

# SOCIOLOGY, M.A.

## Program Orientation

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Marshall University offers a supportive environment for students who wish to pursue advanced training in sociology or anthropology as well as those for whom the Master's level is the final degree. The curriculum is designed to provide our students with a wide range of options in pursuit of their academic and professional goals and interests, while also providing solid training in core foundational aspects of the two disciplines. Students learn both qualitative and quantitative research methods and are exposed to a variety of subfields and theoretical perspectives. Faculty core strengths include: theory, social movements and social change, inequality, stratification, deviance, cultural diversity, social interaction and group processes, migration, world systems/globalization, social institutions (religion, family, work and occupations, health care, sports, politics and the economy), criminology, gerontology, leisure and recreation, qualitative and quantitative research methods, and advanced statistical analysis.

## Admission Requirements

Interested students may seek admission to the program for full-time or part-time studies, with preferred entrance in the fall semester of each year. To receive full consideration all application materials must be received by the Graduate Admissions Office by April 15 for the Fall semester and by November 15 for the Spring semester. Please note that while the GRE is not required for admission into the program, students are strongly encouraged to take the exam.

Applicants should follow the admission process outlined in the Graduate Catalog or at the Graduate College website at [www.marshall.edu/graduate/admissions/how-to-apply-for-admission](http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/admissions/how-to-apply-for-admission) (<http://www.marshall.edu/graduate/admissions/how-to-apply-for-admission/>).

In addition to the materials described in the Catalog and on the Web site, applicants for regular admission to the Master of Arts in Sociology must submit to the Graduate Admissions Office:

- A personal statement describing interests in the program and future plans;
- International students must provide evidence of English language proficiency such as the TOEFL;
- Evidence of a minimum of 12 credit hours of undergraduate sociology coursework;
- Undergraduate grade point average (GPA), overall and in sociology;
- A writing sample: a copy of one paper (10-25 pages) from an undergraduate course, preferably a sociology or anthropology course; and
- Two letters of recommendation from persons familiar with the applicant's academic or professional competence.

Admission to the program is offered to a limited number of qualified students demonstrating academic excellence and professional promise. Applicants who have submitted a complete application and fulfill the requirements stated above will be considered for full admission. The Sociology program may admit applicants provisionally, on a limited basis, at the discretion of the program. The Sociology program may admit applicants on a conditional basis.

## Program Requirements

In addition to regular courses and seminars, students are expected to contribute to their professional growth through interaction with the faculty and other graduate students as well as from independent study and reading. A student must earn at least a 3.0 GPA in all Sociology and Anthropology classes as a requirement for graduation. A student who receives a second grade of C or below while pursuing the M.A. in Sociology must review her/his academic plans with the department's graduate program director; this review may result in the student being dismissed from the program.

The Sociology Master of Arts degree requires the completion of 33 hours of coursework plus SOC 681 Thesis for the Thesis Option, or completion of 36 hours of coursework plus SOC 679 Problem Report for the Non-Thesis Option. The curriculum is structured around a set of core requirements and a set of disciplinary focus areas that together provide a strong foundation in sociological theory, research methods and data analysis. At least half of the minimum required hours for the student's master's degree must be earned in classes numbered 600 or above. Students, in consultation with their advisor, must complete an official "Plan of Study" during their first semester or before completion of 12 credit hours. The Plan of Study must be approved by the Graduate Program Director in the department before submission for approval to the Office of the Graduate College.

All students must successfully pass comprehensive exams to demonstrate broad comprehension and synthesis of sociology. The comprehensive exam will be scheduled twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring. On the first attempt at an exam, if a student fails any one question, he or she will be asked to consult readings, re-write, and re-submit a new answer to the Graduate Program Director within 7 days of receiving the committee's evaluation. If the student fails a second attempt on this question, he or she must wait until the following semester to retake that portion. If a student fails two or more questions of the comprehensive exam on the first attempt, he or she will re-take the exam the following semester. Students who fail all or any one portion of the comprehensive exam in the second semester will not be permitted to continue in the program.

## Plan of Study

### Core Requirements

All students are required to complete 15 hours of core courses:

Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Core Courses</b>		
SOC 600	Classical Sociological Theory	3
SOC 601	Contemp Sociological Theory	3
SOC 605	Qual Res Methods and Analysis <sup>1</sup>	3
SOC 606	Quantitative Res Meth Analysis <sup>1</sup>	3
SOC 609	Professional Development	3
Total Credit Hours		15

<sup>1</sup> SOC 605 Qual Res Methods and Analysis and SOC 606 Quantitative Res Meth Analysis is a two-course research methods sequence that should be completed by all students during the first academic year in the graduate program if possible (or within the first 12 graduate credit hours for part-time students). Exceptions are made for students who must take prerequisite courses before enrolling in this sequence.

## Electives

(18 hours for thesis option and 21 hours for non-thesis option)

The department offers a variety of electives which are bundled in four disciplinary focus areas. Graduate level courses from other departments may be taken with approval from the Graduate Program Director and the course instructor.

To guarantee breadth of education, all students must take courses from more than one focus area. Note that some classes contribute to more than one focus area; a student can count such classes in more than one focus area for this requirement, but must of course still meet the requirement for the total number of credit hours.

To guarantee depth, students also have to take more courses of a particular focus area or declare a minor.

*Thesis option:* Thesis related to one focus, one course from each of the three remaining focus areas (9 hrs.).

*Non-thesis option:* One course from each focus area 1 through 4 (12 hours) and additional courses from one primary area, or declare a minor (9 hrs.).

Code	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Focus Area 1: Organizations and Institutions</b>		
SOC 508	The Family	3
SOC 533	Sociology of Work	3
SOC 550	Sociology of Religion	3
SOC 580	Special Topics (dependent on content)	1-4
SOC 668	Seminar (dependent on content)	1-3
<b>Focus Area 2: Stratification and Diversity</b>		
SOC 523	Social Class, Power & Conflict	3
SOC 525	Race and Ethnicity	3
SOC 532	Sociology of Appalachia	3
SOC 555	Sociology of Sex and Gender	3
SOC 655	Feminist Social Theory	3
SOC 580	Special Topics (dependent on content)	1-4
SOC 668	Seminar (dependent on content)	1-3
<b>Focus Area 3: Demography, Health, and Human Environments</b>		
SOC 501	Population and Human Ecology	3
SOC 528	Medical Sociology	3
SOC 532	Sociology of Appalachia	3
SOC 540	Intro to the Soc of Aging	3
SOC 542	Urban Sociology	3
SOC 552	Soc Of Death & Dying	3
SOC 640	Problems Aging Society	3
SOC 580	Special Topics (dependent on content)	1-4
SOC 668	Seminar (dependent on content)	1-3

## Focus Area 4: Social Problems and Collective Behavior

SOC 513	Social Movements & Soc Change	3
SOC 520	Criminology	3
SOC 560	The Holocaust and Genocide	3
SOC 602	Contemp Social Change	3
SOC 620	Criminology	3
SOC 640	Problems Aging Society	3
SOC 580	Special Topics (dependent on content)	1-4
SOC 668	Seminar (dependent on content)	1-3