

DEVELOPMENT SOCIOLOGY (PHD)

Graduate School

Program Website (<https://cals.cornell.edu/education/degrees-programs/graduate-field-of-development-studies/>)

CIP: 45.1103 | HEGIS: 2208.00 | NYSED: 78436

Graduate Field

Development Studies (<https://catalog.cornell.edu/graduate-school/development-studies/>)

Program Description

Our doctoral program in Development Sociology focuses on 'development,' a central and contested concept that gained prominence after World War II, which implies progressive change towards improving economies and people's well-being while conserving nature at local, regional, and global scales. Faculty and graduate students in the field of Development Studies study processes of social, cultural, ecological, economic, and political change, and the historical and contemporary forces that shape those dynamics. They also study the organizations and actors that engage in development-related processes and the practices, knowledge, and forms of expertise they bring to bear on their work.

An interdisciplinary field, Development Studies draws from a wide range of disciplines, including sociology, economics, political science, human geography, anthropology, history, Indigenous and postcolonial studies, and the natural and technical sciences. Our doctoral students study in a range of contexts, some working directly with communities around the globe, others exploring large data sets or studying institutions as they seek to understand the complexities behind development and its impacts on people and the planet.

The program offers preparation for research, for the application of social sciences in government positions, the non-profit sector, consulting, and think tanks, and for college teaching in development studies and related fields.

Students are admitted into the Ph.D. program. If they do not have a M.S. degree in Development Studies or a related discipline, they will complete a qualifying paper or M.S. thesis as part of their training.

Research and Study Opportunities

Faculty in the field rely on a wide range of domestic and international funding to support research and graduate students. Graduate students also successfully apply for a wide range of internal and external grants for their fieldwork, such as the Wenner Gren fellowship, National Science Foundation and Fulbright fellowships.

Students and faculty members are actively conducting research around the globe, both in the United States and elsewhere. Although some doctoral dissertations are based on field-collected data, other candidates rely on rich secondary-data resources, working closely with the Cornell Institute for Social and Economic Research (CISER) and the various libraries on campus.

Faculty members also participate in other fields such as Natural Resources, City and Regional Planning, Anthropology, Crop and Soil Sciences, in the Mario Einaudi Center for International Studies, and in

the area studies programs for Africa, Latin America, South Asia, and Southeast Asia. Several of those programs have supported dissertation research overseas. The department is also home to the Polson Institute for Global Development (<https://cals.cornell.edu/global-development/our-work/our-initiatives/polson-institute-global-development/>), which funds assorted working group research initiatives in the U.S. and abroad.

Concentrations

- Population and development
- Rural and environmental sociology
- State, economy, and society

Program Information

- Instruction Mode: In Person
- Location: Ithaca, NY
- Minimum Credits for Degree: 66

Program Requirements

- Minimum Semesters for Degree: 6

Graduate School Milestones

- Responsible Conduct of Research Training: Required
- Open Researcher and Contributor ID (ORCID): Required
- Student Progress Reviews (SPR) begin: First Year
- Examination for admission to candidacy (A Exam): Spring of third year
- Defense of Dissertation (B Exam): Summer of fifth year

Field Specific Milestones

- Masters Exam (M Exam): Students without a Masters Degree in a related field must complete a qualifying paper or a Masters Thesis, including an M exam
- Field progress review conducted every year
- Students must give an Exit Seminar

Course Requirements

- Additional course requirements may be set by the student's Special Committee. Program specific requirements that apply to all students are included below.
- All students in the Development Studies (PhD) Program are required to enroll in GDEV 7970 Development Studies Professional Development Seminar every semester they are on campus

Year 1 (Fall)

- GDEV 6190 Quantitative Research Methods
- GDEV 6030 Classical Sociological Theory

Year 1 (Spring)

- GDEV 6150 Qualitative Research Methods
- GDEV 6060 Sociological Theories of Development

University Graduation Requirements Requirements for All Students

In order to receive a Cornell degree, a student must satisfy academic and non-academic requirements.

Academic Requirements

A student's college determines degree requirements such as residency, number of credits, distribution of credits, and grade averages. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of the specific major, degree, distribution, college, and graduation requirements for completing their chosen program of study. See the individual requirements listed by each college or school or contact the college registrar's office (<https://registrar.cornell.edu/service-resources/college-registrar-directory/>) for more information.

Non-academic Requirements

Conduct Matters. Students must satisfy any outstanding sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed or agreed to under the Student Code of Conduct (Code) or Policy 6.4. Where a formal complaint under the Code or Policy 6.4 is pending, the University will withhold awarding a degree otherwise earned until the adjudication process set forth in those procedures is complete, including the satisfaction of any sanctions, penalties or remedies imposed.

Financial Obligations. Outstanding financial obligations will not impact the awarding of a degree otherwise earned or a student's ability to access their official transcript. However, the University may withhold issuing a diploma until any outstanding financial obligations owing to the University are satisfied.

Learning Outcomes

Students in the field of Development Studies engage in theoretical and applied research, teaching, and outreach on the causes, dynamics, and consequences of social, cultural, political and economic change.

The program offers preparation for academic careers in development studies, sociology, rural sociology, geography and related fields, and for applied careers in development studies, including development work in the United States and other countries.

For the Ph.D. degree, students are expected to demonstrate

1. A thorough knowledge of social theory, with special emphasis on theories in their academic concentrations,
2. Comprehensive knowledge of the body of work that is pertinent to their concentrations, and
3. Knowledge of multiple research methods, with special emphasis on research design, data collection, and analytical techniques used in the discipline.