BROCHURE: MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM, SOCIOLOGY

In the heart of Waterloo Region, the University of Waterloo is home to world-changing research and teaching. The University’s reputation for excellence and innovation attracts some of the most inspiring and creative graduate students and researchers in the world. The University of Waterloo is committed to significantly increasing research-based graduate studies at the University in the next decade, and recognizes the important need for more graduate programs in professional fields to meet the needs of Canada’s changing economy.

The University of Waterloo’s Mater of Arts (MA) program in Sociology is located in a department that provides a supportive, friendly, and intellectually vibrant environment in which to learn and to cultivate a sociological analysis of the most pressing issues confronting societies today. Our MA program provides graduate students with a stronger understanding of social, political, economic, and cultural relations through sociological theory and methods, critical analysis, and interdisciplinary research training. Our program offers courses and research agendas in areas such as: law, crime, and security; knowledge, education, and digital media; migration, borders, and transnationalism; and social inequality and public policy. Our sociology faculty have a diverse range of research strengths and interests, including social theory, feminist analysis, criminology, socio-legal studies, surveillance, studies of migration and citizenship, education, health, and social policy, to name a few.

After graduating, our students have gone on to work in academic and non-academic environments. Some of our former MA students are now pursuing their PhDs at the University of Waterloo and beyond, while others are working in the public, non-profit, non-governmental, and private sectors.

MA STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

The strength of the Waterloo Masters program lies in its professors. Waterloo professors go above and beyond to ensure your coursework and research related needs are met. The required courses afford you the skills to conduct future independent research.

-Annie Simpson, 2nd year Master’s student, thesis option

I really appreciated being part of departmental gatherings where you can informally engage with colleagues and faculty.

-Andrea Schreiner, Master’s exchange student, thesis option

Professors are helpful and supportive of my academic pursuits. This is a very strong program...overall, I am very proud to be a part of the Sociology and Legal Studies Department and I am enjoying my courses and research.

-Raisa Sharmin, 1st year Masters student, MRP option
ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Admission requirements for students seeking admission to the MA program are as follows:

- an Honours Bachelor’s degree or its equivalent in Sociology or a cognate discipline with at least an B+ average (78%) in course work;
- three letters of reference from academic sources;
- official transcripts from all other post-secondary institutions;
- a sample of written work;
- a curriculum vitae;
- a statement of academic interest (approximately a page, outlining areas of interest and reasons for choosing to study at the University of Waterloo);
- proof of competency in English (if applicable). A score of at least 600 is required in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). See Academic Regulations - English Language Proficiency Certification for other acceptable tests of English;
- (optional) applicants may choose to submit results from the Graduate Record Examination (both the General Section and the Special Field, Sociology).

APPLICATION AND DEADLINES

The deadline for applications is February 1 for Fall admission. Applications received after this deadline will be considered only if positions are available.

You can access the online application here.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Excellence in our MA program, and in all graduate studies at the University, is supported through the availability of funding so that our students can devote their time and energy to the successful completion of their studies and research.

The department provides financial support to MA students in the form of teaching assistantships, research assistantships and scholarships. Full-time MA students typically receive $12,000 in their first year, contingent upon the achievement of satisfactory progress in their degree programs (see below). Those pursuing the thesis or research paper option receive an extra $5,000 at the start of their second year. In addition, there are a variety of additional internal and external funding options, and a number of scholarships are awarded each year to students with superior academic records. Both incoming and continuing students are automatically considered for these awards.

International students receive an International Master’s Student Award worth $1,800 per term for two years.

In order to be eligible for financial support from the department, students are required to make satisfactory progress in their academic programs. An important indicator of "satisfactory progress" is the timely completion of basic academic program requirements (namely, graduate course work, proposal, and thesis/research paper).

Note: Students are also reminded that there are other external scholarships (e.g. OGS, SSHRC, CIHR) for which they may apply. See also: President's Graduate Scholarship.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Students may choose to complete their degree requirements in any one of the following three ways:

1. **Course Work Only** (3 terms/one year): eight graduate-level one-term courses
2. **Research Paper** (4 terms/1.5 years): six graduate-level one-term courses, plus a 50-70 page research paper
3. **Thesis** (6 terms/2 years): four graduate-level one-term courses, plus a 100-150 page thesis
Students may undertake these programs fulltime or part-time.

