

Research and Creative Works

University Guidelines, from the General Announcements:

Distinction in Research and Creative Works is a university award for select undergraduates, granted at commencement, which appears on the transcript and diploma. Students must apply within their department or program to be considered for the award and the application must be supported by a letter from a faculty member.

Eligibility for the award extends widely to include a variety of research, design, and other creative projects, as well as persistent dedication to research. Projects completed in part or entirely at other institutions or with community partners will be eligible for consideration.

Applicants must be in good academic standing and have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.30 in courses completed at Rice. The award will be granted only to projects that produce a concrete outcome--e.g. an essay, invention, design, musical composition--and demonstrate commitment and/or achievement above and beyond the norm. Students who complete senior theses, senior design projects or other required senior capstone projects shall not qualify automatically for consideration for this university distinction.

Responsibility for judging applications and determining those that merit the distinction award rests with the undergraduate degree programs or departments. Departments publish annually clear expectations and criteria for the research and design projects that will be considered for the award, as well as guidelines for what constitutes research work above and beyond the norm within their respective fields. Departments may designate additional requirements as well, such as completion of a research seminar or oral defense.

Rice Sociology Department Guidelines

To earn **Distinction in Research and Creative Works** in sociology, students should have done one or more of the following:

1. Written a senior thesis in the department (or a related thesis outside the department)
2. Co-authored a paper with a faculty member
3. Written a sole-authored scholarly paper and submitted it to a journal
4. Otherwise made a significant contribution to sociological research (note that merely RAing for a faculty member does not qualify one to apply)

By March 15, students who wish to be considered should let the undergraduate advisor know of their intention to apply. By April 1st, students applying should submit to the undergraduate advisor:

- (1) a two-page description of how their research effort meets the requirements of the Distinction. This two-page document should outline the original contribution to scholarly

sociological research, including the student's specific contributions in cases of co-authoring with faculty.

- (2) If a paper or thesis has been written to qualify, students should also submit the paper.
- (3) A letter of support from a sociology faculty advisor familiar with the student's work, which also details the student's contribution to scholarly sociological research.

FAQ

Do I have to be a sociology major or minor to apply for Distinction from sociology? *No, although it would generally be unusual for a non-major or minor to have completed rigorous scholarly work in sociology.*

How does this work in conjunction with the honors thesis in sociology? *Students may receive honors through their thesis work as well as apply for Distinction, but completing a thesis does not automatically mean students will receive Distinction.*

How competitive is the Distinction process? *We plan to select a very limited number of students for Distinction.*