

Sociology (MA)

Degree Requirements

Master Of Arts Program In Sociology

The Master of Arts Program in Sociology provides students with advanced training in sociological theory and social science research methods for enhanced understanding of several specialized subject areas of sociology: crime and deviance, family, gender, medical sociology, social psychology, social stratification and labor markets, and the sociology of religion. In addition to working closely with sociology graduate faculty, students can collaborate with graduate faculty in anthropology and social work and can simultaneously pursue a graduate certificate in gerontology. The Master of Arts Program in Sociology can prepare students for doctoral-level study or for careers in teaching, private industry, government, or community and social service.

Students can apply for admission to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology to begin study in the Fall or Spring semester. However, it is highly recommended that students apply for admission to begin study in the Fall semester as per the academic structure of the Master of Arts Program in Sociology. See below, and The Graduate School, for important application deadlines.

The following Requirements for Admission to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology supplement the categories of admission as stipulated by The Graduate School.

Requirements For Admission

Regular Admission

1. Baccalaureate degree or coursework in a social science discipline from an accredited institution of higher education.
2. Applicants to graduate programs in Arts and Sciences typically have a minimum GPA of at least a 3.0 on all undergraduate work. In exceptional cases, applicants may be considered with at least a 2.5 GPA on all undergraduate work, or at least a 2.75 GPA on the last 60 hours of undergraduate work.
3. Completion of the University of South Alabama on-line Graduate Application for Admission.
4. Official academic transcripts from each college or university attended, even if the applicant did not earn credit at the institution.
5. Applicants to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology typically have a minimum combined score of 300 or better on the Verbal Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning sections of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) General Test. In exceptional cases, applicants to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology may be considered with a minimum combined score of lower than 300 on the Verbal Reasoning and Quantitative Reasoning sections of the GRE General Test.
6. Submission of a statement of purpose—approximately two (2), single-spaced pages in length—that provides an intellectual autobiography of the applicant, an indication of the applicant's areas of specialized interest within sociology, and a description of the applicant's academic and career goals.
7. One (1) writing sample, preferably generated for evaluation in completed coursework toward the baccalaureate degree.
8. Three (3) letters of recommendation that detail the applicant's capacity for success in, and for timely completion of, a master's program of study. Letters of recommendation should also address the applicant's ability and willingness to work cooperatively within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work and cooperatively among the University of South Alabama's broader academic community. A minimum of two (2) letters of recommendation must be written by college or university faculty members who are familiar with the applicant's academic work.

Applicants who wish to be considered for financial assistance through a Graduate Assistantship must submit a University of South Alabama Application for Graduate Assistantship directly to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology, care of the Graduate Coordinator. Letters of recommendation for Graduate Assistantships should additionally consider merit for paid financial assistance through a Graduate Assistantship. Applicants who wish to be considered for Fall admission to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology, and for a Graduate Assistantship, should submit all pertinent application materials to the appropriate recipient by March 1. Review of admission and Graduate Assistantship applications will begin immediately thereafter and continue until all available Graduate Assistantships are awarded.

Non-Degree Admission

Applicants with a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution of higher education who prefer not to earn the terminal master's degree in sociology can apply for admission to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology as a Non-Degree student.

A suitable academic background for coursework in sociology is expected. After completing the University of South Alabama on-line Graduate Application for Admission, permission to enter graduate-level courses in sociology in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work should be obtained from the Department's Graduate Coordinator. Non-Degree students subsequently seeking admission to the Master of Arts Program in Sociology must follow and meet the requirements for admission as above outlined. No more than twelve (12) credit hours of graduate-level coursework completed as a Non-Degree student can be applied toward coursework requirements for the Master of Arts degree in sociology.

Program Requirements

To earn the Master of Arts degree in sociology, students must complete thirty (30) credit hours of graduate-level work with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0. At least twenty-four (24) credit hours of graduate-level work must be in sociology. A student who receives two (2) grades of "C" or lower in any graduate-level course while enrolled in the Master of Arts Program in Sociology will be recommended to the Dean of The Graduate School for academic dismissal.

Program requirements, both for master's students planning to ultimately pursue doctoral-level study and for master's students planning to ultimately pursue a career in teaching, private industry, government, or community and social service, are as follows:

1. Core Coursework

Contemporary Sociological Theory (SY 506), Social Research Design (SY 507), and Social Research Analysis (SY 509).

2. Comprehensive Examination

Students will sit for a comprehensive examination that evaluates their knowledge and skills with respect to Year 1 coursework in contemporary sociological theory, research methods, and other relevant, specialized subject areas of sociology. The comprehensive examination will be administered between the Spring and first Summer semesters. The sociology graduate faculty, comprised of at least a quorum of sociology graduate faculty members, will evaluate the comprehensive examination as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating a reexamination evaluated by at least a quorum of sociology graduate faculty members within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive comprehensive examinations evaluated by the sociology graduate faculty as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology.

