



UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE
UNIVERSITEIT VAN DIE VRYSTAAT
YUNIVESITHI YA FREISTATA

POSTGRADUATE HONOURS PROGRAMME: SOCIOLOGY – 2027-intake

If you enjoyed studying Sociology at the undergraduate level, you might be interested in doing an Honours degree. The one-year Sociology Honours programme will equip you to think critically about complex social issues and your place within a rapidly changing world, and help you develop strong research and analytical skills. Graduates go on to work in many fields, including government departments, NGOs, education, social movements, trade unions, and research organisations.

The programme consists of two core modules: Sociological Theory and Social Research, and two specialised modules: Population and the Environment, and Collective Behaviour and Social Movements. Applications are open for study at both the Bloemfontein and QwaQwa Campuses.

Core modules

<i>Sociological Theory</i>	<i>Social Research</i>
<p>SOCT6808: Sociological Theory</p> <p>Why do we do social theory? Why can it be considered the cornerstone of understanding academic and worldly endeavours? Most social theorists wanted (and still want) to develop social theory because they were interested in explaining social processes, not simply from a detached interest but from a deep involvement in the fate of humankind. There is, therefore, an expressed need for some of these theorists to improve humanity's capacity to shape the course of social processes or at least to avert their worst outcomes. Despite the promises of progress, civilisation, development, and technology, our contemporary contexts remain fraught with contradictions, tensions, and recurrences of past errors that have led to unutterable atrocities. As sociologists, we should strive to reflect on the issues of our time by using the "sociological imagination" to deepen our awareness of our societies.</p>	<p>SOCR6808: Social Research</p> <p>Our understanding of the world around us broadens and deepens when we recognise it as a continuously changing reality with different facets. The research process enables us to acquire this knowledge and better understand the surrounding reality. In this module, you will be taught, in logical, interdependent steps, how to scientifically approach, investigate, and present your conclusions regarding a problem or issue. In this way, the research process becomes a school where you can learn to become acquainted with social realities in all their exciting facets and full diversity. Whatever the motivation for our research, in one way or another, it satisfies our craving for more knowledge and deeper understanding, answers the diverse questions we continue to ask about the world around us, and justifies our role and function as scientists in this world.</p>

Areas of specialisation and modules offered

<i>Environmental Sociology</i>	<i>Social Movements</i>
<p>SOCP6808: Population and the Environment</p> <p>This module focuses on the relationship between the social and natural environments, specifically the intersection of population, environmental, and developmental issues. Besides aspects that affect the quality of the ecosystem we live in, such as population changes and development needs, attention is also devoted to environmental issues that impact development. Hence, the core focus of this course falls on the population-environment-development (PED) nexus. A further aspect addressed is the demand for sustainability and the pursuit of a sustainable environment, specifically how it is reflected in and addressed by international and local policy programmes and frameworks. As environmental sociology has an essentially scientific orientation, attention will also be devoted to theoretical discourses, policy agendas, and methodological strategies within the discipline.</p>	<p>SOCS6808: Collective Behaviour and Social Movements</p> <p>South Africa is a country in constant flux, with our history and contemporary reality being shaped by collective behaviour and social movements. This module explores the Sociology of Social Movements worldwide, examining various geopolitical contexts and how people respond collectively to social change, oppression, states, and other social institutions. It provides an academic space for students to contextualise and critically reflect on broader societal trends in social movement activity.</p>

Application and Selection Process

Step 1

Check whether you meet the minimum admission requirements:

- Undergraduate (BA/BSocSci) degree with Sociology as a major
- Minimum average of 60% for Sociology at the undergraduate level
- Minimum average of 60% at the undergraduate level

Please note that meeting the minimum admission requirements for honours does not guarantee selection.

Step 2

Download the Sociology Honours Application Form from the Sociology Department Website:

<https://www.ufs.ac.za/humanities/departments-and-divisions/sociology-home/general/postgraduate-honours>

Step 3

Complete the application form and compile supporting documents.

Step 4

Submit the application form with the following supporting documents:

- A completed and signed Departmental application form (see Step 2)
- Official academic transcript/ a complete academic record
- Motivational essay (500-1000 words) explaining why you would like to pursue an honours degree in Sociology, your favourite sociological theory is, and why, and how you see this theory 'playing' itself out in everyday life or social structures.

Do not ask Generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT) or someone else to write your essay. Candidates submitting plagiarised or AI-generated essays will be rejected.

Step 5

Submit your application with supporting documents by e-mail to: sociologyhonours@ufs.ac.za.

Step 6

Complete the online application on the University Student Academic Services portal:

<https://apply.ufs.ac.za/>

Closing date for applications: 30 September 2026

What happens after you have submitted your application? (Remember to submit to the department AND on the UFS application portal)

- ☑ The Department will confirm receipt of your application submitted by e-mail.
If you do not receive an e-mail within two weeks confirming receipt, please e-mail sociologyhonours@ufs.ac.za to follow up.
- ☑ Check your admissions status on the UFS Admissions Portal. It should show DDEF, indicating that your application has been captured on the portal and that the department must decide on it.
- ☑ The honours selection committee considers all complete applications.
- ☑ The selection process is completed by 30 November.
- ☑ Your admission status on the UFS portal will be updated to:
 - COND – accepted conditionally: In the case of outstanding results, to complete your degree.
 - ADMT – accepted unconditionally for the programme.
 - WAIT – eligible for admission, but cannot be admitted due to space availability in the programme
 - DENY – You did not meet the requirements to be admitted to the programme, and your application was incomplete.
- ☑ Successful applicants will receive a letter from the Department confirming their application was successful and outlining the next steps.
- ☑ Successful applicants must accept the offer of admission on the UFS admissions portal.

*Note: There is limited space in the honours programme, and meeting the minimum admission requirements **does not guarantee selection***

Funding

We encourage you to apply for funding once you have been accepted for the programme.

The Faculty of the Humanities may offer tuition bursaries to qualifying students from time to time. Information regarding these bursaries will be communicated as it becomes available for a given academic year.

You can also consider looking into whether you are eligible for postgraduate bursaries from the National Research Foundation: <https://www.nrf.ac.za/nrf-for-post-graduate-students/bursaries-scholarships/>

Note: The Department of Sociology cannot guarantee funding and cannot make funding decisions on behalf of external parties.

Contact details: Honours Coordinator

If you have any questions about the programme or the application process, please contact:

Dr Nola Redelinghuys

E-mail: sociologyhonours@ufs.ac.za

Tel: +27 514012891

Office: S22A, South Block, Bloemfontein Campus