

Master's in Sociology

Master's in Criminology

Department of Sociology

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Director of Graduate Studies

Fall 2025

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC



GW - Columbian College of Arts & Sciences (CCAS)

- Located in the heart of Washington, DC, since 1821
- Largest institution of higher education in the U.S. capital
- 14,000 GW graduate students from 130+ countries
- Close to top government, nonprofit, and private sector organizations
- GW's largest academic unit with 93 graduate programs
- 2,188 CCAS graduate students
- 490 full-time faculty members fostering critical thinking and collaboration
- Average of \$20M in annual research funding supporting innovation

Department of Sociology at GW

Two programs: MA in Sociology and MA in Criminology

- Strong grounding in research methods, theory, and substantive topics
- Excellent training in writing and independent research through a thesis
- Small classes
- Devoted [faculty](#)
- Strong cohort communities
- Excellent placements after the degree

Department of Sociology at GW

- Department foci – inequalities, criminology, race, gender, immigration, health
- Department ethos – equity, social justice, inclusivity, caring, academic rigor

MA in Sociology: Core Requirements

Research Methods, Quantitative Methods, and Qualitative Methods

(3 classes x 3 credits = 9 credits)

Classical and Contemporary Sociological Theory

(2 classes x 3 credits = 6 credits)

Five substantive electives

(5 classes x 3 credits = 15 credits)

Option to take classes outside the department

Two semesters of independent study with thesis director

(2 "classes" x 3 credits = 6 credits)

MA in Criminology: Core Requirements (Thesis Track)

Research Methods, Quantitative Methods, and Qualitative Methods

(3 classes x 3 credits = 9 credits)

Classical OR Contemporary Sociological Theory

(1 class x 3 credits = 3 credits)

Criminology, Deviance and Control, Criminal Law

(3 classes x 3 credits = 9 credits)

Three substantive electives

(3 classes x 3 credits = 9 credits)

option to take classes outside the department

Two semesters of independent study with thesis director

2 "classes" x 3 credits = 6 credits)

MA in Criminology: Core (Comprehensive Exam Track)

Research Methods, Quantitative Methods, and Qualitative Methods

(3 classes x 3 credits = 9 credits)

Classical OR Contemporary Sociological Theory

(1 class x 3 credits = 3 credits)

Criminology, Deviance and Control, Criminal Law

(3 classes x 3 credits = 9 credits)

Five substantive electives

(5 classes x 3 credits = 15 credits)

option to take classes outside the department

Comprehensive Exam

Full Time, Part Time, Accelerated Options

- Most MA students are full time, i.e. 9 credits per semester for 4 semesters over 2 years
- Part time (3-6 credits a semester) and accelerated (12 credits each during Fall and Spring, plus Summer classes) an option
- All Sociology Department classes are late afternoons and evenings, with the exception of one statistics lab

Applications: Requirements I

- Undergraduate degree with transcripts
 - Our applicants usually have Bachelor's degrees in Sociology or Criminology/Criminal Justice
 - We have accepted students with Bachelor's degrees in a wide variety of fields, including History, Neuroscience, and English, for example.
 - Use your Statement of Purpose to connect previous training and future goals.
- [International/ESL candidates](#)
 - TOEFL (min: 550 paper-based, 80 internet-based)
 - IELTS (min: overall score of 6.0 with no individual below 5.0)
 - PTE Academic (min: 53)
 - or Duolingo English Test (min: 110)
- GRE - optional

Applications: Requirements II

- Statement of Purpose
 - Fit: Why YOU want to pursue this degree
 - Your career/academic “story”/goals, not only a personal story
 - Why you want to come to GW’s Sociology Department
 - What classes or professors interest you?
- Optional - diversity statement
- Resume (or CV)
- Academic letters of recommendation (three preferred, two minimum)
 - Professors > employers (or non-academics)

Applications: Requirements III

- Writing sample
 - The writing sample should be a minimum of 5 pages and typically not exceed 30 pages. It is very important to choose a sample that demonstrates your ability to write according to academic standards. Where possible, the substance and topic of the paper should overlap with the substance of the degree being sought and should reflect academic conventions, including citations and references.

Applications: Requirements IV & Holistic Review

- Details and quality (writing, grammar, etc.) matter
- **Fall Admission Deadline: April 1**
 - **For applicants applying for assistantships/fellowships Deadline: February 1**
- Holistic review

Costs

Tuition

- \$2,091 per credit, or \$37,782 per year for 18 credit for 2025-2026

Fees

- The student account may include a variety of small fees and charges depending on the student's registration and GW activity.

International Student Tuition

- Estimates for the 2-year program, including tuition & fees, living expenses, books, and insurance: \$120,000+

Funding

- Tuition stipends (partial)
 - Dean's Scholarship OR MSI funding
 - **NO full funding available**
- Graduate Instructional Assistantship = GIA
 - salary without benefits; \$5,150 per semester; 20 hours per week
 - Office of Graduate Student Assistantships and Fellowships
 - GIAs do not come with tuition funding
- International students
 - Financial requirement to obtain a US visa
 - Funding stream for international students from select countries

Outcomes

Our graduates aim for and achieve in three main paths:

- Policy research; government, nonprofits, for-profits
- Policy advocacy; government, nonprofits, for-profits
- PhDs and JDs

Recent alumni placements range from working as an investigative analyst with the Manhattan DA to data analysts with the DOJ Money Laundering and Asset Recovery Section. Other alumni are now working on PhDs at Boston College, UC-Davis, and the Chicago School of Professional Psychology, among others.

Many of our older alumni have risen to top positions in the advocacy and nonprofit sectors, as well as great success in other areas.

Contact and questions

The best person to contact for substantive questions about applications or the program is the Director of Graduate Studies, Dr. Matthew Kafafian

email: gradsoc@gwu.edu

We look forward to answering your questions and helping you with your applications.

Thank you.