3a. Master's Practicum Report Proposal, SY 592

For master's students planning to ultimately pursue a career in teaching, private industry, government, or community and social service, completion of Master's Practicum Report Proposal (in conjunction with course co-requisite SY 596, Sociology Internship) to generate a practicum report proposal, directed by a member of the sociology graduate faculty, that the student must formally defend. The practicum report proposal and practicum report proposal defense must be approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the practicum report proposal defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1) opportunity to re-defend the practicum report proposal within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive practicum report proposal defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology.

3b. Master's Thesis Proposal, SY 598

For master's students planning to ultimately pursue doctoral-level study, completion of Master's Thesis Proposal focused on the specialized subject area of research interest in sociology to generate a thesis proposal, directed by a member of the sociology graduate faculty, that the student must formally defend. The thesis proposal and thesis proposal defense must be approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the thesis proposal defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1) opportunity to re-defend the thesis proposal within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive thesis proposal defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology.

4a. Master's Practicum Report, SY 593

For master's students planning to ultimately pursue a career in teaching, private industry, government, or community and social service, completion of Master's Practicum Report based on work in SY 596, Sociology Internship, that satisfied the practicum report proposal. The practicum report must be defended and approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of

the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the practicum report defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1) opportunity to re-defend the practicum report within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive practicum report defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology. Upon passing the practicum report defense, students must provide the Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work with a PDF copy of the practicum report for approval. Students must follow all thesis preparation deadlines and approval guidelines as outlined by The Graduate School.

4b. Master's Thesis, SY 599

For master's students planning to ultimately pursue doctoral-level study, completion of Master's Thesis focused on the specialized subject area of research interest in sociology that satisfies the Master's thesis proposal. The thesis must be defended and approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the thesis defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1) opportunity to re-defend the thesis within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive thesis defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology. Upon passing the thesis defense, students must provide the Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work with a PDF copy of the thesis for approval. Students must follow all thesis preparation deadlines and approval guidelines as outlined by The Graduate School.

Program Of Study

First Year		Credit Hours
Core Coursework		9 hrs
SY 506		
SY 507		
SY 509		
Elective Coursework		9 hrs
Comprehensive Exam	Pass to advance to Year 2 of study	
Second Year		Credit Hours
Elective Coursework		3 hrs
Master's Practicum Report Proposal or Master's Thesis Proposal		6 hrs or 3 hrs
SY 592 and SY 596 or SY 598		
Master's Practicum Report or Master's Thesis		3 hrs or 6 hrs
SY 593 or SY 599		

The Master of Arts Program in Sociology also offers an accelerated bachelor's to master's degree in sociology. For general information see the Graduate School, Admission Requirements and Procedures, Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program.

Program Requirements

To earn an accelerated Master of Arts degree in sociology, students must complete thirty (30) credit hours of graduate-level work with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0. At least twenty-four (24) credit hours of graduate-level work must be in sociology. A student who receives two (2) grades of "C" or lower in any graduate-level course while enrolled in the Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program in sociology will be recommended to the Dean of the Graduate School for academic dismissal from the program.

Program requirements, both for students planning to ultimately pursue doctoral-level study and for students planning to ultimately pursue a career in teaching, private industry, government, or community and social service, are as follows:

1. Core Coursework

Contemporary Sociological Theory (SY 506), Social Research Design (SY 507), and Social Research Analysis (SY 509) completed as an undergraduate.

2. Comprehensive Examination

Accelerated master's students will sit for a comprehensive examination that evaluates their knowledge and skills with respect to graduate-level coursework taken at the undergraduate level in contemporary sociological theory, research methods, and other relevant, specialized subject areas of sociology. The comprehensive examination will be administered between the Spring and first Summer semesters prior to the Year of Graduate Study. The sociology graduate faculty, comprised of at least a quorum of sociology graduate faculty members, will evaluate the comprehensive examination as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating a reexamination evaluated by at least a quorum of sociology graduate faculty members within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive comprehensive examinations evaluated by the sociology graduate faculty as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology.

3a. Master's Practicum Report Proposal, SY 592

For accelerated master's students planning to ultimately pursue a career in teaching, private industry, government, or community and social service, completion of Master's Practicum Report Proposal (in conjunction with course co-requisite SY 596, Sociology Internship) to generate a practicum report proposal, directed by a member of the sociology graduate faculty, that the student must formally defend. The practicum report proposal and practicum report proposal defense must be approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the practicum report proposal defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1) opportunity to re-defend the practicum report proposal within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive practicum report proposal defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology.

