Learning Goals – Sociology-WGS MA Program

Sociology focuses on core questions of group and societal organization to explore how order is maintained and how social change occurs. Our department seeks to develop what C. Wright Mills referred to as the “sociological imagination” by investigating how broader social forces shape life trajectories, how social categories such as race, class, gender, and sexuality structure social experiences, and how individuals and groups confront, and sometimes alter, institutionalized systems of power. Since its founding, the department has enjoyed a distinct intellectual culture that links the key normative questions of democracy, social justice and the good life to critical social thought and qualitative research methods.

Students completing the MA program in Sociology and Women’s, Gender and Sexuality Studies will develop the following competencies:

Knowledge:

Develop familiarity with key theories and debates in Sociology and Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies.  
Relate sociological perspectives to social, economic, and political issues and policies.

Core Skills:

Understand and extend theoretical frameworks for critically and systematically producing knowledge about social phenomena.  
Map links between Sociology and other disciplines relevant to Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies, and think in a cross-disciplinary fashion.  
Conceptualize and design research projects, conduct data collection according to established principles, and engage in rigorous analysis.  
Critically evaluate research in the field.  
Conduct scholarly and professional activities according to ethical standards.

Social Justice:

Gain knowledge and perspectives needed to participate as informed citizens in a global society.  
Recognize and understand how structural, cultural, and relational contexts shape systems of power, access, and inequity.  
Develop a reflexive and ethical sense of how diversity operates in social settings.  
Be an informed and critical consumer and producer of sociological knowledge.