Note: Course work beyond these minima below may be required at the discretion of the Associate Chair, Graduate Affairs. If additional course work is required, the student will be notified in writing at the time of entry into the program. Additional course work may be required by those who in the estimation of the Associate Chair, Graduate Affairs, do not possess the equivalent of an Honours Bachelor's degree in sociology from the University of Waterloo.

**Electing an Option**

In the first term of the program, a student in consultation with the assigned Departmental Advisor will select a Master's option (Course Work Only, Research Paper, Thesis). A form will be signed by both the student and the Departmental Advisor and forwarded to the Associate Chair, Graduate Affairs. Thereafter, the approval of the Associate Chair, Graduate Affairs, is necessary in order to change an option. In the case of the Master's Research Paper and Thesis options, the Departmental Advisor will also assist the student in the identification of a potential supervisor. Students undertaking the Course Work or Research Paper options should keep in mind that it is strongly advised that they complete three courses in their first term.

**Course Work Only Option**

Master's students who choose this option must complete eight courses including:

- Theory: one of SOC 700 or 704
- Statistics: SOC 710
- Research Methods: SOC 712
- At least five other graduate courses with a minimum weight of 0.5 unit each

All eight courses should be completed by the end of the third term (typically at the end of August).

**Research Paper Option**

Master's students who choose this option must complete:

- Theory: one of SOC 700 or 704
- Statistics: SOC 710
- Research Methods: SOC 712
- At least three other graduate courses with a minimum weight of 0.5 unit each
- A research paper proposal
- A research paper, approximately 50 to 70 pages in length and equivalent to two one-term courses, that will be orally defended.

The research paper proposal must be completed and approved by a supervisor and one reader by the middle of the third term (typically the end of June). The research paper must be defended by the end of the fourth term (typically, the end of December).

**Thesis Option**

Master's students who choose this option must complete:

- Theory: one of SOC 700 or 704
- Statistics: SOC 710
- Research Methods: SOC 712
- At least one other graduate course with a minimum weight of 0.5 unit each
- A thesis proposal that will be orally defended
- A thesis, approximately 100 to 150 pages in length and equivalent to four one-term courses, that will be orally defended.

A thesis proposal, approved by a supervisor and two readers, must be completed by the end of the second term (typically the end of April). The thesis should be completed and defended by the end of the sixth term.
**A Selection of our Graduate Courses**

MA students are able to choose from a wide variety of graduate courses in Sociology, such as:

- SOC 696 Sociology of the Life Course
- SOC 700 Sociological Theory
- SOC 704 Key Theoretical Debates
- SOC 707 Canadian Sociological Thought
- SOC 709 Selected Problems in Sociological Theory
- SOC 710 Intermediate Social Statistics
- SOC 712 Element of Social Research
- SOC 714 Ethnographic Research in the Social Sciences
- SOC 715 Research Design
- SOC 716 Qualitative Methods
- SOC 720 Social Inequality
- SOC 725 Sociology of Health
- SOC 744 Sociology of Crime and Justice
- SOC 751 Theories of Gender Relations
- SOC 760 Social Networks
- SOC 765 Political Sociology
- SOC 776 Sociology of Knowledge
- SOC 781 Global Development Governance
- SOC 782 Law, Globalization and Women's Empowerment
- SOC 783 Security and Regulation
- SOC 784 International Migration
- SOC 789 Graduate Readings in Sociology

**MA SUPERVISION**

Each student is assigned a temporary advisor upon entry into the MA programme. Students completing the Research Paper or Thesis options will decide on a supervisor for their research. Supervisors must be full-time faculty members in the department. Supervisors should normally be appointed by the end of the first term. In addition, students undertaking the Research Paper option require one reader, while those undertaking the Thesis option require two readers. Readers are chosen by the student in consultation with the supervisor.

**THE DEPARTMENT’S THEMATIC AREAS**

Our faculty members place a high value on research and teaching that engages with fundamental and crucial aspects of social life. A wide array of sociological and socio-legal research projects are conducted by our faculty and students in four thematic areas.

**Crime, law, and security**

Crime, law, and security raise pressing issues for understanding contemporary policing and security practices and their cultural, political, and socio-legal implications. Our researchers study the causes, institutional responses to, and governance of crime, deviance, and anti-social behaviour. Our diverse and active faculty support theoretically informed research in a range of substantive areas such as border security, criminal justice, criminal networks, national and international security, organized crime, policing, punishment, security and surveillance studies, socio-legal studies, and terrorism.
Knowledge, education, and digital culture
Knowledge, education, and digital cultures examines the development, conditions, and transmission of knowledge, values, and practices. Our researchers study how social contexts and informal and formal processes relate to the following origins of ideas, ideology, scientific and technical expertise, human development, social structures, and social stratification. Such research spans various levels of analysis, ranging from the individual to the structure of relations among institutions. Faculty and graduate students working in these areas investigate a range of topics including think tanks, intellectual networks, the culture of cities, parenting, the organization of schooling, academic achievement, new media, and gaming.

