SOCIOLGY, MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.S.)

Program goals

The goal of the graduate program in sociology is to facilitate the development of theoretical, methodological and substantive competence appropriate for students' interests and career goals. In keeping with VCU's role as an urban institution, the program focuses on the study of public sociology, inequality, social problems, policy alternatives and strategies for change. In addition to its program on the VCU campus, the department offers an online applied option with a focus in digital sociology.

Student learning outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the key concepts developed by classical and modern sociological theorists.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability to apply a detailed comprehension of diversity and of inequality to the analysis of social issues.
3. Students will demonstrate advanced knowledge of sociological concepts such as culture, roles, norms, social structure, social institution, socialization and stratification.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of methodological approaches and data analysis techniques in sociology.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to use sociological theory in the critical analysis of sociological issues and research questions.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to present clear, organized and coherent arguments in the analysis of sociological issues.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to use methodological skills in the critical evaluation of existing sociological research and the discussion of alternative research methods.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (http://www.graduate.vcu.edu) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the Graduate study section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students)

Degree candidacy requirements

A graduate student admitted to a program or concentration requiring a final research project, work of art, thesis or dissertation, must qualify for continuing master's or doctoral status according to the degree candidacy requirements of the student's graduate program. Admission to degree candidacy, if applicable, is a formal statement by the graduate student's faculty regarding the student's academic achievements and the student's readiness to proceed to the final research phase of the degree program.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following degree candidacy policy as published in the VCU Graduate Bulletin for complete information and instructions.

Visit the Graduate study section for additional information on degree candidacy requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/degree-candidacy)

Graduation requirements

As graduate students approach the end of their academic programs and the final semester of matriculation, they must make formal application to graduate. No degrees will be conferred until the application to graduate has been finalized.

Graduate students and program directors should refer to the following graduation requirements as published in the Graduate Bulletin for a complete list of instructions and a graduation checklist.

Visit the Graduate study section for additional information on graduation requirements. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/graduation-requirements)

Apply online at graduate.admissions.vcu.edu (http://www.graduate.admissions.vcu.edu).

Admission requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Degree:</th>
<th>Semester(s) of entry:</th>
<th>Deadline dates:</th>
<th>Test requirements:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.S.</td>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Jul 1</td>
<td>GRE-General</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: A limited number of assistantships are available for qualified applicants. Applicants for assistantships should have their files complete by April 1. Individuals not applying for assistantships should file their applications for graduate study as early as possible to permit adequate review.

In addition to the general admission requirements of the VCU Graduate School (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/graduation-requirements), the following requirements represent the minimum acceptable standards for admission.

Preference is given to students who have a substantial background in sociology, such as an undergraduate major or minor or 18 or more college-level credit hours in sociology. Students with an undergraduate or graduate degree in a closely related field will also receive consideration for admission.

Degree requirements

In addition to general VCU Graduate School graduation requirements (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students/graduation-requirements), the following requirements apply:

Student learning outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of the key concepts developed by classical and modern sociological theorists.
2. Students will demonstrate an ability to apply a detailed comprehension of diversity and of inequality to the analysis of social issues.
3. Students will demonstrate advanced knowledge of sociological concepts such as culture, roles, norms, social structure, social institution, socialization and stratification.
4. Students will demonstrate knowledge of methodological approaches and data analysis techniques in sociology.
5. Students will demonstrate the ability to use sociological theory in the critical analysis of sociological issues and research questions.
6. Students will demonstrate the ability to present clear, organized and coherent arguments in the analysis of sociological issues.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to use methodological skills in the critical evaluation of existing sociological research and the discussion of alternative research methods.

VCU Graduate Bulletin, VCU Graduate School and general academic policies and regulations for all graduate students in all graduate programs

The VCU Graduate Bulletin website documents the official admission and academic rules and regulations that govern graduate education for all graduate programs at the university. These policies are established by the graduate faculty of the university through their elected representatives to the University Graduate Council.

It is the responsibility of all graduate students, both on- and off-campus, to be familiar with the VCU Graduate Bulletin as well as the Graduate School website (http://www.graduate.vcu.edu) and academic regulations in individual school and department publications and on program websites. However, in all cases, the official policies and procedures of the University Graduate Council, as published on the VCU Graduate Bulletin and Graduate School websites, take precedence over individual program policies and guidelines.

Visit the Graduate study section for additional information on academic regulations for graduate students. (http://bulletin.vcu.edu/graduate/study/general-academic-regulations-graduate-students)
1. Credit hour requirements: Students in the M.S. in Sociology program are required to earn a minimum of 36 graduate-level credit hours beyond the baccalaureate. At least one-half of the credit hours presented for graduation must be at the 600 level or higher.

2. Other requirements: Students are required to apply for either the thesis or applied sociology (non-thesis) option by the end of their second semester in the program. The thesis option is completed through on-campus courses, and the applied option may be completed through either on-campus or online courses. Degree requirements for the two options are shown below. Incoming students apply as either on-campus students (both options) or online students (applied option only). Incoming students choosing the online applied option must make that decision prior to beginning the program and continue as such until obtaining the degree. For the thesis option, a master’s thesis will be developed under the guidance of a thesis committee (three faculty members including a thesis adviser) and must be defended publicly.

### Curriculum requirements

#### Thesis option

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required core courses</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCY 502 Contemporary Sociological Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCY 601 Sociological Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCY 602 Applications of Sociological Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thesis option courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistics for Social Research</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M.S. Thesis</td>
<td>1-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Electives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Select courses from the list below</th>
<th>18-23</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Total Hours**

| 36 |

### Total graduate credit hours required (minimum) 36

#### Applied sociology option (non-thesis)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Required core courses</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCY 502 Contemporary Sociological Theory</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCY 601 Sociological Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCY 602 Applications of Sociological Research Methods</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applied sociology option courses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction to Social Statistics</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>or Statistics for Social Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Choose six credits from any combination of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internship</th>
<th>6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practicum in Sociology</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Electives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Select courses from the list below</th>
<th>18</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Total Hours**

| 36 |

### Total graduate credit hours required (minimum) 36

#### Recommended electives

A maximum of six credits from outside sociology may be presented toward the degree.

**Recommended electives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADMS (600-level)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ANTH (500-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CRJS (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ECON (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRAD (600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRTY (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GWS (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GVPA (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HADM (600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURS (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PADM (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHIL (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POLI (500-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC (600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RHAB (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBHD (600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEDP (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCY (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCY 692 Independent Study</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLWK (600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPTL (600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>URSP (500- to 600-level)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. A maximum of six credits of SOCY 698 may be presented toward the degree.
2. A maximum of six credits of SOCY 692 may be presented toward the degree.

**Graduate program director**

Julie A. Honnold, Ph.D.
Email: jhonn@vcu.edu
Phone: (804) 828-6680

**Additional contacts**

Tara M. Stamm, Ph.D.
Assistant program director
Email: tmstamm@vcu.edu
Phone: (804) 828-9432

Meredith A. Katz, Ph.D.
Assistant program director
Email: makatz@vcu.edu
Phone: (804) 828-4027

**Program website:** sociology.vcu.edu (http://www.sociology.vcu.edu)