

SOCIOLOGY, M.A.

Learning Outcomes

- Sociology MA students will demonstrate an understanding of the components of the theoretical explanations used in the varied substantive areas of the discipline. The theoretical explanations will be based on classical and contemporary theorists central to the discipline.
- Sociology MA students will demonstrate an understanding and ability to use the following types of statistical tools: 1. the distinction between descriptive and inferential statistics 2. causal modeling techniques 3. use of appropriate statistical analysis packages 4. sampling.
- Students will become familiarized with aspects of presentation of research results and findings to a professional audience.
- Students will learn to successfully complete research projects and prepare results for professional dissemination.
- Students will demonstrate an aggregate integrated mastery of sociological skills appropriate to an MA degree in their substantive area.

Degree Requirements (30 Hours)

The M.A. requires a minimum of 30 credit hours beyond the B.A. or B.S. This includes 6 hours of thesis preparation. Consult the Sociology Graduate Student Handbook for further information (<http://www.cas.sc.edu/socy/GradHandbook.pdf>).

Theoretical and Substantive Foundations (12 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
SOCY 515	Scientific Methods and Sociological Inquiry	3
SOCY 560	Advanced Sociological Theory	3
Select 6 hours in one of four areas of department specialization (No more than six hours can be at the 500-level.):		
Methods		
Population & Health		
Institutions & Inequalities		
Social Psychology		
Total Credit Hours		12

Research Methods and Statistics (6 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
SOCY 562	Advanced Sociological Research Methods	3
SOCY 730	Statistical Analysis in Sociology	3
Total Credit Hours		6

Electives (6 Hours)

Select from SOCY 500-SOCY 891. A maximum of 3 credit hours earned from other departments may be applied toward this requirement.

Thesis and Research Preparation (6 Hours)

Course	Title	Credits
SOCY 799	Thesis Research and Preparation	6
Total Credit Hours		6

Additional Information

Students must maintain a **B** average for all graduate courses taken at the University of South Carolina. Grades below **B** are generally unacceptable in graduate school. After completing 12 hours of graduate credit at the University, students whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.00 are dropped from the program without further review. Also, students receiving a second grade of **C+** or below are dropped from the program without further review.

For transfer students who do not hold a master's degree, some program requirements may be waived if the student has taken a course or its equivalent in graduate work elsewhere and earned a grade of **A** (excluding **A-**). However, such waivers may not exceed 6 credit hours to be applied toward the 30-hour requirement for the master's degree. Students requesting a waiver must inform the Graduate Program Committee in writing. The Graduate Program Committee evaluates the files of students to determine whether a waiver is warranted.

As students near the end of their course work, they select a thesis committee composed of at least three members of the department's faculty. Faculty members have the right of refusal. The student chooses one faculty member to serve as director. The director of the Thesis Committee notifies the director of the Graduate Program Committee in writing of the composition of the Thesis Committee. The director of the Graduate Program Committee informs the chair of the department and the dean of The Graduate School of the composition of the Thesis Committee. Pursuant to the rules of The Graduate School, the department and The Graduate School must approve the Thesis Committee. Working with the Thesis Committee, the student prepares a thesis proposal. The Thesis Committee has the right to approve, request revisions, or reject the proposal. The committee also conducts an oral comprehensive examination to determine if the student has acquired the theoretical and methodological background required to complete the proposed research. For full-time students, this examination usually occurs late in the first semester of the second year of study. Students who fail the M.A. comprehensive examination twice are removed from the program without further review.

If the Thesis Committee approves the proposal and the oral examination, all members sign a letter stating that the student has passed the comprehensive examination. The director of the Thesis Committee provides a copy of this letter to the chair of the department and gives the original letter to the director of the Graduate Program Committee. The original letter is placed in the student's file. The director of the Graduate Program Committee notifies the dean of The Graduate School that the student has passed the comprehensive examination.

After the student submits the thesis for evaluation, the Thesis Committee conducts an oral examination to determine if the proposed work has been successfully completed. The committee members have the right to approve, request revisions and further analysis to, or reject the thesis. The M.A. degree is granted only after the Thesis Committee approves the thesis, all members sign the title page, The Graduate School accepts the approved thesis, and all other requirements are met.