

# SOCIOLOGY, MA

Our MA program prepares students to apply social research skills to a wide range of industries and jobs. MA students go on to a range of careers as data analysts, program managers, researchers, grant writers, and others across many different industries. Our diverse community of deeply engaged faculty provides students with rigorous research training as well as developing in-depth understanding of social systems, dynamics, and human behavior. The core MA course sequence provides a strong foundation in sociological theory, research, and analysis, while elective courses and faculty mentoring help develop students' expertise in more specific areas of sociological study.

Graduate students in the UWM Department of Sociology come from a wide variety of backgrounds. We welcome applications from prospective students with a Bachelor's degree in sociology, as well as those with degrees in other fields who have developed a passionate interest in sociology. Please visit the **Graduate School Future Master's Student** 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 MA 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.

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

1. Provide three letters of recommendation from persons, preferably faculty, familiar with the applicant's scholastic achievement and potential.
2. Submit a sample of scholarly writing, a minimum of five pages in length.
3. 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 Aid

The major source of financial assistance for graduate students in sociology is employment as a teaching assistant. Assistantships are awarded every academic year on a competitive basis and may

be renewed for an additional year; they 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.

### Advising Procedures

Upon admission, the Director of Graduate Studies will serve as the student's advisor. An initial advisor will be assigned in the student's first semester in residence. The initial advisor assists students in planning their course programs, and in scheduling other degree requirements. When the MA student begins to formulate a topic for a thesis, a master's paper, or MA examination, the student selects a member of the Sociology Graduate faculty as their committee chair. This person then becomes the student's main curriculum advisor for the remainder of the time in the program.

## Credits and Courses

The MA in Sociology requires a minimum of 30 graduate credits.

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Required</b>		
SOCIOL 701	Professional Seminar	1
SOCIOL 715	Systematic Sociological Theory	3
SOCIOL 750	Research Methods in Sociology	3
SOCIOL 760	Advanced Statistical Methods in Sociology	3
Select a 900-level sociology seminar course		3
<b>Electives</b>		
Select 17 elective credits in consultation with advisor		17
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>30</b>

Up to five credits of SOCIOL 790, may be taken by students who elect the thesis/paper capstone option.

With permission of the student's advisor, up to six graduate credits may be taken outside the department in courses related to the individual's plan of study. No more than six credits of undergraduate/graduate courses (excluding those previously taken as an undergraduate), taken at the graduate level, may be applied toward meeting degree requirements. No more than six credits in SOCIOL 799 may count toward the degree.

## Additional Requirements

### Good Standing

To retain good standing in the Department of Sociology, an enrolled graduate student must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative GPA and demonstrate progress toward completion of the course and/or thesis requirements each semester.

### Thesis, Master's Paper, or the MA Examination Options

The student must write and defend an acceptable thesis, a master's paper, or write an examination in fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts degree in Sociology.

### Thesis or Master's Paper

The thesis or master's paper is intended to be a relatively limited research exercise, focused on a manageable topic. It does not necessarily have to involve original research. Acceptable thesis or master's paper options

include, but are not limited to, collection of data for hypothesis testing or exploratory research, secondary analysis of available data, theoretical critique, conceptual analysis and library research on a clearly defined problem. In general, students are encouraged to utilize existing data rather than collect new data unless they are confident that they have adequate resources (including time) to collect data sufficient for their purposes.

By the end of the third semester, students should complete a proposal for the MA thesis or paper. The proposal will reflect the formulation of a research problem and the development of a plan for its empirical investigation. Once a proposal is successfully defended, it constitutes an agreement between the student and the MA committee.

Students must prepare the thesis or master's paper under the direction of their committee, receive approval that it meets professional standards, and defend it at an oral examination. The master's paper is normally the length of a journal article (about 30 pp.). Students who choose to write a thesis should consult the Graduate School Thesis and Dissertation Formatting (<https://uwm.edu/graduateschool/thesis-dissertation-formatting/>) page. The thesis must be prepared according to these format requirements.

### MA Examination

The Master of Arts examination option is based on a bibliography developed by the student in consultation with their committee. The bibliography will represent both classical statements and recent debates in at least one area of sociological specialization. Students are encouraged to develop the bibliography by the end of the third semester of residence.

The examination itself will be a set of three questions developed by the MA committee, from which the student must choose two. The student will have two weeks to write a take-home examination. The advisor and two other faculty members will grade the examination. Within two weeks of the completion of the written examination, there will be an oral examination on the same material.

### Time Limit

The student must complete all degree requirements within five years of initial enrollment.

## Sociology MA Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from the Sociology MA program should be able to:

- Use sociological theory and research methods to develop and answer sociological questions, demonstrating sufficient mastery of core sociological knowledge broadly and in at least one area of specialization to participate in the field's and specialization area's key debates.
- Clearly articulate a problem or research question, its significance, and the potential contribution of research on this problem or question to the field.
- Summarize, synthesize, and critique relevant scholarly work in support of their project's aims, research design, and research methods.
- Design a study and select research methods that allow them to conduct effective research on their problem or research question, including clearly describing their study's design, methods, and measurement of key concepts.
- Carry out and report on data analyses with clarity and accuracy that meet the field's professional standards.
- Make appropriate and accurate interpretations of research findings and draw conclusions that illuminate the research problem, add to the field's knowledge base, and have implications for further research.
- Convey ideas through clear, organized, and accurate writing of professional quality.
- Give accurate and insightful responses to oral questions, demonstrating understanding of the literature and their study's findings.