Sociology — MA, MS

Degree Programs

- Sociology — MA (https://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/sociologymsma_major/sociology_ma/)
- Sociology — MS (https://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/sociologymsma_major/sociology_ms/)
- Rural Sociology — MS (https://bulletin.auburn.edu/thegraduateschool/graduatedegreesoffered/sociologymsma_major/ruralsociology_ms/)

The interdepartmental graduate program in sociology offers study and research leading to the degrees of Master of Arts or Master of Science in Sociology and in Rural Sociology. Anthropologists, social work faculty, rural sociologists, and sociologists make up the faculty. The program is administered by a two-member coordinating committee from the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work. Information about the two degrees is available at https://www.cla.auburn.edu/sociology-anthropology-social-work/sociology/graduate-degrees/.

Admission Requirements

Admission to the program is administered by co-directors representing the Department of Sociology, Anthropology & Social Work and the Department of Agricultural Economics & Rural Sociology. Applicants are required to have a bachelor's degree from an accredited institution. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 on all completed coursework is desired. The applicant's statement of interest and letters of recommendation also are considered in making a decision on admission.

Applicants should ensure the following materials are submitted to the Graduate School web application:

- Official transcripts from every college and university attended
- If an international student, the official score from the TOEFL exam
- Three letters of recommendation

Applicants should ensure that the following materials are submitted to the graduate program officer in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work:

- Statement of interest

Applications to the program are reviewed year-round.

The program’s coordinating committee will evaluate each applicant’s dossier.

Thesis (MS) and Non-Thesis (MA) Options

The MS and MA degree options are designed to serve the needs of differing types of students. The thesis option is recommended for students interested in pursuing advanced graduate work and in gaining research experience. 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 have no intent on pursuing a more advanced graduate degree.

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

Required Core Courses

All students take core graduate courses in social theory, social research methods, and statistics:

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

Students without undergraduate course work in these areas may be required to take additional courses to prepare for the core graduate courses. Additional 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 teaching assistantships and graduate research assistantships are available on a competitive basis to support graduate students in the program. Strong preference is given to funding students pursuing the thesis option.

Admission to the program is determined collectively by the coordinating committee, but funding decisions are made by individual departments. To be considered for funding, applicants should send three letters of recommendation to the coordinating committee member in the appropriate department.

Most graduate teaching assistantships and graduate research assistantships require the commitment of 13–15 hours of work per week. Given these responsibilities, graduate students holding graduate teaching assistantships and graduate research assistantships are expected to take no more than 9 hours of graduate credit course work per semester. Experience indicates that a heavier course load leads to an erosion of performance both on the job and in the course work.

Graduate teaching positions are associated primarily with the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work and involve working with faculty teaching in the undergraduate core curriculum. Students seeking graduate teaching assistantships should submit their completed applications by March 1 to be included in the review process regarding funding decisions for the following academic year. However, occasionally, funds for graduate teaching assistantships may become available later in the year, and applications are then reviewed accordingly.

Graduate research assistantships are associated primarily with the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology and require working with faculty conducting research on a variety of topics dealing with rural development. Funding from grants becomes available at different times of the year. The funds for graduate research assistantships generally are made available in February or March. Please contact the coordinating committee member from the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology for further information on funding.