

SOCIOLOGY, BACHELOR OF SCIENCE (B.S.)

The Bachelor of Science in Sociology requires a minimum of 120 credits, with at least 33 of those credits in sociology and other approved courses. The program can be completed either face-to-face or online.

The baccalaureate curriculum in sociology seeks to ensure that each student develops a solid foundation in the basic principles, theories and techniques of analysis in sociology. It also encourages students to pursue an interdisciplinary approach by incorporating course credit from closely related subject areas in other programs. Since students majoring in sociology vary in their interests and career goals, the curriculum allows for a great deal of flexibility in developing individual courses of study. Students who are interested in pursuing graduate studies in sociology usually will take more than the minimum number of upper-level courses. The program provides opportunities for involvement in faculty research through its course offerings, which include independent study, internships and honors research.

Student learning outcomes

Upon completing this program, students will know and know how to do the following:

- Understand sociological theory
Students will demonstrate an ability to apply different theoretical perspectives to social issues as well as compare and contrast basic theoretical orientations.
- Understand sociological concepts
Students will demonstrate knowledge of basic concepts in sociology, such that students will be able to define, give examples and demonstrate the relevance of culture, social structure, institutions, socialization, stratification, social change and differentiations by race/ethnicity, gender, sexuality, age and class.
- Understand sociological research and analysis
Students will demonstrate knowledge of basic methodological approaches (both quantitative and qualitative) in sociology and the general role of methodology in building sociological knowledge. Students will know how to retrieve data sets from the Internet, read and produce descriptive statistics, and work with data analysis software, such as SPSS.

Degree requirements for Sociology, Bachelor of Science (B.S.)

Course	Title	Hours
General education (https://bulletin.vcu.edu/undergraduate/undergraduate-study/general-education-curriculum/)		
Select 30 credits of general education courses in consultation with an adviser.		30
Major requirements		
• Major core requirements ¹		
SOCY 202	Foundations of Theory	3
SOCY 302	Contemporary Social Problems	3
SOCY 320	Research Methods in the Social Sciences	3
SOCY 322	Sociology of Race and Ethnicity	3
SOCY 402	Contemporary Theory	3

SOCY 406	Sociology Senior Seminar	4
• Major electives		
Select SOCY courses (300- to 400-level) ²		18
Ancillary requirements		
HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1
SOCY 101 Play course video for Introduction to Sociology	Introduction to Sociology (satisfies general education BOK for social/behavioral sciences and AOI for diversities in the human experience)	3
STAT 208	Statistical Thinking (either satisfies general education quantitative foundations)	3
or STAT 210	Basic Practice of Statistics	
Experiential fine arts ³		1-3
Foreign language through the 102 level (by course or placement)		0-6
Open electives		
Select any course.		43-51
Total Hours		120

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

1

A minimum grade of C is required in each course.

2

Students have an option of completing three elective credits chosen from any 300- or 400-level SOCS course.

3

Course offered by the School of the Arts.

What follows is a sample plan that meets the prescribed requirements within a four-year course of study at VCU. Please contact your adviser before beginning course work toward a degree.

Recommended course sequence/plan of study

Freshman year		Hours
Fall semester		
MATH 131	Introduction to Contemporary Mathematics (or open elective if placed out of MATH 131)	3
UNIV 101	Introduction to the University	1
UNIV 111	Focused Inquiry I (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
Play course video for Focused Inquiry I		
Experiential fine arts		1-3
General education course (select in consultation with an adviser)		3
General education course (select in consultation with an adviser)		3
Term Hours:		14-16
Spring semester		
HUMS 202	Choices in a Consumer Society	1

SOCY 101	Introduction to Sociology (satisfies general education BOK for social/behavioral sciences and AOI for diversities in the human experience)	3
STAT 208 or STAT 210	Statistical Thinking (either satisfies general education quantitative foundations) or Basic Practice of Statistics	3
UNIV 112	Focused Inquiry II (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
General education course (select in consultation with an adviser)		3
Open elective		3
Term Hours:		16
Sophomore year		
Fall semester		
SOCY 202	Foundations of Theory	3
UNIV 200	Advanced Focused Inquiry: Literacies, Research and Communication (satisfies general education UNIV foundations)	3
Foreign language 101		3
General education course (select BOK to complete breadth of knowledge requirement)		3
Open elective		3
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
SOCY 302	Contemporary Social Problems	3
SOCY 320	Research Methods in the Social Sciences	3
Foreign language 102		3
General education course (select BOK to complete breadth of knowledge requirement)		3
Major elective (300-level)		3
Term Hours:		15
Junior year		
Fall semester		
SOCY 302 or SOCY 322	Contemporary Social Problems or Sociology of Race and Ethnicity	3
Major elective (300-level)		3
Major electives (300- to 400-level, except SOCY 402 or SOCY 406)		6
Open elective (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY elective)		3
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
SOCY 302 or SOCY 322	Contemporary Social Problems or Sociology of Race and Ethnicity	3
Major electives (300- to 400-level)		6
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		6
Term Hours:		15

Senior year**Fall semester**

SOCY 402	Contemporary Theory	3
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		12
Term Hours:		15

Spring semester

SOCY 406	Sociology Senior Seminar	4
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		11
Term Hours:		15
Total Hours:		120-122

The minimum number of credit hours required for this degree is 120.

Accelerated B.S. and M.S.

The accelerated B.S. and M.S. program allows qualified students to earn both the B.S. in Sociology and an M.S. in Gerontology in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. Students in the program may count up to 12 hours of graduate courses toward both the B.S. and M.S. degrees. Thus, the two degrees may be earned with a minimum of 138 credits rather than the 150 credits necessary if the two degrees are pursued separately.

Students holding these degrees will have completed advanced course work focused on the sociology of health, medicine and aging, preparing them for a variety of careers in policy, counseling and health services.

Entrance to the accelerated program

Interested undergraduate students should consult with their adviser as early as possible to receive specific information about the accelerated program, determine academic eligibility and submit (no later than two semesters prior to graduating with a baccalaureate degree, that is, before the end of the spring semester of their junior year) an Accelerated Program Declaration Form to be approved by the graduate program director. Limited spaces may be available in the accelerated program. Academically qualified students may not receive approval if capacity has been reached.

Minimum qualifications for admittance to the program include completion of 84 undergraduate credit hours including SOCY 202 and a GPA of 3.0 in the major. Students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirements may submit GRE scores to receive further consideration. Successful applicants would enter the program in the fall semester of their senior year.

Once enrolled in the accelerated program, students must meet the standards of performance applicable to graduate students as described in the “**Satisfactory academic progress**” section of the Graduate Bulletin, including maintaining a 3.0 GPA. Guidance to students admitted to the accelerated program is provided by both the undergraduate sociology adviser and the faculty adviser to the graduate program.

Admission to the graduate program

Entrance to the accelerated program enables the student to take the approved shared courses that will apply to the undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, entry into an accelerated program via an approved Accelerated Program Declaration Form does not constitute application or admission into the graduate program. Admission to the

graduate program requires a separate step that occurs through a formal application. In order to continue pursuing the master's degree after the baccalaureate degree is conferred, accelerated students must follow the admission to graduate study requirements outlined in the VCU Bulletin. Three reference letters (at least two from sociology faculty members) must accompany the application.

Degree requirements

The Bachelor of Science in Sociology degree will be awarded upon completion of a minimum of 120 credits and the satisfactory completion of all undergraduate degree requirements as stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

A maximum of 12 graduate credits may be taken prior to completion of the baccalaureate degree. These graduate credits will substitute for open elective credits for the undergraduate degree. These courses are shared credits with the graduate program, meaning that they will be applied to both undergraduate and graduate degree requirements.

The graduate gerontology courses that may be taken as an undergraduate, once a student is admitted to the program, are:

Course	Title	Hours
GRTY 601	Biological and Physiological Aging	3
GRTY 602	Psychology of Aging	3
GRTY 603	Social Gerontology	3
GRTY 606	Aging and Human Values	3
Total Hours		12

Recommended course sequence/plan of study

What follows is the recommended plan of study for students interested in the accelerated program beginning in the fall of the junior year prior to admission to the accelerated program in the senior year.

Course	Title	Hours
Junior year		
Fall semester		
300-level SOCY elective		3
300- to 400-level SOCY electives (except SOCY 402 or SOCY 406)		6
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		6
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
300- to 400-level SOCY electives or approved SOCY or SOCS electives		6
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		9
Term Hours:		15
Senior year		
Fall semester		
GRTY 602	Psychology of Aging	3
GRTY 603	Social Gerontology	3
SOCY 402	Contemporary Theory	3
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		6
Term Hours:		15

Spring semester		
GRTY 601	Biological and Physiological Aging	3
GRTY 606	Aging and Human Values	3
SOCY 406	Sociology Senior Seminar	4
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		6
Term Hours:		16
Fifth year		
Fall semester		
GRTY 605	Social Science Research Methods Applied to Gerontology	3
GRTY 607	Field Study in Gerontology	1
GRTY 608	Grant Writing	2
Elective		3
Term Hours:		9
Spring semester		
GRTY 604	Problems, Issues and Trends in Gerontology	4
GRTY 607	Field Study in Gerontology	3
Elective		2
Term Hours:		9

Accelerated B.S. and M.S.

