

# Interdepartmental Graduate Program in Sociology: Rural Sociology (Thesis & Non-Thesis) — MS

---

## Degree Programs

- Rural Sociology — MS ([http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/sociologymisma\\_major/ruralsociology\\_ms/](http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/sociologymisma_major/ruralsociology_ms/))
- Sociology — MA, MS ([http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/sociologymisma\\_major/](http://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/sociologymisma_major/))

The master's program in rural sociology is part of the Interdepartmental Graduate Program in Sociology (IDGPS). The program is administered by co-directors representing the Departments of Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work (College of Liberal Arts) and Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology (College of Agriculture).

IDGPS offers study and research leading to the degrees of Master of Science in Rural Sociology and Master of Arts or Master of Science in Sociology. Anthropologists, social work faculty, rural sociologists, and sociologists make up the faculty.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants are required to have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution and a GPA of at least 3.0 on all completed coursework. The applicant's statement of interest, GRE scores (recommended but not required), letters of recommendation, and curriculum vitae are also considered in making a decision on admission.

**Applicants should ensure the following materials are submitted to the Graduate School web-based application system:**

- Official scores from the General Test of the GRE
- Official transcripts from every college and university attended
- If an international student, the official score from the TOEFL exam
- Three recommendations that address academic abilities
- Statement of interest in the program and field of study
- Curriculum Vitae

Applications to the Program are reviewed, year-round, by the admissions committee who will evaluate each dossier.

## Thesis and Non-Thesis Options

Thesis and non-thesis options are available for the MS degree in Rural Sociology. These two degree options are designed to serve the needs of differing types of students. The thesis option is recommended for students who are interested in gaining research experience or who might be interested in pursuing advanced graduate work. The non-thesis option is designed for individuals who are in mid-career, who wish to learn new skills in order to be more productive professionally, and who do not plan to pursue a more advanced graduate degree. However, PhD students in other programs often choose to complete a Rural Sociology non-thesis degree to augment their studies.

The thesis option requires a minimum of 30 semester hours, with 6 semester hours of this total being for research and thesis (RSOC 7990 Research And Thesis). The non-thesis option requires 36 semester hours of course credit and the completion of a capstone paper.

## Required Core Courses

**All IDGPS students take three core graduate courses:**

- SOCY 7000 Adv Sociological Theory
- SOCY 7100 Stat Anlys Surv Aggr And Data
- RSOC 7700 Methods Of Social Research

Students without undergraduate coursework in these core areas may be required to take additional courses. Remaining courses, at the 6000-level and above, are taken with the advice of the student's graduate advisory committee.

## **Financial Aid**

A variable number of graduate research assistantships (GRA) are available on a competitive basis to support graduate students in the program. When assessed, strong preference is given to funding students pursuing the thesis option.

GRAs require work with faculty conducting research on a variety of topics dealing with, but not limited to, environment and natural resources, food and agriculture, and community and rural development. While funding from grants may become available throughout the year, GRAs are generally made available in February or March for the following academic year.

Most graduate assistantships require the commitment of 13–15 hours of work per week. Given these responsibilities, graduate students holding assistantships are expected to take no more than 9 hours of graduate credit coursework per semester.