coursework requirement. Coursework completed ten or more years prior to admission to the doctoral program may not be used to satisfy either of these requirements.

GRADUATE SCHOOL POLICIES

The Graduate School’s Academic Policies and Procedures (https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy) provide essential information regarding general university policies. Program authority to set degree policies beyond the minimum required by the Graduate School lies with the degree program faculty. Policies set by the academic degree program can be found below.

MAJOR-SPECIFIC POLICIES

GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK

A Graduate Program Handbook containing all of the program’s policies and requirements is forthcoming from the program.
PROBATION
The Graduate School regularly reviews the record of any student who earned grades of BC, C, D, F, or Incomplete in a graduate course (300 or above), or grade of U in research credits. This review could result in academic probation with a hold on future enrollment or in being suspended from the Graduate School.

1. Good standing (progressing according to standards; any funding guarantee remains in place).
2. Probation (not progressing according to standards but permitted to enroll; loss of funding guarantee; specific plan with dates and deadlines in place in regard to removal of probationary status).
3. Unsatisfactory progress (not progressing according to standards; not permitted to enroll, dismissal, leave of absence or change of advisor or program).

ADVISOR / COMMITTEE
Students are expected to have ongoing contact with their faculty advisor. Dissertators who fail to confer with their advisor at least once each semester will not be allowed to register in the subsequent semester. All students are required to submit a yearly progress report that is read and discussed by a committee of faculty during the annual review. In addition, all students are expected to create and regularly update an Individual Development Plan (IDP) and use it as the basis for conversations with their advisor about evolving goals, current strengths, and plans for mastery of new skills. A student’s advisor serves as chair of the dissertation committee, which must have at least five members, all of whom read and evaluate the dissertation prior to the student’s final oral exam. Committees are composed of three graduate faculty in Sociology and/or Community & Environmental Sociology, one graduate faculty member from outside these two departments, and a fifth person who may be any individual deemed qualified by the program’s executive committee.

CREDITS PER TERM ALLOWED
15 credits

TIME CONSTRAINTS
Doctoral students must complete the Ph.D. within five years of passing the oral preliminary examination and attaining dissertator status.

OTHER
The department guarantees five continuous years of funding to all admitted students. Our graduate students receive support toward their studies through project assistantships, research assistantships, teaching assistantships, lectureships, traineeships, and fellowships (fellowship awards may come from either the university or external agencies). All types of funding provide a full tuition remission, a stipend, and health insurance.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

GRADUATE SCHOOL RESOURCES
Take advantage of the Graduate School’s professional development resources (https://grad.wisc.edu/pd) to build skills, thrive academically, and launch your career.

PROGRAM RESOURCES
The Sociology graduate program offers students an array of professional development opportunities.

All new graduate students are required to take SOC 700 Introductory Proseminar for Graduate Students during their first semester in the program. This course provides an overview of the discipline and the graduate program and addresses such professional development issues as teaching strategies and grant proposal writing. The proseminar also explores topics like productive advisor-advisee relationships, working effectively as part of a research team, co-authoring, and other matters important to graduate school success. Those students affiliated with the multi-disciplinary Center for Demography & Ecology and Center for Demography of Health & Aging are required to enroll in SOC/C&E SOC 995 Research: Methodology Trainees, as well. This course provides training in writing grant applications, conducting research responsibly, making presentations, writing papers for publication, applying for academic and research jobs, and other essential professional skills. In addition, all students who are teaching for the first time are required to participate in a weekly teaching workshop, which focuses on issues typically of concern to new TAs—e.g., developing lesson plans, engaging students, facilitating discussions, and evaluating written work. Finally, all graduate students are required to create an Individual Development Plan to help them define interests and values, evaluate skills, develop specific plans for meeting degree milestones and professional goals, and communicate effectively with their advisors.

Students are encouraged to participate in “brownbags” each semester. The department offers nine of these training seminars, each focusing on a different sociology subfield. Brownbags meet weekly and involve presentation and discussion of student and faculty work-in-progress as well as analysis of current developments and debates; often guest speakers from other universities join the conversation. In addition, second- and third-year students are encouraged to take Soc 875, Professional Development, which covers a broad spectrum of topics—e.g., networking and peer support; time management; IRB approval and considering ethics throughout the research process; writing, revising, and submitting papers to scholarly journals; writing for public audiences; doing outreach work; speaking at conferences; investigating careers within and outside academia; and learning how to mentor. Students may also enroll in Soc 910, Teaching Sociology, a seminar focusing on course development, pedagogy, and evaluation.

