

**Application for the Graduate Minor in Rural Sociology**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone numbers: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Graduate Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor name and campus address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Undergraduate major and minor: \_\_\_\_\_

**Personal Statement:**

Please attach a 1-2 page, double-spaced statement of purpose. Explain your interest in pursuing a Graduate Minor in Rural Sociology and how the minor will contribute to your career goals. Include relevant information on previous coursework or studies related to sociology and/or rural studies and feel free to include information on non-academic preparation for the minor, such as Peace Corps or other relevant international experience, Americorps, extension work or other domestic experience.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student signature Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Advisor signature (Major program) Date

*Approved by:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Graduate Studies Chair of Graduate Minor Program Date

## **Procedures for Applying for a Graduate Minor in Rural Sociology**

1. A student interested in pursuing the graduate minor in Rural Sociology is advised to consult with the advisor in the home/major department. The Rural Sociology Program cannot advise students on how the minor can be incorporated into their coursework. Through consultation with the advisor, students will determine how to fit Rural Sociology coursework into their plan of study.
2. A student must apply for admission into the Graduate Minor using the Application Form. Graduate Minor Application Forms for admission may be turned in at any time.
3. Shortly after receipt of the completed Application Form, the Graduate Studies Chair of the Rural Sociology Program will send the student an acknowledgement indicating whether or not the applicant has been accepted.
4. If accepted, students will receive a letter from the Graduate Studies Chair in Rural Sociology and a copy of the application form and letter of acceptance will be submitted to the Graduate Studies Chair and major advisor of the student's home department for the student's file. The Graduate School also will send the student an acknowledgement letter or memo.
5. After acceptance, the student will meet with an assigned faculty advisor for the Graduate Minor in Rural Sociology in order to design a program of study. The student and the Rural Sociology advisor will complete a Graduate Minor Program Plan form (plan of study). When requirements for the minor have been completed, documentation will be submitted to the home department and to the Graduate School.
6. Copies of the completed Graduate Minor Program Plan form will be given to the Graduate School, the Graduate Studies Committee Chair from the student's home graduate program, and the student's major advisor. The original will be retained by the graduate program in Rural Sociology. Completed Graduate Minor Program Plan forms should be turned in no later than one quarter after admittance to the Graduate Minor program.
7. The student must adhere to the curriculum for the Graduate Minor as indicated in the approved Graduate Minor Program Plan. If changes in the approved curriculum are necessary, the student must complete a new Graduate Minor Program Form and once again obtain approval via steps 1-6 above.
8. Upon application to graduate, the student must complete the Graduate Minor Transcript Designation Form obtained from the Graduate School. This will be supported by formal notification from the Graduate Studies Chair in Rural Sociology that all requirements have been met.
9. The Graduate School will match the courses completed with those in the approved Graduate Minor Program Form. Departures from the approved Graduate Minor program plan could lead to a loss of transcript designation.

## Why Earn a Graduate Minor in Rural Sociology?

The discipline of Rural Sociology focuses on the study of social life (broadly conceptualized) in rural and non-metropolitan areas, domestic and international. The discipline emerged as part of the Land Grant mission and Rural Sociology courses have been taught at Ohio State since 1904. Rural sociologists have a dual mission. Not only do they conduct research that advances sociological theory and contributes to empirical knowledge, rural sociological research also is intended to produce information relevant to public policy and to local development. Rural sociologists frequently partner with researchers from other disciplines, particularly agricultural economics, geography, anthropology, extension, and communications.

The graduate program in Rural Sociology is located in the Department of Human and Community Resource Development. Our faculty have graduate degrees in Rural Sociology, Sociology, Social Demography, Latin American Studies, and Anthropology. Some have joint appointments with OSU Extension, OARDC (Ohio Agricultural Research Development Center), the Office of International Programs in Agriculture, Natural Resources, and Women's Studies and courtesy appointments in Sociology, Geography, Anthropology, and Social Work. Faculty research involves collaboration with faculty and students from Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics; Geography; City and Regional Planning; Natural Resources; Sociology; and Women's Studies as well as with colleagues from other universities in the U.S. and abroad (Australia, Canada, Egypt, India, Japan, Mexico, Senegal, Uganda, Venezuela).

Our classes teach about rural poverty, agriculture and food systems, environment and natural resources, domestic rural development, public policy analysis, diffusion of innovations, international development theories and policies, citizen organizing for social change, social capital, immigration and rural conflict, rural women's lives in comparative perspective, and the Amish. Recently, Rural Sociology faculty established the Social Responsibility Initiative, or SRI. The SRI is a coordinated, interdisciplinary effort to encourage cutting-edge research on some of the most pressing food, agricultural and environmental issues facing Ohio and the world, from genetically modified foods and environmental quality to urban sprawl and the globalization of agriculture.