Migration, borders, and transnationalism
Migration within and between countries has reached unprecedented levels and continues to shape the societies we live in. Simultaneously, the proliferation of border and migration controls contributes to an increase in inequality and violence and to the classification of populations as citizens and non-citizens, and as wanted and unwanted migrants. Such practices shape political, legal, and cultural frameworks and have lasting effects on migrants and their socio-economic wellbeing, as well as on areas of origin, transit, and destination. Faculty and graduate students working in this area investigate how migration, borders, and transnationalism intersect with issues of global and national inequality, freedom of movement, citizenship and belonging, humanitarian and development governance, and security.

Social inequality and public policy
There are many dimensions of systematic inequality in society. Scholars of social inequality and public policy are interested in understanding the production and reproduction of systematic inequality, and social policy’s role in these dynamics. Dimensions of inequality include age, race/ethnicity, income, Aboriginality, gender, religion, immigration status, sexuality, rural/urban geography, health status, and (dis)ability and social class, among others. Social policy areas of focus include educational policy, health and health care, pensions and income support, welfare, social assistance, environmental legislation, immigration and security, and policing and law enforcement.

FACULTY RESEARCH
Within the four thematic areas, our faculty secure research grants and conduct projects on a broad range of topics.

Faculty
Janice Aurini. Organizations; occupations; professions and education; inequality; qualitative methods
Philip Boyle. Security and policing; surveillance; urban governance
Peter J. Carrington. Life-course criminology; juvenile justice; social networks; criminal networks; research methods and statistics
Martin Cooke. Life course; welfare state; population health and labour force ageing; social demography of Aboriginal peoples; research methods. Jointly appointed at School of Public Health and Health Systems
Lorne Dawson. Sociology of religion; sociology of science; sociological theory; New Religious Movements (NMR); religion and violence; terrorist radicalization
Weizhen Dong. Sociology of health; social determinants of health; comparative health care systems; health, illness and society
Owen Gallupe. Individual and group offending dynamics; substance use; social networks; drug dealing/smuggling.
Rick Helmes-Hayes. Sociological theory; history of Canadian sociology; knowledge, education and digital culture.
Suzan Ilcan. Mobilities and migration; humanitarianism; refugees and refugee camps; social justice and citizenship; international aid; global governance; critical development studies.
Cetta Mainwaring. Irregular migration; asylum seekers and refugees; migration politics and management; international relations; border studies.
John McLevey. Sociologies of science and knowledge; technology; comparative cultural sociology; sociological theory and methods; social movements. Primary association with Department of Knowledge Integration
E.D. (Adie) Nelson. Criminology; victimology; sexuality and the law; gender; law and literature.
Daniel O’Connor. Security and policing; borders and governance; regulation and law; social theory.
Jennifer Schulenberg. Criminology; juvenile delinquency; policing; criminal justice system; socio-legal responses to crime; mental health; quantitative and qualitative methods.
Rashmee Singh. Post-colonial feminist thought; gender violence; civil society-state relations; governance and regulation; sociology of law; criminology.
Jennifer R. Whitson. Sociology of digital media; governance of online spaces; game and software studies; surveillance studies; qualitative methods.

Affiliated faculty
Kieran Bonner. Radical interpretive theory and methodology; culture; power; Socratic tradition of inquiry.
   Primary association with St. Jerome’s University
Susan Brophy. Historical relation between law and capitalism; legal theory; political economy.
   Primary association with St. Jerome’s University
Fred Desroches. Criminology; legal studies.
   Primary association with St. Jerome’s University
Kristina Llewellyn. History of education; sociology of education; gender, democracy, and schooling; teaching profession; civics curriculum; global citizenship education; oral history; qualitative methods.
   Primary association with Renison University College
Tracy Peressini. Gender inequality and homelessness; single parents mental health; Aboriginal poverty; role of pets in the health and well-being of Canadians.
   Primary association with Renison University College
Sharon Roberts. Transition to adulthood; identity resolution; youth and risk-taking; eating disorders; mental health; primary healthcare evaluation; furries.
   Primary association with Renison University College