Advising Guide
Master of Science in Applied Sociology

With an emphasis on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and social research skills, the MS degree in Applied Sociology is designed to prepare students for careers in policy analysis, program development and evaluation, and quantitative and qualitative data analysis. As public, private and nonprofit organizations attempt to maximize their human and monetary resources, they often seek professionals with specialized skills to assess program demands and viability, evaluate program success, direct change and inform policy. Graduates of the MSAS program are trained to fill such roles and effectively apply their knowledge and skills in employment areas including healthcare, local, state and national government, nonprofit social services, community activism, marketing research, human resources and business administration.

Although the MA in Applied Sociology is a terminal degree program, a number of our graduates have transitioned into UTD’s Doctoral program in Public Policy and Political Economy, as well as external sociology doctoral programs throughout the country. The program is open to full-time and part-time students, with many of our classes offered in the late afternoon and evenings. Students may enter the program in the fall, spring or summer semesters.

Faculty

Professors: Richard K. Scotch
Associate Professors: Bobby C. Alexander, Sheryl Skaggs
Assistant Professors: Nicholas Vargas

Program Objectives

With an emphasis on the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and social research skills, the MS degree in Applied Sociology is offered under two different options: (1) the thesis option, which is primarily designed for students continuing on for a Ph.D. in sociology or other social science program; (2) the non-thesis option, which is primarily designed to prepare students for careers in policy analysis, program development and evaluation, and quantitative and qualitative data analysis. As public, private and nonprofit organizations attempt to maximize their human and monetary resources, they often seek professionals with specialized skills to assess program demands and viability, evaluate program success, direct change and inform policy. Graduates of the MSAS program are trained to fill such roles and effectively apply their knowledge and skills in employment areas including healthcare, local, state and national government, nonprofit social services, community activism, marketing research, human resources and business administration.
Although the MA in Applied Sociology is a terminal degree program, a number of our graduates have transitioned into UTD’s doctoral program in Public Policy and Political Economy, as well as external sociology doctoral programs throughout the country. Students planning to apply to a doctoral program are strongly encouraged to pursue the master’s thesis option. The program is open to full-time and part-time students, with many of our classes offered in the late afternoon and evenings. Students may enter the program in the fall, spring or summer semesters.

Facilities

Students have access to the computing facilities in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences and the University’s Computing Center. The School has two computing laboratories which have over 50 computers that are network linked and equipped with major social science software packages, including E-Views, R, Rats, SPSS and STATA. A computerized geographic information system, the Lexis Nexis Database, and WestLaw are also available for student use. The University’s Computing Center provides personal computers and UNIX Workstations. Many important data and reference materials are also available online via the library's and the School's memberships in numerous organizations.

Prerequisites

There are no required prerequisite courses in sociology for the Applied Sociology program, although prior coursework in social theory, research methods, and social statistics is desirable. Prospective students with concerns about their preparation for the Applied Sociology program are encouraged to consult with the program coordinator.

Grading Policy

In order to qualify for graduation, students must maintain a minimum 3.0 grade point average in their degree program’s core courses plus an aggregate grade point average of 3.0 for all graduate courses taken in the student’s degree program at U.T. Dallas.

Students who fail a course and are required to retake it for a passing grade must complete a Repeated Course Adjustment Form in order for the passing grade to be correctly reflected on the transcript. Failure to complete this form will result in both the passing and failing grade being calculated into the degree GPA.

Enrollment

Graduate students in the Applied Sociology program must be:

- registered for any session during which he/she is taking courses, or taking examinations, required in his/her degree program.
- registered for a minimum of three semester hours when preparing a thesis.
- enrolled in at least three credit hours and pay all required fees in the semester in which he/she graduates.
A **continuing** graduate student in good academic standing may register online or with the Office of the Registrar. If a student has an **account hold** for any reason, the student must contact the graduate advisor for Applied Sociology to seek enrollment approval of desired courses. In such cases, the department administrative assistant will be notified of advising approval and can then remove the account hold.

Students who are **conditionally admitted** or have **non-degree seeking status** must obtain approval each semester for enrollment. Non-degree seeking students are not permitted to take more than fifteen credit hours.

Graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment during the fall and spring (long session) semesters of each academic year, unless on an approved leave of absence (see [http://www.utdallas.edu/student/catalog/gradcurrent/FIRST40/registration_enrollment_requirements.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/student/catalog/gradcurrent/FIRST40/registration_enrollment_requirements.htm) for additional details). A student who fails to register in any given long session will be permitted to re-enroll through his/her department office in any two subsequent semesters only if in good academic standing at the time of last enrollment.

**Degree Requirements**

The University’s general degree requirements are discussed at [http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/CAT2010/FIRST40/degree_prg_policies.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/CAT2010/FIRST40/degree_prg_policies.htm)

Students may select the thesis or non-thesis option. The Master of Science (M.S.) in Applied Sociology has three components and requires the completion of 36 semester credit hours.

**Thesis Option**

**Course Requirements**

- 15 credit hours of core courses in Applied Sociology and EPPS**
- 12 credit hours of Applied Sociology guided electives
- 3 credit hours of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences (EPPS) electives
- 6 credit hours of thesis research

The Master’s Thesis is supervised by the student’s major professor and the thesis committee, chosen in consultation with the major professor. The thesis committee may include a faculty member from another program with the approval of the major professor. Students are advised to consult with the graduate program director in selecting a major professor and thesis committee members. Students must pass a publicly announced defense of the thesis before it is submitted to the Graduate School. A passing grade on the defense is required in order to graduate. The date for the thesis defense should be early enough for required revisions (if any) to be made prior to the Graduate School deadline for submission. The thesis must conform to all Graduate School requirements.

*A thesis student must enroll in at least three thesis hours before graduating. Once a student has enrolled in thesis, he/she must maintain continuous enrollment (not necessarily
in thesis hours) of at least three semester hours during consecutive long semesters unless granted a leave of absence.

**Non-Thesis Option**

**Course Requirements**

- 15 credit hours of core courses in Applied Sociology and EPPS**
- 15 credit hours of Applied Sociology guided electives
- 6 credit hours of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences (EPPS) electives

The Master of Science (M.S.) in Applied Sociology (ASOC) requires the completion of 36 semester credit hours: 15 credit hours of core courses in Applied Sociology, 12 credit hours of Applied Sociology guided electives, and 6 credit hours of electives from any graduate program in the School of Economic, Political, and Policy Sciences (EPPS).

**Students must earn a grade of “B” or better in the Applied Sociology core courses and an overall grade point average of 3.0 to graduate.

**Core Courses in Applied Sociology and EPPS (15 hours):**

SOC 6350 Social Stratification (usually offered in fall)
EPPS 6313 Introduction to Quantitative Methods (usually offered in fall & spring)
EPPS 6310 Research Design I (usually offered in fall)

One of the following:

EPPS 6316 Applied Regression
EPPS 6346 Qualitative Research Methods

One of the following:

SOC 6312 Social-Economic Theories (usually offered in spring)
SOC 6340 Domestic Social Policy (usually offered in spring)

**Applied Sociology Guided Elective Courses (15 hours):**

Any graduate-level courses with a SOC prefix outside of the core may be applied to this requirement. Students may apply other graduate social science courses related to Sociology, including an appropriate graduate-level internship, with the permission of the program coordinator.

**Social Science Electives (6 hours):**

Any 5000 or 6000 level courses in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences may be applied to this requirement. Students are encouraged to consult with the program coordinator in order to select courses appropriate for their academic and professional career goals.
Graduate Certificate

With appropriate planning in consultation with the program coordinator, students enrolled in the ASOC program may use 15 semester credit hours from their elective courses to earn a graduate certificate in Nonprofit Management. Information about these certificate programs may be obtained from the department graduate advisor.

Admission Requirements

The Master of Science in Applied Sociology seeks applications from students with a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university or college. Although applications will be reviewed holistically, in general, entering students should have earned a 3.0 undergraduate grade point average (on a 4.0 scale) and optimally have a Graduate Records Examination (GRE) verbal score of no less than 156 and a quantitative score of at least 152. Standardized test scores are only one of the factors taken into account in determining admission. Students should also submit all transcripts, three letters of recommendation, and a one-page essay outlining personal background, education, and professional objectives. UT-Dallas undergraduates in any major may apply to the ASOC fast track program, which involves taking up to 15 semester credit hours of graduate courses as an undergraduate that can subsequently be applied to the master’s degree requirements.