The accelerated B.S. and M.S. program allows qualified students to earn both the B.S. and M.S. in Sociology in a minimum of five years by completing approved graduate courses during the senior year of their undergraduate program. Students in the program may count up to 12 hours of graduate courses toward both the B.S. and M.S. degrees. Thus, the two degrees may be earned with a minimum of 144 credits rather than the 156 credits necessary if the two degrees are pursued separately.

Students holding these degrees will have the strong analytical and methodological skills that prepare them for future academic and/or professional work. Using both theory and methods, students will develop a sociological imagination central to the critical analysis of modern social problems. The program will also provide students with opportunities to participate in research projects, internships and other training programs where they develop the skills to evaluate, refine and apply what they learn in the classroom.

Entrance to the accelerated program

Interested undergraduate students should consult with their adviser as early as possible to receive specific information about the accelerated program, determine academic eligibility and submit an Accelerated Program Declaration Form to be approved by the graduate program director. Limited spaces may be available in the accelerated program. Academically qualified students may not receive approval if capacity has been reached.

Minimum qualifications for entrance to this accelerated program include completion of 90 undergraduate credit hours including a minimum of nine credit hours in sociology courses; an overall GPA of 3.0; and a GPA of 3.3 in sociology course work. Students who do not meet the minimum GPA requirements may submit GRE scores to receive further consideration. Successful applicants would enter the program in the fall semester of their senior year.

Once enrolled in the accelerated program, students must meet the standards of performance applicable to graduate students as described in the “Satisfactory academic progress (<https://bulletin.vcu.edu/academic-regs/grad/satisfactory-academic-progress/>)” section of the Graduate Bulletin, including maintaining a 3.0 GPA. Guidance to students admitted to the accelerated program is provided by both the undergraduate sociology adviser and the faculty adviser to the graduate program.

Admission to the graduate program

Entrance to the accelerated program enables the student to take the approved shared courses that will apply to the undergraduate and graduate degrees. However, entry into an accelerated program via an approved Accelerated Program Declaration Form does not constitute application or admission into the graduate program. Admission to the graduate program requires a separate step that occurs through a formal application. In order to continue pursuing the master’s degree after the baccalaureate degree is conferred, accelerated students must follow the admission to graduate study requirements outlined in the VCU Bulletin. Three reference letters (at least one from a sociology faculty member) must accompany the application.

Degree requirements

The Bachelor of Science in Sociology degree will be awarded upon completion of a minimum of 120 credits and the satisfactory completion of all undergraduate degree requirements as stated in the Undergraduate Bulletin.

A maximum of 12 graduate credits may be taken prior to completion of the baccalaureate degree. These graduate credits may be used to satisfy required major electives or open elective credits for the undergraduate degree. These courses are shared credits with the graduate program, meaning that they will be applied to both undergraduate and graduate degree requirements.

The graduate sociology courses that may be taken as an undergraduate, once a student is admitted to the program, are:

Course	Title	Hours
SOCY 502	Contemporary Sociological Theory	3
SOCY/STAT 508	Introduction to Social Statistics	3
SOCY 601	Sociological Research Methods	3
SOCY 602	Applications of Sociological Research Methods	3
Total Hours		12

Recommended course sequence/plan of study

What follows is the recommended plan of study for students interested in the accelerated program beginning in the fall of the junior year prior to admission to the accelerated program in the senior year.

Course	Title	Hours
Junior year		
Fall semester		
300-level SOCY elective		3
300- to 400-level SOCY electives (except SOCY 402 or SOCY 406)		6
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		6

Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
300- to 400-level SOCY electives or approved SOCY or SOCS electives		6
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		9
Term Hours:		15
Senior year		
Fall semester		
SOCY 502	Contemporary Sociological Theory	3
SOCY/STAT 508	Introduction to Social Statistics	3
SOCY 601	Sociological Research Methods	3
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		6
Term Hours:		15
Spring semester		
SOCY 406	Sociology Senior Seminar	4
SOCY 602	Applications of Sociological Research Methods	3
Open electives (upper-level preferred, may take additional SOCY electives)		9
Term Hours:		16
Fifth year		
Fall semester		
SOCY 699	Seminar in Sociological Practice	3
600-level SOCY electives		6
Elective (500- to 600-level, may take additional SOCY elective)		3
Term Hours:		12
Spring semester		
SOCY 699	Seminar in Sociological Practice	3
600-level SOCY electives		6
Elective (500- to 600-level, may take additional SOCY elective)		3
Term Hours:		12