

Criminology, PhD

The PhD program in criminology provides students with comprehensive training in criminological theory, research methods, and data analysis. The program also promotes an advanced understanding of substantive issues related to criminology, including government policy and the justice system by providing students with well-rounded experiences as teachers, scholars, and researchers through rigorous interdisciplinary coursework, research training, and teaching opportunities. Paramount to the goals of the program is the formulation of critical thinking skills and the application of evidence-based reasoning and analytics to contemporary criminological issues.

The doctoral program has a research emphasis and primarily prepares criminologists for positions at colleges and universities or research positions in academic, private, and government institutions. For a summary of where the department's recent graduates have found employment, view Recent Student Placement on the Department of Sociology and Criminology website.

Graduate students work closely with faculty on collaborative research as well as developing independent research programs. In addition to valuable research experiences, students can also obtain substantial training and experience in undergraduate teaching, including online courses. The department training program includes an orientation workshop for new teaching assistants; a credited teaching seminar, SOC:7010 Teaching Sociology, for advanced graduate students; courses on instruction; and an opportunity for these graduate students to design and teach their own courses under the mentorship of faculty.

Learning Outcomes

The graduate program in the Department of Sociology and Criminology develops professionals who are qualified to conduct original research in the field of sociology and criminology and serve the discipline and larger community through teaching and/or other applications of sociological and criminological knowledge. The program's specific learning outcomes are outlined below.

Goals and Outcomes

- Develop the expertise to conduct original research in sociology and criminology that is publishable in scholarly outlets.
- Develop a professional skillset in research methodology commonly used in the social sciences, particularly sociology and criminology.
- Develop a professional skillset in social science theories pertaining to sociology and criminology.
- Develop professional expertise in substantive sociological and criminological research areas, which at a minimum includes graduate-level competence in both a major and minor area of research.
- Develop scholarly writing and communication skills.
- Serve the discipline and broader community as sociologists and criminologists.
- Be prepared to teach in the field of sociology and/or criminology.
- Understand the goals, practices, and standards of research and applied professionals associated with the discipline of

sociology and/or criminology. This includes developing a firm grasp of the principles of ethical research.

Requirements

The Doctor of Philosophy program in criminology requires a minimum of 72 s.h. of graduate credit. This can include up to 30 s.h. of credit from a previous master's degree in criminology or sociology; a maximum of 3 s.h. of credit from CRIM:7030 Readings and Research Tutorial or its transferable equivalent at another institution will be counted as part of the 30 s.h. Students must maintain a program grade-point average of at least 3.25.

The PhD in criminology requires the following coursework.

Required Courses

All PhD students must complete the following courses with grades of B-minus or higher.

Course #	Title	Hours
All of these:		
CRIM:5120	Introduction to Criminal Justice Systems	3
CRIM:5410	Criminological Theory I	3
CRIM:6420	Criminological Theory II	3
SOC:5160	Research Design and Methods	3
SOC:6170	Introduction to Sociological Data Analysis	3
SOC:6180	Linear Models in Sociological Research	3

Professional Seminars

Course #	Title	Hours
Both of these:		
SOC:7270	Scholarly Professionalism and Integrity I	2
SOC:7271	Scholarly Professionalism and Integrity II	2

Research Methods and Statistics Courses

Students must complete two of the following courses with grades of B-minus or higher. They may substitute another course for those listed with approval from the director of graduate studies.

Course #	Title	Hours
Two of these:		
SOC:6175	Qualitative Methods	3
SOC:7170	Advanced Statistical Modeling of Data	3
SOC:7175	Social Science Research: Big Data	3

Elective Courses

Course #	Title	Hours
18 s.h. from these:		
CRIM:6430	Feminist Perspectives on Crime and Punishment	3
CRIM:6440	Crime and Health in the Life Course	3

CRIM:6450	Comparative Criminology	3
CRIM:6460	Criminal Punishment	3
CRIM:6490	Immigration and Crime	3
CRIM:6750	Race and Crime	3
CRIM:7400	Seminar: Selected Topics in Criminological Research	3
CRIM:7410	Communities and Crime	3
CRIM:7430	Gender and Violence	3
CRIM:7440	Social Psychology of Violence	3

Comprehensive Examination

The comprehensive examination consists of five questions prepared by the student's exam committee; each answer should contain no more than 2,500 words. The student should demonstrate mastery of the relevant research methods as well as the major, minor, or related fields of study for a given area. Students should pass the comprehensive examination before the start of their fourth year in the program.

Dissertation

All PhD candidates prepare a detailed prospectus of research for the dissertation within one year of the comprehensive examination. The prospectus is written in consultation with the student's dissertation committee members and should allow the committee to evaluate the feasibility of the dissertation research and make suggestions to improve it.

Students must pass an oral examination by their dissertation defense committee. The oral dissertation defense should be completed no later than five years after passing the comprehensive examination.

As students work on the dissertation they will typically be registered in CRIM:7030 Readings and Research Tutorial or CRIM:7090 PhD Dissertation.

For a detailed statement of graduate study rules, visit the Department of Sociology and Criminology website. Prospective doctoral students should examine this information carefully.

Teaching Assistantship Training

All new graduate teaching assistants (TAs) are expected to attend a three-day orientation before classes begin. In addition, SOC:7010 Teaching Sociology is required for students who wish to teach their own courses.

Graduate Education

Graduate education prepares students with advanced knowledge and skills in specialized fields. At the University of Iowa, the Graduate College advocates for student-centered graduate education and supports equitable application of rules and policies across graduate programs.

Academics

University of Iowa graduate credentials are regulated by policies and requirements found in the Graduate College Manual of Rules and Regulations. This includes minimum grade-point average (GPA) requirements for academic standing and degree conferral. The Graduate College sets the minimum requirement. Individual graduate programs may establish higher GPA requirements.

Admissions

Graduate student applicants must meet admission requirements for both the Graduate College and the program to which they have applied. University of Iowa graduate admission requirements are published by the Graduate College and on the Graduate Admissions website.

Financial Support

Graduate students might be eligible for financial support. Several contingencies apply, including degree program and award type, satisfactory progress toward degree, satisfactory completion of all duties related to an appointment, and availability of funding. Graduate students should inquire directly with their program for more information about funding availability. The Graduate Student Employment Standards govern the employment relationship between the University of Iowa and all graduate teaching and research assistants in all matters except wages, which are covered by an existing collective bargaining agreement or the conditions of an applicable federal grant.

Admission

Admission to graduate study in criminology usually requires an undergraduate grade-point average of at least 3.25.

All applicants must complete the Graduate College application form, the supplemental sociology and criminology department application, and use the department's personal reference forms to obtain three letters of recommendation.

All application materials for fall admission must be received by Jan. 1. Evaluation of applications begins in early January.

Admission decisions are based on consideration of prior academic performance, personal reference letters, and the applicant's statement of reasons for pursuing advanced work in criminology at the University of Iowa. The department has no specific undergraduate course requirements for admission, but a background in the social sciences with some mathematical training is useful. A world language is not required for admission, and there is no world language requirement for a graduate degree in criminology. To inquire about admission, consult the director of graduate studies, Department of Sociology and Criminology.

Career Advancement

The program of study for the PhD primarily aims to prepare criminologists for academic positions in colleges and universities or for research positions in academic, private, and government institutions.

In addition to preparing students for careers in social service, criminal justice, and other areas, this major offers an integrated package of courses, research training, writing enhancement, international perspective, and internships to provide graduates with impressive credentials.

The Pomerantz Career Center and the Graduate College Career Exploration and Planning website offer multiple resources to help students find jobs.