

# SOCIOLOGY, PHD

The department's primary educational goal is to train first-class sociology PhD students. The sociology graduate experience at Johns Hopkins University is best characterized as a research apprenticeship – a careful blend of formal instruction, faculty-directed individual study, and supervised as well as self-initiated research. The department's small size and specific focus areas yield a personalized course of study and close relationships with faculty members and fellow graduate students. The social climate is informal, and the mix of students and faculty, drawn from a wide variety of geographic and social backgrounds, constitutes a rewarding intellectual community. For more details, please visit <http://soc.jhu.edu/graduate/>.

## Admission Requirements

Applicants must submit an application fee, personal statement, all college transcripts, three letters of recommendation, and a sample of written work. International applicants must also submit a TOEFL score and a financial statement (FS-1G Form: Graduate International Student Notification [F-1/J-1]). GRE scores are optional\*\*. Applicants should have a broad background in social science, especially sociology, economics, and psychology. Training in mathematics is encouraged. The department gives greatest weight to an applicant's demonstrated ability and past performance. For more details, please visit <http://soc.jhu.edu/graduate/admissions/>.

\*\* 10/14/2025 - CORRECTION: Applicants are required to submit GRE Scores.

## Program Requirements

Code	Title	Credits
<b>Core Curriculum</b>		
AS.230.600	Introduction to Social Statistics	3
AS.230.602	Theories of Society	3
AS.230.603	Contemporary Social Theory	3
AS.230.604	Linear Models for the Social Sciences	4
AS.230.608	Proseminar In Sociology <sup>1</sup>	1
AS.230.643	Sociological Analysis	3
AS.230.605	Categorical Data Analysis	4
AS.230.650	Macro-Comparative Research	3

<sup>1</sup> This fall semester course is taken during the first year. Faculty presentations introduce students to the substantive interests, research, and professional backgrounds of the sociology faculty. It is graded pass/fail.

Colloquium: Students in their first and second years are also required to register for AS.230.420 Sociology Department Colloquium. Graduate students will be graded based on their in-person attendance at all seminars. This colloquium is central to the intellectual life of the department and is attended by all members of the faculty and affiliated researchers. Graduate students beyond their first two years should plan to attend all seminars in person, but are not required to register for the course.

To count toward degree requirements, Core Curriculum courses other than the Proseminar and Colloquium (which are graded Pass/Fail only) must be passed with a grade of B- or higher.

Substitutions for Core Courses (from outside or within JHU) are not accepted with the exception of Introduction to Social Statistics (see below for more detail).

## Electives

In addition to the Core Curriculum requirements above, five elective graduate courses are required. Graduate courses generally have a 600-level designation (230.6xx). However, 400-level (e.g., 230.4xx) courses are also eligible for fulfillment of the five elective courses. In some cases, students may count a 300-level (230.3xx) course to fulfill the elective requirement, with permission of the instructor and their advisor. At least four of the five electives must be a JHU Sociology department course (i.e. with a 230 designation) or taught by a faculty member of JHU Sociology Department. Up to two of the five electives may be fulfilled with directed research or independent study courses within the Department (these must be taught by a faculty member of the Sociology Department and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies, as stipulated elsewhere in this Handbook).

To count toward degree requirements, electives must be passed with a grade of B- or higher except in cases where the course is offered only on a Pass/Fail basis (e.g., as is the case with some courses offered in other departments).

Substitutions for Elective Courses (from outside or within JHU) are not accepted.

## Teaching Assistantships

As part of their preparation for future academic work, graduate students are required to register for AS.230.811 Teaching Assistantship and serve as a teaching assistant for at least one semester.

## Foreign Language

The Sociology Department no longer requires certification of fluency in a foreign language as part of the PhD requirements. Students should be proactive in gaining the language skills necessary to conduct their TRP and dissertation research, and should work closely with their advisor to determine whether additional language education is needed.

## Residence

A minimum of two consecutive semesters of full-time residence is mandatory for all degrees. However, at least six semesters of full-time residence is recommended by the department for completion of the core curriculum, electives, and completion of a research apprenticeship and a trial research paper. By the end of the fourth year in the program, the student is expected to have written a dissertation proposal and have defended it successfully before the appropriate examining committees.

## Research Assistantship/Apprenticeship

AS.230.801 Research Assistantship and AS.230.804 Research Apprenticeship

Students are required to develop practical research expertise through professional-level participation (data analysis, literature searches/reviews, non-routine data processing or coding, preparation and refinement of research instruments, and data/file management). This requirement is fulfilled by satisfactorily completing a Research Apprenticeship, which is required during the student's first year of full-

time graduate study in the department. The standard for certification is substantial research accomplishment as judged by the faculty supervisor.

