

Dear Prospective Student:

Thank you for your interest in graduate studies in Sociology at Mississippi State University (MSU). We have much to offer both Masters and Ph.D. students. This letter will provide you with some basic information regarding MSU, the department, graduate degrees offered by the department, and admissions into the graduate school at MSU and into the Sociology graduate program.

### **ABOUT MSU AND STARKVILLE:**

Mississippi State University is a comprehensive “Research One” “Doctoral One” institution. Currently MSU enrolls more than 15,000 students, approximately 2900 which are graduate students. The research, teaching and service missions of the institution are all emphasized in a student’s graduate education. Mississippi State University is located in Starkville, Mississippi, a city of about 25,000 inhabitants in the northeast section of the state. Starkville is about 180 miles southeast of Memphis, Tennessee; 140 miles west of Birmingham, Alabama; and 150 miles north of Jackson, Mississippi.

### **ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT AND GRADUATE DEGREES IN SOCIOLOGY:**

The department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work offers three different graduate degree tracks in sociology: (1) Master of Science, Non-Thesis Option; (2) Master of Science, Thesis Option; and (3) Doctor of Philosophy. Additional information on each of these degree programs can be found on the Departmental Graduate Program Handbook on our website. Our Ph.D. Students have been placed in many fine colleges and institutions. Those students who have earned Master’s degrees at MSU have also been well placed in a variety of professional settings. Students, in conjunction with the faculty, tailor-made their program of study at MSU. Upon acceptance into the graduate program in Sociology, students identify a program of study with a graduate advisor and their Graduate Advisory Committee. This program of study provides the framework for each student’s graduate career at MSU by helping students meet their individual needs and occupational aspirations. Graduate classes are small enough to be conducted within a seminar setting. As a student, this enhances your opportunity to interact at a much more personal level with your mentors and peers.

### **ABOUT THE GRADUATE PROGRAM AT MSU:**

Our graduate program currently enrolls about 50 students. We are one of the largest sociology graduate programs in the southeast. Students come into our program from all over the world and from a variety of cultural and intellectual backgrounds. We consider the diversity of our students just one of many strengths our department has to offer. Another asset of the department is the opportunity for close professional interaction with the faculty. The opportunity to work closely with a faculty mentor is an important part of a graduate education. Our faculty is active in research, teaching and service and there are numerous opportunities for students to play a

major role in many research projects. Our graduate students have also been very active professionally publishing in peer review journals and presenting at professional meetings while consistently garnering awards for outstanding papers in these meetings. We are very proud of the activities and performance of our graduate students.

Course work and research expertise of the faculty are concentrated in five key focus areas. These include: **Criminology, Demography, Rural Sociology and Community, Social Change and Development, Sociology of the Family and Gender, and Social Inequality.**

#### **FINANCIAL AID OPPORTUNITIES:**

To assist in the professional development of graduate students the department and the Social Science Research Center (SSRC) offer graduate Teaching Assistantships and Research Assistantships respectively. Two different application forms for Graduate Assistantships (one from the department and the other from the SSRC) can also be found on the Departments Graduate Program web site: <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/sociology/>.

#### **ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES:**

The necessary forms for admission into the graduate program at MSU (WHICH MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE DEPARTMENT CAN CONSIDER YOUR APPLICATION) can be obtained from the **MSU Office of Graduate Studies**. (The Office of Graduate Studies offers an electronic admission procedure on-line at: [www.msstate.edu/dept/grad/application.htm](http://www.msstate.edu/dept/grad/application.htm))

**Telephone:**  
(662) 325-7400

**E-mail Address:**  
Grad@Grad.MsState.Edu

**U.S. Mailing Address:**  
Office of Graduate Studies  
P.O. Box G  
Mississippi State University  
Mississippi State, MS 39762-5507

## **DEPARTMENTAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES:**

The Sociology Graduate Program **requires** the following items for admissions:

- 1) **An Application Form for the Office of Graduate Studies at MSU**
- 2) **Transcripts from Previous Institutions**
- 3) **An Academic Writing Sample** (*You may choose what you submit as a sample of your writing. It must be in English*)
- 4) **The General Graduate Records Examination (GRE) Scores**
- 5) **Three Letters of Recommendation** (*These should be from people who know your academic abilities and potential*)
- 6) **A Statement of Purpose** (*The Statement of Purpose should explain why you want to study Sociology at MSU and how the program At MSU will assist you in your goals*)
- 7) **For International Students TOEFL Scores** (*A minimum of 550 on the TOEFL is required for admission in the Graduate Program in Sociology*)

## **IMPORTANT DATES FOR APPLICANTS:**

Applicants for each semester are considered vis-a-vis the entire applicant pool. Therefore, the department has established **April 15<sup>th</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup>** cut off dates for Fall and Spring semester admissions. The Department does not consider Summer term admissions. To ensure your application is considered for the semester of your choice, please have your completed application into the Office of Graduate Studies by April 15<sup>th</sup> for Fall semester and October 15<sup>th</sup> for Spring semester. This is especially critical if you are seeking any type of assistantship as it is unlikely that applications received after April 15<sup>th</sup> will be considered for financial support. Additionally, to be considered for a teaching assistantship, a student must have a Master's degree in Sociology or have a Master's degree in another field of study and have completed 18 graduate credit hours of Sociology.

I hope this information is helpful. If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me. The appropriate numbers/addresses are listed below. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely:

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(662) 325-4564 (FAX)