For further information about the Applied Sociology Program, contact Katie Doctor (kld015500@utdallas.edu), see our web page at http://www.utdallas.edu/epps/soc, or contact the program coordinator: Dr. Sheryl Skaggs (siskaggs@utdallas.edu 972-883-4460).

Graduation Requirements

To graduate at the end of a given semester, a student must apply for graduation through his/her department office by the date specified in the Comet Calendar and the Academic Calendar. The student must complete a separate application for graduation for each semester in which an attempt to graduate is made. A student who expects to receive more than one degree in a single semester must complete a separate application for each degree. A late applicant for graduation will incur an additional fee (refer to the Comet Calendar).
Guidelines for Writing a Thesis

The following is a summary of the procedure for writing a Master’s Thesis:

1. **A student initiates** the process of writing a thesis by identifying a problem or issue he/she would like to investigate. In conversation with faculty members, the student seeks clarification of the problem and discusses possible interest and expertise of the topic area with faculty. It is the student’s responsibility to request that a faculty member serve as thesis chair. A faculty member need not accede to the request. Thesis committees usually consist of at least two faculty members. Professors who will serve along with the committee chair can be selected in advance or after the project is on its way toward a proposal hearing. Sometimes the chair of the committee will make suggestions to the student about other members, and may discuss the possibility of serving with other faculty. However, ultimately it is the student’s responsibility to request committee membership with potential faculty member(s).

2. **A thesis begins with a proposal.** A proposal is a carefully written, thorough description of the student’s project. It is a detailed plan.

   a. A proposal begins with a literature review. In the literature review, the student demonstrates knowledge of the literature related to the selected problem and situates his or her proposed research within that literature. Prior work on the problem or related to the problem, unanswered questions or un-addressed issues, and controversies and debates related to the proposed work are all part of a literature review. In writing a literature review, the student’s task is to demonstrate mastery of a bounded body of work in sociology and to show how his or her investigation fits within that work and will make a contribution to existing knowledge within the field. A good literature review can sometimes be the better part of the first chapter of the thesis.

   b. Sampling, data, data gathering instruments and techniques of analysis are all part of a proposal. While some projects may be primarily theoretical or historical in nature, focusing on new insight or a new development, empirical projects are theoretically famed but rely on the testing of research questions with some form of data analysis. The later type of proposal would include a discussion of how the problem selected will be addressed with data. Data need to be gathered and analyzed. They also need to be justified. Thus, an empirical proposal should: 1) identify the data that will be used to investigate the problem, 2) explain the grounds on which the data were selected, and 3) explain why
these data are preferred and how they are appropriate to the problem. Techniques for gathering data should be covered and examples of the data-gathering instruments (questionnaires, guided interview schedules, etc.,) should be provided. Examples of the data that will be used (e.g., a sample interview) should be included. Typically, data have limitations and inherent problems; these need to be discussed. The proposal should also consider the issues of sampling and sample size. Sampling procedures need to be identified along with sample size, and sample limitations. Sampling procedures and sample size should be justified as appropriate for the problem, in addition to explaining how the sample may or may not limit the investigation. The proposal should include a section on data analysis that 1) identifies the techniques (statistical or otherwise) that will be used for analyzing the data, 2) justifies the techniques as appropriate to the study and to the data, and 3) discusses the limitations inherent in the techniques.

c. Expected findings, implications of expected findings, and likely conclusions, are all part of a proposal. Findings do not always meet expectations. How the problem of negative findings will be handled should be addressed.

A well-developed proposal is a resource for writing the actual thesis. It includes chapter outlines and even parts of chapters.

3. **A Note on Conducting Research using Human Subjects:** Gathering original data that requires any kind of interaction with human beings is absolutely prohibited without prior review and approval from the Human Subjects Review Board in the Office of Research (this rule applies to class projects as well). Students and faculty are not allowed to approach people as subjects in an investigation until that investigation has been cleared in advance. This clearance is obtained after the research procedure is close to being finalized by the thesis committee.

