

SOCIOLOGY, M.S.

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 conduct research with intellectual and ethical rigor, care, and creativity.
2. Complete an original research project in one of the subfields of sociology. In doing so, they will learn to formulate ideas and develop research questions, interpret and evaluate existing literature on the topic, design a feasible research project, use an appropriate methodology, analyze and interpret the resulting data, and consider avenues for future research. Write a thesis describing their research project and defend it during a comprehensive oral exam.
3. Develop an understanding of the field of sociology by participating in a required introductory proseminar as well as completing required courses in sociological theory, research methods, and statistics along with elective courses in their area of interest. Demonstrate their understanding by working as teaching assistants, project assistants, research assistants, and trainees; by presenting work-in-progress at informal brownbag colloquia; by preparing and submitting manuscripts resulting from their research for publication in respected journals; and by submitting papers for presentation at professional conferences.
4. Retrieve, interpret, and evaluate social science literature and use it, along with their own understanding of relevant methodologies, to employ the most appropriate methods and practices in their own research.
5. Develop analytical thinking skills that enable them to evaluate information pertinent to their research questions. Develop the breadth of knowledge and experience that empowers them to synthesize disparate information and use the resulting synthesis to respond creatively to challenges in their field of study.
6. Communicate in a clear, organized, engaging manner, using language, methods, and critical tools appropriate to the social sciences. Learn to develop grant proposals; gather, manage, and analyze data; write a thesis that is thought-provoking, concise, and persuasive; present research informatively; listen with care and patience; and give and receive feedback orally and in writing.
7. Understand, recognize, and apply principles of ethical and professional conduct by developing effective relationships with faculty mentors, graduate student colleagues, and the undergraduate students whom they teach. Design research, collect and analyze data, and interpret and report results with honesty and scientific rigor.