The departments host scholars from other institutions who speak at departmental colloquia as well as speakers from campus units such as the Havens Center for Social Justice and the Institute for Research on Poverty. Students are encouraged to attend these events. They are also advised to participate in the program’s workshops on career exploration and creating a professional website. Students are invited to collaborate with faculty and staff serving on department committees, and they are encouraged to develop leadership skills by becoming involved in the Sociology Graduate Student Association.
The departments provide small grants that assist students with research expenses and support those who are traveling to present their work at professional conferences.

The Sociology website includes several pages containing valuable resources for graduate students—e.g., Graduate Student Professional Development, Diversity & Inclusion Resources for Classroom Teaching, and Job Search & Placement Tips.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

1. Demonstrate a broad understanding of major theories, methodologies, and research findings in the sociological literature. Develop critical thinking skills that empower them to analyze strengths and weaknesses in the existing literature, identify knowledge gaps, evaluate evidence, synthesize information, and form conclusions. Attain the skills necessary to teach and conduct research with intellectual and ethical rigor, care, and creativity.

2. Create individualized programs to suit their specific interests and goals. Formulate ideas and develop research questions, design feasible research projects, use appropriate methodologies, analyze and interpret the resulting data, and identify avenues for further exploration. Their original research will expand the current boundaries of knowledge in the field.

3. Write seminar papers and conduct dissertation research, prepare and submit manuscripts resulting from their research for publication in respected journals, and submit papers for presentation at professional conferences. Their independent research will contribute substantively to scholarship in the field.

4. Demonstrate breadth within their learning experience by taking at least four seminars, completing a minor area of study, and passing written preliminary exams in two different subfields. In addition, because our program emphasizes collective responsibility for training, students will be supervised and mentored by several faculty members with a range of expertise. They will also learn to mentor others.

5. Advance the contributions of sociological study to society by conducting research that explores complex ideas, analyzes quantitative and qualitative data, and disseminates new knowledge. Contribute to the vast body of scholarship and applied work that leads to the improvement of society. Share theory, methodology, and the results of research with the undergraduate students whom they teach and thereby foster an understanding of how social life works, what causes social change, and why humans behave in the ways they do.

6. Communicate complex ideas in a clear, organized, engaging manner to diverse audiences. Craft effective grant proposals; gather, manage, and analyze data; write papers that are thought-provoking, concise, and persuasive; present research informatively; listen with care and patience; and give and receive feedback orally and in writing.

7. Foster ethical and professional conduct by demonstrating respect for and having positive interactions with faculty members and staff, graduate student colleagues, and undergraduate students. Foster such conduct by the scientific rigor and honesty with which they design research, collect and analyze data, and interpret and report results.

8. (Career Preparation) Prepare for a range of sustainable careers in academia as well as government, private industry, and the nonprofit sector. Develop flexibility, leadership, and broadly applicable skills in critical thinking, problem solving, project management, collaboration, and communication.

**PEOPLE**

**Faculty:** Professors Raymo (chair, Sociology), Green (chair, Community & Environmental Sociology), Bell, Borman (affiliated), Carlson, Collins, Elwert, Emirbayer, Ermakoff, Ferree, Fletcher, Freeland, Friedland (affiliated), Fujimura, Gerber, Goldberg, Grodsky, Herd, Logan, Massoglia (director, Graduate Studies), Maynard, Montgomery, Morales (affiliated), Nordheim (affiliated), Oliver, Rogers (director, COWS), Schaeffer (director, UWSC), Schwartz, Seidman, Stoecker, Thornton (affiliated), Tigges, Wright; Associate Professors Alatout, Christens (affiliated), Curtis, Feinstein, Grant, Higgins (affiliated), Lim, Nobles, Shoemaker (affiliated); Assistant Professors Addo (affiliated), Conti, Engelman, Garoon, Goffman, Halpern-Meekin (affiliated), Leachman (affiliated), Light, O’Brien (affiliated), Simmons (affiliated), White, Xiong (affiliated)