4. **Write the thesis!** While there is no set length of a thesis, as a general rule, it should be between 50 and 100 pages excluding bibliography. The thesis should be written in the format specified by the university graduate office. These guidelines can be located at http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/dgFront.htm

5. **Thesis Defense Hearing:** When the committee chair and reader agree that the thesis is substantively ready for a defense, the student will provide each professor with a final copy of the document in proper format. Another copy will be provided to the department
administrative assistant, where it is open for faculty inspection at least three working days before the scheduled defense. The chair, co-chair or committee member, along with the student will then organize a Thesis Defense. The Graduate School must be notified of a defense. The defense is a public event, but often does not draw a large audience. At this event, the student provides a brief presentation of the research (approximately 45 minutes) and answers questions about his or her project. If the student and the committee have done their respective jobs well, the thesis defense should be a public celebration.

6. Submit thesis and forms to Graduate School. Once the thesis is approved and signed by the committee, the student must follow the proper procedures for submitting the thesis and all other forms required for graduation to the Graduate School. For more information on these steps, please refer to the following document:
http://www.utdallas.edu/dept/graddean/dgtChecklist.pdf

Following your first enrollment in master’s thesis hours, you must enroll in SOC 6V98 each fall and spring semesters continuously until all thesis requirements are completed and approved. If you are unable to complete your thesis within the first six hours of registration, you must continue to enroll; however, only six hours of SOC 6V98 will count toward meeting program requirements for your degree. If you plan to graduate during the Summer I or Summer II semesters, you will need to be enrolled during that semester.
Master’s Thesis Registration Approval Form
THIS FORM IS VALID FOR ONE SEMESTER ONLY.
Submitted to: Katie Doctor, Graduate Program Administrator GR 2.242

SOC 6V98

Semester & Year: _____ # of Hours Enrolled: _____ (maximum 6 total)

(Print or type) Last Name __________________________ First ___________ Middle ___________
UTD ID____________________________ E-mail _____________________________

Degree Sought ______ MS Applied Sociology ______

Supervisor ___________________________ Dept ___________________________
(Print name) ___________________________ (Dept)

Co-Supervisor ___________________________ Dept ___________________________
(If applicable) (Print name) ___________________________ (Dept)

Reader ___________________________ Dept ___________________________
(Print name) ___________________________ (Dept)

Reader ___________________________ Dept ___________________________
(If applicable) (Print name) ___________________________ (Dept)

The Master's Supervising Committee consists of at least two individuals. Your supervisor must be a tenured/tenure-track sociology faculty member. A co-supervisor or reader may be from outside your department, but must be approved by the sociology department supervising committee member.

Sociology Graduate Advisor's Signature ___________________________ Date ___________

Supervising Professor's Signature ___________________________ Date ___________
THE INEQUALITY OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION:
EFFECTS OF STANDARDIZED TESTING

(2 single line spaces)
by

(2 single line spaces)
Jane Doe

(10 single line spaces*)

APPROVED BY SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

______________________________________________
Richard Scotch, Chair

______________________________________________
Jane Jones

______________________________________________
Susan Miller
Master of Science in Applied Sociology  
Degree Plan  
2014 Catalog

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Courses</th>
<th>15 semester credit hours</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Transfer/ Fast Track</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC 6350</td>
<td>Social Stratification</td>
<td>Fall</td>
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<tr>
<td>EPPS 6313</td>
<td>Intro to Quant. Methods</td>
<td>Fall &amp; Sp.</td>
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<td>EPPS 6310</td>
<td>Research Design I</td>
<td>Fall</td>
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**One of the following:**

| EPPS 6316    | Applied Regression       | Fall     |       |                      |
| EPPS 6346    | Qual. Research Methods   | Fall     |       |                      |

**Non-Thesis Option**

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<th>SOC Guided Electives</th>
<th>15 semester credit hours</th>
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**Thesis Option**

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<th>SOC Electives</th>
<th>12 semester credit hours + 6 thesis hours</th>
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<tr>
<th>EPPS Electives</th>
<th>6 semester credit hours non-thesis / 3 semester credit hours thesis option</th>
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Student Name: ___________________________        Date: __________