

Outstanding MA Thesis Award

Purpose: To recognize and honor overall excellence in the performance of the Master of Arts degree.

Eligibility: All current Sociology students who completed the M.A. degree between Fall 2015 and Fall 2018 are eligible for this award.

Selection procedures:

1. The primary criterion for this award is the M.A. thesis. Members of the award committee will read and independently evaluate each of the theses based on the following criteria:
 - a. The importance and originality of the thesis' contribution to sociology generally, and – if applicable – to specific specialties or sub-problems of the field
 - b. The conceptualization of the problems or issues
 - c. Clarity in the development and presentation of the ideas identifying the problems or issues addressed
 - d. Appropriateness of the method(s) used and operationalization and measurement, if applicable, of variables
 - e. Discussion of the sociological implications of the thesis' findings
 - f. Quality and clarity of writing
2. Students will also be evaluated on time-to-completion of degree and their overall degree performance, including their GPA in various required courses of the M.A. program.

Application: Submit M.A. thesis in PDF format, a cover letter detailing the contribution of the thesis, and transcript. Self-nominations and nominations by faculty (accompanied by the application materials) are both accepted.

Distinguished Graduate Student Paper Award

Purpose: To recognize, honor, and promote examples of high quality graduate student scholarship.

Eligibility: Papers must represent original research by one or more current Sociology graduate students. Papers may not be co-authored by a faculty member. Papers published, in press, or of publishable quality and written or published within the past three years are eligible for this award. All sociology graduate students enrolled during the academic year in which the award will be given and who are in good standing are eligible to submit a paper for consideration. One paper submission for the award per student is allowed. M.A. theses must be significantly revised in order to be considered.

Selection procedures: Papers will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

1. The importance and originality of the paper's contribution to sociology generally, and – if applicable – to specific specialties or sub-problems of the field
2. The conceptualization of the problems or issues
3. Clarity in the development and presentation of the ideas identifying the problems or issues addressed.
4. Appropriateness of the method(s) used and operationalization and measurement, if applicable, of variables
5. Discussion of the sociological implications of the paper's findings
6. Quality and clarity of writing

Application: Submit a paper in PDF format (no more than 40,000 words) and cover letter detailing the contribution of the paper. Self-nominations and nominations by faculty (accompanied by the application materials) are both accepted.

Outstanding Dissertation Award

Purpose: To recognize, honor, and promote examples of high quality dissertation research.

Eligibility: All current Sociology students who have advanced to candidacy and are in good standing in the program may apply for this award.

Selection procedures: Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria: The importance of the research and its potential contribution to the field, the student's ability to conduct/complete the research, and satisfactory progress through the program to date.

Application: Self-nominations and nominations by a faculty member (accompanied by a complete application package) are both accepted.

Application materials:

1. Cover page with the following elements (maximum of 1 page):
 - a. Name
 - b. Email address
 - c. Phone
 - d. Project Title
2. Project narrative describing the dissertation's objectives, significance, expected contributions to the field, and procedures that will be used (maximum of 2 pages).
3. Summary of the dissertation prospectus (maximum of 4 pages).
4. Letter of recommendation from the dissertation committee chair
5. Transcript
6. CV

Outstanding Performance in Public Sociology Award

Purpose: To support students who express a genuine desire to help others and to acknowledge their contributions to the land grant mission of West Virginia University.

Eligibility: Sociology graduate students who have demonstrated a commitment to helping others.

Criteria: Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to a career and volunteer activities in the area of public sociology, and most importantly a sincere desire to help others. The recipient must be an individual who has made a substantial contribution to his/her community through volunteer work, related service activity, or engaged research and who has demonstrated initiative and leadership in the course of these contributions. The recipient's commitment should also be indicative of the likelihood that throughout his/her career the candidate will continue to contribute to the quality of community life. Preference will be given to students engaging in public sociology at the local, national, and/or international levels. However, those engaging in public sociology at the university or departmental levels may also be considered.

Application: In PDF format, submit a clear and concise statement of no more than 2 pages (double-spaced, 12 pt font) explaining your qualifications for this award and your CV.