

Master of Arts in Sociology

Sociology Graduate Program

Sociology offers a distinct perspective on understanding the social world. Our discipline emphasizes how institutions and structural forces outside the individual—the family, organizations, politics, economics, culture—shape individual and group behavior, opportunities, and histories. As a major teaching and research unit, we seek to ensure that the knowledge imparted to our students is current and that they learn the skills of critical inquiry, analytical evaluation, and historical sensibilities.

Admission to Graduate Studies

Admission Requirements

- All applicants must meet the requirements outlined in the Admission to Graduate Study (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/admission-to-graduate-study/>) policy.
- Bachelor's degree: A copy of official transcripts showing proof of a bachelor's degree (and any post-bachelor's coursework or degrees) from a regionally accredited institution, or a foreign university with equivalent bachelor's degree requirements is required.
- English proficiency: Proof of English proficiency (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) for non-native or non-native-like English speakers is required. There are two bands of English proficiency, including Admission and Full proficiency. For applicants to online programs, Full proficiency is required.

Graduate Admission

To be considered for admission, applicants must have completed 15 credit hours in sociology, including a course in sociological theory, and a course in statistics.

Applications also must include:

- A statement of academic interests and professional goals
- 3 recommendation rating forms and letters from individuals who can evaluate the applicant's academic performance
- 1 complete set of transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- A current résumé/curriculum vitae
- A writing sample (senior or master's thesis preferred)
- A nonrefundable application fee

GRE scores are **optional** for applicants for Fall 2025 admission.

The applicant's record should indicate considerable academic promise and a high level of motivation.

Submit your graduate application online (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/apply/>). Most application materials can be attached to the online application.

Deadlines

Applications for fall admission are due on January 5. (If January 5 falls on a weekend or holiday, the deadline will be the next business day.)

Late applications will not be accepted. The Department of Sociology does not accept applications for spring admission.

MA Degree Requirements

Students entering the graduate program without a master's degree in Sociology must first complete all master's degree requirements. All courses must be selected in consultation with the student's faculty advisor.

1. Within the first 2 years of the program, students must complete all M.A. level requirements, including coursework, portfolio, and a final exam/defense. If a student does not complete all the M.A. level requirements within the first 2 years of the program, they will not be eligible for the renewal of their GTA/GRA funding.

The M.A. allows for the following degree completion options: 1. Master's Thesis Final Defense or 2. Exam-only (Terminal) option. Option 1 (thesis) requires 36 credit hours; option 2 (Exam-only) requires 30 hours.

Code	Title	Hours
Required Courses		
SOC 810	Sociological Inquiry	3
Methods		
SOC 812	Analytic Methods in Sociology	3
SOC 707	Seminar in Historical Sociology	3
or SOC 910	Seminar on Special Topics in Methods: _____	
Theory		
SOC 802	Classical Social Theory	3
or SOC 902	Contemporary Social Theory	
SOC 900	Seminar on Special Topics in Theory: _____	3
or SOC 802	Classical Social Theory	
or SOC 902	Contemporary Social Theory	
Elective Seminars		15
SOC 722	Sociology of Gender	
SOC 760	Social Inequality	
SOC 767	Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Gerontology and Aging	
SOC 780	Advanced Topics in Sociology: _____ (e.g. Cultural Sociology, Population Dynamics, Sociology of Religion, Gender in the Global Context, Comparative Sociology of Race)	
SOC 820	Political Sociology	
SOC 824	Health and Social Behavior	
SOC 873	International Political Economy	
SOC 920	Seminar on Special Topics in Social Organizations: _____	
Thesis (Not required for exam-only option.)		0-6
SOC 899	Thesis	
Total Hours		30-36

*Individual Master's Readings courses (SOC 891) may not be used to meet these requirements except by approved petition.

2. During their first year in the program, students must begin compiling portfolios of their professional work.

Thesis Defense

Students must complete an M.A. thesis under the direction of a sociology faculty member of the student's choosing, an oral defense of the thesis, and a final exam for the M.A. Degree. The M.A. committee must comply with Graduate Studies' Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/masters-oral-exam-committee-composition/>). A maximum of 5 members are allowed. The oral defense and the exam take place on the same occasion. The oral defense will consist of a presentation of research, open to the public, followed by a period of examination by the committee in closed session. No student can attempt a thesis defense and a M.A. exam more than twice; a second failure on the defense and examination requires that the M.A. committee chair report this fact to the Sociology Graduate Studies Committee to deliberate on the possible dismissal of the student from the program.

- Demonstrate good understanding of sociological literatures and theories in the field.
- Apply research methods to sociological research questions.
- Critically analyze the empirical outcomes of the sociological research.

Continuation to Ph.D.

Students who wish to continue must submit a request to the department's Graduate Studies Committee. Following the student's successful thesis defense, the committee will consider the recommendations of the student's M.A. committee members, the completed thesis, and the student's overall academic record. A signed Advisor/Committee form indicating approval of a faculty member to serve as the student's advisor during their doctoral studies is also required. Following deliberation of the students' qualifications, the Director of Graduate Studies will notify the student and their advisor whether the student is approved to continue in the program.

Exam Only (Terminal) M.A. Option

A student that wishes to complete a master's degree but does not wish to continue on to the doctoral level of the program may choose the exam only, terminal M.A. option. Completion of these requirements leads to the M.A. degree but does not allow the student to proceed to doctoral study. Exam only students must complete 30 hours of graduate credit. Coursework requirements are the same as listed above for the thesis-option M.A., but thesis hours (SOC 899) are not required.

A final, oral examination over course work in sociology is also required. The exam is closed to the public. The M.A. committee must comply with Graduate Studies' Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/masters-oral-exam-committee-composition/>). A maximum of 5 members are allowed. The oral examination may be taken twice; a second failure on the oral examination requires that the M.A. committee chair report this fact to the Sociology Graduate Studies Committee to deliberate on the possible dismissal of the student from the program.

Handbook for Graduate Students

A more detailed account of advising procedures, degree requirements, and program options is set forth in the department's *Manual of Graduate Study in Sociology*, which is available on the department's website (<https://sociology.ku.edu/curriculum/>).

University Policies and Requirements

A list of all policies of the Office of Graduate Studies is available online in the Policy Library (<https://policy.ku.edu/office/Graduate-Studies/>).

At the completion of this program, students will be able to: