

SOCIOLOGY

SO YOU THINK YOU WANT TO GO TO GRADUATE SCHOOL?

Whether your intention is to pursue your academic interests in more depth or to be more competitive in today's job market, attending a graduate program requires time and commitment. Graduate programs provide specialized training necessary for particular careers so before you apply make sure you are choosing the right type of program for the kind of work you want to do.

ASK YOURSELF

- What do you want to gain?
- Can you make the commitment?
- Are you willing to accrue debt up front?
- Where do you want to live? Are you able to relocate?
- Is grad school necessary?

WHY ATTEND

- Your career goal requires an advanced degree, certificate, or licensure.
- You want to advance in your career or change career fields.
- You want to conduct original research or specialize in a subject.

DEGREE TYPE

- Master's
- PhD
- Professional license

ALSO CONSIDER

A master's degree is a professional degree that prepares you for a variety of careers within public agencies and the private sector. A doctoral or PhD is a specialized degree required for most university teaching positions and research-based careers. A third option is professional licensing in fields such as law, accounting, nursing, or architecture.

MASTER'S

2-3 years to complete
High acceptance rate
Self-pay
Research thesis or capstone
Career-based training

Potential Career Paths

Advocacy
Communications
Public Policy
Social Justice

PHD

5-7 years to complete
Low acceptance rate
Fellowships & Assistantships
Research project & dissertation
Research-based training

Potential Career Paths

University Professor
Research Analysts
Policy Researcher
Director of Research

UCs offer PhD programs for Sociology majors, but no master's programs. CSUs offer master's degree programs in Sociology, but no PhD programs.



General To-Do List for Graduate Program Application Requirements

(varies by degree type)

Research Programs– Create a list to keep track of the different programs you've researched. To learn more about programs, consider these options:

- Contact professors who specialize in an area of research that you are interested in.
- Speak with current graduate students about how they chose their graduate program.
- Conduct informational interviews with professionals working in the fields that interest you.
- PhD: research the department faculty at the colleges you intend to apply to.

Graduate Record Exam (GRE)– The GRE is an admissions requirement for most graduate programs. The exam measures verbal, quantitative reasoning, analytical writing, and critical thinking skills. Study for the exam a minimum of 3 months out. The cost of the exam is \$205.

Writing Sample/Thesis– This requirement will vary according to degree and program. Find out what the writing requirement is for each program. Schedule yourself enough time to meet expectations.

Resume/Curriculum Vitae (CV)– A resume is a concise presentation of your skills and qualifications relating to a specific position. A CV is a full history of your academic credentials & accomplishments. Most graduate programs request a CV.

Personal/Academic Statement– A personal statement and/or academic statement of purpose is required by most graduate programs. Find out which statement(s) are required and plan ahead.

Letters of Recommendation– Most programs require 3 letters of recommendation. Give professors a minimum of 30 days to prepare letters.

Transcripts– Meet with your college advisor to verify that you are meeting graduation requirements. Visit the registrar's office for more information about ordering transcripts and transcript fees.

Costs– Applying to graduate programs can be costly. The average application fee is \$90. Budget application costs ahead of time.

General Application Timeline *PhD specific

Junior Year (fall/winter/spring)

- Participate in research project/program*
- Take independent course "senior thesis"*
- Decide career goals & degree program
- Research programs & create a list

Summer (before senior year)

- Study for GRE
- Draft the academic/personal statement
- Continue working on your thesis*
- Submit funding applications*
- Apply for scholarships

Senior year (fall quarter)

- Take the GRE
- Final draft thesis*
- Final draft statements
- Request letters of recommendation
- Apply to graduate programs

Senior year (winter & spring quarter)

- Fill out FAFSA before the deadline
- Search & apply for funding/scholarships
- Try to relax while you wait for admissions

Helpful Tips from current & former PhD students

- Save books & other potential resources now.
- Choose a grad program that will pay for you– don't pay for a PhD.
- Wait, work for a few years to gain field experience.
- Talk to professors who know you. Find out if they think you have what it takes for a PhD program.
- Have a realistic understanding about potential job options post-graduate school. Tenure-track teaching jobs are scarce.

Resources

Career Center www.careers.ucsc.edu

Workshops include: Statement of purpose

Letters of recommendation

Career Advice Network (C.A.N)

Alumni mentor students www.ucsc.evisors.com

GRE www.kaptest.com and www.ets.org/gre

Research Programs

ASA Guide to Graduate Departments in Sociology
(Sociology department lounge)

www.petersons.com www.gradschools.com

www.princetonreview.com

"If you know you want to teach and do research at the university level, enrolling in a PhD program throws you into what you want to be doing immediately. I am in my second year in the sociology PhD program and have already had a variety of opportunities to craft my own research projects and create lesson plans for undergraduate discussion sections." -Megan Alpine