## Trial Research Paper

(AS.230.685 TRP Seminar I, AS.230.690 TRP Seminar II, AS.230.815 Trial Research Paper I, AS.230.816 Trial Research Paper II, AS.230.817 Trial Research Paper III)

Students begin working on a Trial Research Paper (TRP) no later than the spring semester of their second year. The TRP affords students the experience of planning and executing a research project that leads to a publishable quality paper. The TRP is expected to be a serious, complete work of scholarship, suitable for conference presentation or journal submission. Whether or not the topic of the TRP is similar to that of the eventual dissertation, the department believes all students will benefit from going through this exercise before planning for the dissertation.

By the end of the fall semester of their second year, students should invite a faculty TRP advisor to supervise the design and execution of the TRP project. Regular or adjunct faculty members whose positions entitle them to serve as dissertation advisors are eligible to serve as faculty TRP advisors. Work on the TRP generally will be done over three semesters. In order to facilitate progress on the TRP, students register for courses that are meant to consist of one-on-one meetings with their TRP advisor (TRP I, AS.230.815 Trial Research Paper I in the spring of their second year, TRP II, AS.230.816 Trial Research Paper II in the fall of their third year, and TRP III, AS.230.817 Trial Research Paper III in the spring of their third year.)

In order to facilitate student progress on the TRP, the department has also introduced two required TRP seminars, for which all students register in the spring of their second and third year. These are AS.230.685 TRP Seminar I (spring of second year) and AS.230.690 TRP Seminar II (spring of third year). These courses will be graded pass/fail and will not count toward the fulfillment of the elective courses required for the PhD.

A TRP proposal must be approved by the faculty TRP advisor by the end of the spring semester of the second year. By the end of the fall semester of the third year, the TRP advisor must approve a draft of the paper which will then be reviewed by another department faculty member. The TRP advisor, at their discretion, may extend this deadline to the end of the intersession period following the fall semester. The faculty reviewer will evaluate the paper and, if necessary, recommend revisions that should be made before the paper is certified. The TRP advisor will determine required revisions and must certify a final TRP by the end of the spring semester of the third year.

## Dissertation

The student must propose and conduct original research presented in a dissertation suitable for publication. The department administers an oral examination which must be passed before the student is allowed to defend before a university board. The dissertation must then be defended either at a Graduate Board preliminary oral examination, based on the dissertation proposal, or at a Graduate Board final oral examination, based on the completed dissertation.

## Special Programs

The department offers two special programs that coordinate activities in its two focus areas. Doctoral students may affiliate with one or both of these programs at their discretion. These programs function as fields of doctoral specialization within the Department of Sociology.

## Program on Global Social Change (PGSC)

This focus area of graduate study focuses on cross-national, comparative research and long-term, world-scale social change. The goal of the program is to give students knowledge of the various theoretical perspectives in these areas, experience in data collection and analysis, and expertise in one or more substantive fields.

The program does not focus on a particular geographic area, although faculty members have conducted extensive research on Latin America, Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern and Southeastern Europe. Instead of a geographical approach, the emphasis is on issues of development and social change that cut across different countries and world regions. Examples are globalization and regionalization, labor and development, city systems and urban primacy, social movements and revolutions, state violence, migration and labor force formation, family structure and change, social structure and personality, and national and international stratification. Students enroll in a sequence of courses and seminars and participate actively in ongoing faculty projects dealing with one or more of the above issues.

In addition, the interdisciplinary character of graduate education at Johns Hopkins University offers students ample opportunity to enroll in courses or collaborate in research of faculty in other departments. Faculty associates of the program include distinguished scholars in anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, and public health.

A graduate focus area is not required of PhD students.

## Program on Social Inequality (PSI)

This focus area of graduate study focuses on the causes and consequences of social inequality, the social processes that sustain it, and how social policies can reduce it. These questions are addressed in terms of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and immigration status/citizenship.

The program is designed to train students in the sociological analysis of social inequality among individuals and groups. This training includes course work in areas such as social stratification, the sociology of the family, the sociology of education, sociology of immigration, social structure and personality, social policy, and research design and methods. Students in the PSI program enroll in a sequence of courses and seminars and participate actively in ongoing faculty projects dealing with one or more of the above issues.

In addition, the interdisciplinary character of graduate education at Johns Hopkins University offers students ample opportunity to enroll in courses or collaborate in research with faculty in other departments. Faculty associates of the program include distinguished scholars in anthropology, economics, geography, history, political science, and public health.

A graduate focus area is not required of PhD students.