

Criteria For Writing Sample: Sociology MA Application Packet

Sociology's MA program attracts non-traditional students -- students who are not recent graduates of a BA/BS program -- as well as traditional students. Hence, GRE scores are optional. We do require a writing sample and the Graduate Admissions Committee gives substantial weight to this document. A writing sample should be the best paper written in college or one that clearly demonstrates your analytical and interpretative skills. The writing sample is a very important part of your application packet.

Please do not submit a paper that represents a work product (e.g., a press release, newsletter, or a report). The writing sample needs to be either an academic paper written in one of your college courses or a five to ten page essay written about a sociological topic or a related subject area. Regardless of which type of writing sample you submit, the members of the Graduate Admissions Committee look for the same qualities. At a minimum, we expect the paper to be well organized, free of typing and grammatical errors, and clearly written. It should have an introduction, clearly stated purpose, contents that demonstrate how you achieved the purpose, a conclusion and references. Please indicate the origin of your writing sample – i.e., the course for which it was completed or whether it was specifically written for your application packet. The Graduate Admissions Committee uses your writing sample to assess your ability to conduct scholarly research and to successfully complete the Sociology MA program.