

Doctor of Philosophy 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

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (<https://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies/>) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (<https://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences/>) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Graduate Admission

The Department of Sociology at the University of Kansas offers a Ph.D. program in sociology. Upon admission, all students are enrolled as Ph.D. students, but must complete all requirements for the M.A. degree during their progress toward the Ph.D. degree. A terminal M.A. option is available for students who decide not to complete a Ph.D.

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
- Non-native speakers of English must meet English proficiency requirements (<https://gradapply.ku.edu/english-requirements/>) set by KU Graduate Studies.
- GRE scores are **optional** for applicants for Fall 2024 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.

Ph.D. Degree Requirements

For the Ph.D., students must complete 54 hours of graduate coursework, which includes both M.A. and Ph.D. coursework requirements. Thesis and dissertation hour enrollments are also required. All courses must be selected in consultation with the student's faculty advisor.

1. After completing the requirements for the M.A. degree (see M.A. catalog page), students must attain the requisite levels of competence in the history and theory of sociology and in methods of sociological research by completing the courses listed below. Students must complete an additional 18 graduate credit hours from the coursework list above. This should include:

- An additional 3 credit hours of theory (must be SOC 802 or SOC 902 if not completed during M.A. level work)
- An additional 3 credit hours of methods
- An additional 9 credit hours of electives

*Individual Doctoral Readings courses (SOC 991) may not be used to meet these requirements except by approved petition.

The doctoral student must also complete SOC 995 Professionalization Proseminar.

2. Students must complete the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship (RSRS) requirement. The university requires that every doctoral student have training in responsible scholarship and research skills pertinent to the field of research and appropriate to the doctoral level. This requirement must be met before taking the comprehensive oral exam. Doctoral students in sociology meet this requirement by completion of the following courses: SOC 810, SOC 812, SOC 910. Additional information about this requirement can be found in the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/research-skills-responsible-scholarship/>) policy.

3. Students must compile portfolios of their professional work successfully demonstrating command of 2 fields of specialization within sociology and preparation to undertake dissertation research.

4. Students must pass an oral comprehensive examination and defense of dissertation proposal, within the first 6 semesters post-M.A. degree. The dissertation proposal is an independent piece of research leading to a dissertation that contributes to sociological knowledge. The student's doctoral committee determines the exact format of the dissertation proposal. In the proposal, the student is expected to review the state of the knowledge pertinent to the topic, describe the research problem, and explain the methods to be employed in the investigation. The oral comprehensive examination and dissertation proposal defense occur at the same time and are administered in a closed session. The focus of the oral comprehensive examination will be on the feasibility and quality of the proposed research as well as the student's understanding of the 2 fields of specialization. The dissertation committee must comply with Graduate Studies' Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition (<https://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-student-oral-exam-committee-composition/>) policy. A maximum of 7 members are allowed. The outcome may be graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. Sociology does not utilize the Honors designation for oral comprehensive examinations. The exam may be taken twice; a second failure on the examination requires that the committee chair report this fact to the Graduate Studies Committee to deliberate on the possible dismissal of the student from the program.

5. The candidate must continue to enroll in accordance with the Office of Graduate Studies Post-comprehensive Enrollment policy (<http://policy.ku.edu/graduate-studies/doctoral-candidacy/>) until all Ph.D. degree requirements have been met.

6. Students must complete a dissertation and pass a final, oral examination on the dissertation. The dissertation must demonstrate the development, execution, and results of original research. The doctoral dissertation is a coherent, logically organized, scholarly document. The final exam is open to the public. The outcome may be graded as Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory. If a grade of "Unsatisfactory" is reported, the candidate may be allowed to repeat the examination a second time. Failure on the second attempt at the final oral examination will result in the termination of the student from the graduate 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/>).