A Graduate Minor in Rural Sociology will benefit graduate students from other departments who wish to improve their substantive knowledge of rural sociological theory, empirical research, processes of development and globalization, and the problems faced by people and institutions in small towns, suburbs, and rural areas in the U.S. and abroad. Such training is intended to complement the chosen Ph.D. or Masters major field and will be particularly useful for students whose majors focus on urban life or encourage substantive knowledge to complement professional training. A graduate minor in Rural Sociology will introduce greater inter-disciplinarity to their programs and will help them prepare for research, teaching, policy making or other employment in non-metropolitan settings and developing countries.

Students will be able to list the minor on their transcripts after successfully completing four Rural Sociology classes (20 credit hours) with a minimum grade of B.

All students will take the following core course:

**RS 742 Concepts and Theories in Rural Sociology** (graduate, 5 credits)

Examines the sociological significance of "rurality" and the conceptual perspectives applied to major substantive areas in rural sociology, such as community, environment, and agriculture.

Students will select three additional courses. Students will be strongly encouraged to select from among our 700 and 800-level courses and to take no more than one 600-level course as part of the Graduate Minor. (Some Colleges and Departments do not consider 600-level courses to be "graduate level.")

Students will be encouraged to consult with both their major advisor and with a Rural Sociology faculty member. Both will provide direction about which courses will best suit the student's intellectual and applied interests.

The Rural Sociology faculty member also will advise students on selecting courses that will focus the minor program on one of the three specializations (or tracks) in our graduate program:

- ~ *Agriculture and Environment* (primarily domestic)
- ~ *Rural Community Development* (primarily domestic)
- ~ *Development and Social Change* (international and domestic)

In addition to the core course in Rural Sociology, students must complete one of the courses required for the chosen specialization:

- ~ **RS 733 Agriculture and Food Systems** or **RS 766 Environmental Sociology** for the *Agriculture and Environment* track
- ~ **RS 888 Social Action in Community Development** for the *Rural Community Development* track
- ~ **RS 892 Rural Sociology of Development and Social Change** for the *Development and Social Change* track

Students can choose from the following courses or approved future courses to complete the minor. The Rural Sociology program releases a list of available courses during every registration period.

**RS 622 Amish Society** U G 5 cr.

Analysis of the historical, social, religious, economic, and cultural dimensions of Amish life.

**RS 662N Diffusion of Innovations** U G 5 cr.

Examines the sociological processes involved in the dissemination of new ideas and technologies in developing nations and the U.S. Assesses the consequences of new technologies for farmers, peasants, communities and public well-being.

**RS 666 Rural Poverty** U G 5 cr.

Evaluation of the factors which create and maintain poverty and inequality, with a focus on the rural U.S., developing nations, and the comparative analysis of spatial inequalities.

**RS 678 Women in Rural Society** U G 5 cr.

Women's role in rural society from a comparative perspective, focusing on agriculture, the environment, informal economy, and household production, both in developing and developed countries.

**RS 733 Sociology of Agriculture and Food Systems** G 5 cr.

Overview of sociological theory and research related to agricultural change and food system development, focusing on individual, family, community, economic, and environmental impacts.

**RS 766 Environmental Sociology** G 5 cr.

Sociological approaches to the study of environmental policy with an emphasis on political economy. Analysis of major issues relating to the use and abuse of natural resources, inequalities, and environmental conflicts. Special attention to soil and water issues in rural Ohio.

**RS 788 Sociological Theory Applied to Domestic Development** G 5 cr.

Application of general sociological theories and development research findings to the analysis of domestic rural development; emphasis on consensus and conflict models.

**RS 888 Social Action in Community Development** G 5 cr.

Analysis of the social action process and its application to rural community development. Includes attention to theories of community development, policy analysis, and social problems such as immigration, leadership, and political economy.

**RS 892 Rural Sociology of Development and Social Change** G 5 cr.

Overview of sociological principles, theories, and practice applied to international development, globalization, and social change with particular attention to rural settings. Includes attention to the influence of sociology on international and national development policies.

Each of the above courses is taught every other year, some in even years and some in odd-numbered years.

If you have any questions about the Graduate Minor in Rural Sociology, feel free to contact

Cathy A. Rakowski, Graduate Minor advisor

[Rakowski.1@osu.edu](mailto:Rakowski.1@osu.edu)

Or

Linda Lobao, Graduate Studies Chair

[Lobao.1@osu.edu](mailto:Lobao.1@osu.edu)