MASTER OF ARTS: SOCIOLOGY

Career Implications of the M.A. in Sociology

An M.A. in sociology opens the recipient to many potential career paths. Some M.A. recipients go directly into teaching at the community college or high school level. Others enter the corporate, nonprofit and government worlds in areas such as directors of research, policy analysis, consulting, human resource management and program management. This credential would be an appropriate requirement to become an executive director in a social service agency. For outstanding students, the M.A. is preparation for doctoral level studies.

Admission Requirements

- Bacchalaureate degree from an accredited college or university in Sociology (or related discipline such as Political Science, Anthropology, History, or Psychology)
- An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 (B) in the junior/senior years
- An overall GPA of 2.75 and a 3.0 GPA in sociology courses
- Successful completion (receiving an 80% or better) in three undergraduate courses: Social Theory, Research Methods, and Statistics (equivalent to SOCIOL 263, SOCIOL 361, and SOCIOL 362)*
- The GRE is not required for admission.

*In the case when an otherwise outstanding student does not meet these above requirements, the student may be accepted conditionally to the program. For these conditionally accepted students to gain full admission, they must demonstrate aptitude for coursework in Sociology, particularly in the required courses. We strongly advise potential applicants to have completed at least two (preferably all three) of these courses prior to applying to the program.

Application Procedures

Application Deadlines:

- November 1: Winter/Spring semester admission
- February 15: Fall semester admission. To be considered for departmental teaching or research assistant positions, applicants must submit the GTA/GRA assistantship application in addition to the MA application packet by February 15. The graduate assistantship application form is available at http://cas.umkc.edu/sociology/images/documents/gtagra-application.pdf.
- April 1: Fall semester admission (deadline for applicants who are not applying for a departmental teaching or research assistantship position).

A complete application packet includes the application fee, as required, and these materials submitted to the university’s Office of Admissions:

- The UMKC general application form, available at http://www.umkc.edu/admissions
- All undergraduate transcripts;
- Three letters of recommendation, preferably from former instructors;
- One undergraduate written assignment that best illustrates your ability to think analytically, and
- A two to three page statement outlining your goals for graduate study, the nature of your interest in Sociology, and at least one current UMKC faculty member whose areas of expertise match your interests, any past experiences that are relevant, as well as your future plans. (This is in place of completing the statement of purpose section on the UMKC application.)

We strongly encourage the student to contact directly the principal graduate advisor, Dr. Deborah Smith (smithde@umkc.edu), or other faculty members who similar research interests prior to or during the admission process.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from this program will:

- Examine the role and relevance of the sociological perspective for graduate students who will have the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue either a Ph.D. in a related field or to engage in enhanced study, research, and/or application of sociological method and theory.
- Reflect on contemporary issues and controversies in sociology, and advance sociological research through their own academic engagement with social theories and methods.
- Explore the theoretical and methodological perspectives in a chosen specialty area to elaborate the historical development and contemporary manifestation of social inequalities.
- Advance critical research and writing skills for professional development and civic engagement such that graduate students will deepen their professional commitment to community.
Curriculum Requirements

This program requires 30 credit hours of coursework. The following core courses (15 credits) are required of all students and should be taken early in the program:

### Required Courses

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOCIOL 5501</td>
<td>Social Theory I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOCIOL 5502</td>
<td>Social Theory II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIOL 5510</td>
<td>Sociological Methods I</td>
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<td>SOCIOL 5511</td>
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<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOCIOL 5516</td>
<td>Intermediate Statistics</td>
<td>3</td>
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</table>

Total Credits 15

Students also must complete an additional 15 credit hours, generally fulfilled by taking graduate-level courses from the Sociology curriculum. Specifically, these 15 hours beyond the core courses may include up to 6 credit hours of thesis research, up to 3 credit hours of independent/directed studies, up to 6 credit hours of 400-level coursework in the department, and/or up to 6 credit hours of graduate coursework from other disciplines with the approval of the sociology principal graduate advisor. In no case can more than 3 one-credit courses be part of the program of study.

Students are expected to earn a GPA of 3.0 or above in the core courses and an overall GPA of 3.0. Those who do not meet this requirement will be subject to review by the departmental graduate standards committee. Students who do not perform at a satisfactory level during their time in the program may be reviewed by the Graduate Standards Committee and subsequently can be placed on probation and/or terminated from the program.

Students must complete at least 3 credit hours of graduate work each semester (fall and spring) for the first 2 years of the program and at least 1 credit hour each subsequent semester (fall and spring) to maintain their standing in the program.

By the midpoint of the program, a student should have selected at least 3 faculty members to serve on the master's committee and filed a program of study.

Students may complete the M.A. requirements in Sociology through either: (a) the thesis option, or (b) the comprehensive exam option. We strongly advise students to pursue the thesis option as this provides the greatest flexibility for future study and employment choices.

### Thesis Option

Of the required 30 credit hours, 6 credit hours are used for the completion of the master's thesis. An oral defense of the thesis is required. We strongly encourage all students, especially those who aspire to the doctoral-study level, to select the thesis option.

### Comprehensive Exam Option

In addition to the 30 required credit hours, students choosing this option must pass a comprehensive exam comprised of 3 parts: sociological theory, research methods and statistics and a substantive area of the student’s choice in consultation with the principal graduate advisor or the student’s committee chair.

If a student is unable to pass any component of the comprehensive exam on a second try, the graduate standards committee will evaluate the situation and decide if circumstances warrant a third attempt. Under no circumstances, will a student be given more than three attempts at passing the comprehensive exam.