3b. Master's Thesis Proposal, SY 598

For accelerated master's students planning to ultimately pursue doctoral-level study, completion of Master's Thesis Proposal focused on the specialized subject area of research interest in sociology to generate a thesis proposal, directed by a member of the sociology graduate faculty, that the student must formally defend. The thesis proposal and thesis proposal defense must be approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the thesis proposal defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1) opportunity to re-defend the thesis proposal within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive thesis proposal defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology.

4a. Master's Practicum Report, SY 593

For accelerated master's students planning to ultimately pursue a career in teaching, private industry, government, or community and social service, completion of Master's Practicum Report based on work in SY 596, Sociology Internship, that satisfied the practicum report proposal. The practicum report must be defended and approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the practicum report defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1) opportunity to re-defend the practicum report within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive practicum report defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology. Upon passing the practicum report defense, students must provide the Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work with a PDF copy of the practicum report for approval. Students must follow all thesis preparation deadlines and approval guidelines as outlined by the Graduate School.

4b. Master's Thesis, SY 599

For accelerated master's students planning to ultimately pursue doctoral-level study, completion of Master's Thesis focused on the specialized subject area of research interest in sociology that satisfies the Master's thesis proposal. The thesis must be defended and approved by a faculty committee, the Chair of which must be a member of the sociology graduate faculty. The faculty committee must also include one member of the graduate faculty from within the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work and one member of the University's graduate faculty from outside of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work. The faculty committee will evaluate the thesis defense as Pass or Fail, the latter score initiating one (1)

opportunity to re-defend the thesis within three (3) calendar weeks from the original score notification. Two consecutive thesis defenses evaluated by the faculty committee as Fail will result in dismissal from the Master of Arts Program in Sociology. Upon passing the thesis defense, students must provide the Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work with a PDF copy of the thesis for approval. Students must follow all thesis preparation deadlines and approval guidelines as outlined by the Graduate School.

Program Of Study

Graduate-Level Credit as an Undergraduate	Credit Hours
Core Coursework	9 hrs
SY 506	
SY 507	
SY 509	
Elective Coursework	3 hrs
Comprehensive Exam	Pass to advance to Year of Graduate Study

Year of Graduate Study	Credit Hours
Elective Coursework	9 hrs
Master's Practicum Report Proposal or Master's Thesis Proposal	6 hrs or 3 hrs
SY 592 and SY 596 or SY 598	
Master's Practicum Report or Master's Thesis	3 hrs or 6 hrs
SY 593 or SY 599	

Department Information

Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work website
<https://www.southalabama.edu/colleges/artsandsci/syansw/>

Departmental Mission Statement

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Social Work seeks to equip students with conceptual tools to enhance their social and cultural awareness and with methodological tools to obtain empirical knowledge to empower them to engage in improvement of social conditions. Acknowledging the inextricable link between teaching and scholarly research, we strive for excellence in both areas to unite students and faculty in a common experience of learning and discovery through pure and applied research to prepare students for service through careers and civic engagement.

Undergraduate Programs

Sociology is the scientific study of social behavior and social phenomena. Our program seeks to provide students with knowledge and insight about why groups, institutions, organizations, and societies (and the people in them) behave in the ways they do. Popular courses within the program address such diverse social phenomena as Drug Use, Marriage and Family, Culture, Religion, Crime and Deviance, Medicine, Disasters, Race, Gender, and Aging. We also focus on equipping students with the tools of social research methods and statistics - two very highly-sought-after skills in today's labor market.

Anthropology is the study of humans, past and present. To understand the full sweep and complexity of cultures across all of human history, anthropology draws and builds upon knowledge from the social and biological sciences as well as the humanities and physical sciences. A central concern of anthropologists is the application of knowledge to the solution of human problems. Historically, anthropologists in the United States have been trained in one of four areas: archaeology, biological/physical anthropology, sociocultural anthropology, and linguistic anthropology. Anthropologists often integrate the perspectives of several of these areas into their professional lives.

Social work is a social science and a profession devoted to helping people solve problems and issues in their lives. Social workers, help individuals, families, groups, organizations, and communities to achieve an effective level of psychosocial functioning and seek social reform to improve societal well-being, with an emphasis upon marginalized and oppressed communities. Social work is founded upon the ethical principles of service; social and economic justice; personal dignity and worth; the importance of human relationships; integrity; and competence.

All first-time freshmen must successfully complete CAS 100: First Year Experience as a degree requirement. Students must enroll during their first term at USA, except for summer-entry students who must enroll in the fall semester following entry.

- SY 382 will fulfill the technology proficiency requirement for Social Work majors.
- SY 409 will fulfill the technology proficiency requirement for Sociology majors.
- AN 454 will fulfill the technology proficiency requirement for Anthropology majors.

The Department also offers an accelerated bachelor's to master's degree in sociology. For general information see the Graduate School, Admission Requirements and Procedures, Accelerated Bachelor's to Master's Program