

M.S. in Social Science



Graduate Student Handbook 2024-2025



Department of
**SOCIOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY
AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

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Welcome

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice at Clemson University is a multidisciplinary department committed to gaining a better understanding of human behavior in social context and in developing ways to improve and enrich the quality of life. Our department strives for inclusive excellence to epitomize the motto “Doing Well by Doing Good”. We champion social justice through activities such as research, teaching, advising, mentoring, community outreach, activism, and advocacy. Employing both macro- and micro-level perspectives, we seek to address structural factors that exacerbate inequities, while also paying careful attention to interactions that take place on a daily basis. We acknowledge that our society faces a myriad of complex social issues, but we remain committed to fostering positive social change. We invite all to join us as we take on these endeavors. We sincerely hope that this department is one where everyone feels welcomed, valued, and empowered. The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice welcomes all to our intellectual and physical spaces.

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Introduction

This handbook is intended to familiarize students with the policies and procedures set forth by the M.S. in Social Science program at Clemson University. Throughout the handbook, topics such as eligibility for the program, requirements for completion of the degree, and relevant policies of Clemson University's Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice will be addressed. Since the guidelines presented hereafter are subject to continuous revision, students should always consult the most recent edition of the *M.S. in Social Science Graduate Student Handbook*. Graduate students will be held accountable for their knowledge of all applicable policies and procedures of Clemson University, the Graduate School, and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice. The Graduate Coordinator, Dr. Natallia Sianko (natalls@clemson.edu), is available to provide clarification on these policies when necessary.

The guidelines enumerated in this handbook are intended to supplement the policies and procedures outlined in the *Graduate School Policy Handbook*, which sets the minimum standards for all Clemson University graduate programs. It is the responsibility of the student to adhere to the guidelines set forth by the Graduate School. Furthermore, the student is expected to be familiar with the policies and regulations of the Graduate School as specified in the *Graduate School Academic Catalog* and the *Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations*.

The current version of the *Graduate School Policy Handbook* can be found here:

<http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/policies-procedures/>

Refer to the online *Clemson Academic Calendar* for registration deadlines, key semester dates, and holiday schedules: <https://www.clemson.edu/registrar/academic-calendars/>

The *Guide for the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations* can be found here:

<http://www.clemson.edu/graduate/students/theses-and-dissertations/>

The policies and procedures of the Clemson University Graduate School have been established to ensure a consistent set of standards ranging from the admissions process to the awarding of degrees for every Graduate School program. Generally, students are subject to the policies that are in effect when they first enroll in their graduate program. Minor policy changes that will not affect students' progress toward a degree may be implemented immediately when that is determined to be in the best interest of students and/or the University or if a legislative or regulatory body requires the changes. These changes, and all other substantive changes, will be noted in the "Changes to Graduate School Policy, Annotated" page(s) of the *Graduate School Policy Handbook* and summarized in a table on the *Graduate School Policy & Procedures* webpage.

Overview of the Program

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice offers the Master of Science degree in Social Science, emphasizing practical and theoretical knowledge in the areas of social science research methods and theory, focusing on the acquisition of social research skills, theory application, and practical field experience. Thesis and non-thesis learning tracks are available to students enrolled in the program.

Department faculty are multidisciplinary from three academic traditions: sociology, anthropology, and criminal justice. Faculty members are committed to providing students with opportunities for educational and professional development based on the shared belief that individuals continue to develop their expertise throughout the entirety of their careers. The M.S. in Social Science program offers a variety of opportunities to engage in scholarly and professional development activities outside of the classroom through participation in professional conferences, internships, and applied projects. Students are encouraged to become active members of national, state, and regional academic and professional associations and to participate in as many of these development activities as possible while at Clemson to build network contacts in the discipline before graduation.

Length of Program: The M.S. in Social Science program requires that students designate an experiential learning track upon entering their second year of study. Students selecting the thesis track will complete a minimum of 36 hours of coursework, while students selecting the non-thesis track will complete a minimum of 30 hours of coursework. Regardless of the selected learning track, the program typically requires 2 years of full-time enrollment to complete degree requirements.

Students are generally expected to enroll full-time for the duration of the M.S. in Social Science program. Exceptions may be made for current Clemson University employees or self-funded students. Students receiving departmental funding are expected to maintain a full-time enrollment status in order to remain eligible for their assistantship position.

Content Delivery: While several elective courses are offered in an online/web-based format, most M.S. in Social Science courses require in-person attendance. Thus, students in the program must be able to attend courses at Clemson University's main campus for the duration of the M.S. in Social Science program.

Enrollment Timeline: Students should expect to matriculate into the M.S. in Social Science program during the fall semester. Limited exceptions to this standard may be made for current Clemson University employees or self-funded students. Any student wishing to enroll in the spring or summer semester should contact the Graduate Coordinator to discuss available options for enrollment.

Additional information about the M.S. in Social Science degree may be found on the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice's [program website](#).

Bachelor-to-Graduate Program

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice offers a bachelor-to-graduate degree plan to eligible undergraduate students. This program, informally referred to as the 4+1 plan, expedites the completion of the Master's in Social Science degree by allowing undergraduate students to enroll in graduate-level courses during the final year of bachelor's studies. The graduate-level credits earned during this final year of undergraduate studies may apply towards both the undergraduate and graduate program requirements, allowing the student to earn the master's degree in just one additional year of study.

Eligibility for the bachelor-to-graduate program requires prospective students to complete the bachelor's curriculum through their junior year (at least 90 credit hours) and maintain a minimum 3.4 grade point average. A maximum of 12 credit hours worth of 6000-8000 level coursework may be applied toward both the undergraduate degree and the graduate degree. Exceptions to this general standard are outlined in detail in the [*Graduate School Policies and Procedures Handbook*](#).

Prospective students should consult their academic advisor and the Graduate Coordinator of the M.S. in Social Science program before officially requesting to participate in the bachelor-to-graduate program. Endorsements by the Graduate Coordinator and the student's academic advisor are required for enrollment in the bachelor-to-graduate plan.

The form [*GS6 Bachelor-to-Graduate, Request for Combined Education Plan*](#), should be completed and signed by the student, the Graduate Coordinator, Academic Advisor, and other designated parties before submission to the Graduate School.

Once the student and all designated parties have signed and submitted the GS6 Bachelor-to-Graduate form, and approval has been indicated by the Graduate School, permission has been granted for the student to begin enrolling in graduate-level courses. Consequently, the student need not formally apply to the M.S. in Social Science program, nor will the student be required to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Notably, bachelor-to-graduate students are only eligible for graduate assistantships after the awarding of the bachelor's degree, at which point the student becomes eligible for departmental funding.

Admission Policies

The decision to admit an applicant to the M.S. in Social Science program is made by the Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice's Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC) and the Department Chair. Applicants must meet all requirements of the Graduate School and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice to be eligible for admission to the M.S. in Social Science program. The requirements for admission are reviewed annually by the Graduate Coordinator and the Departmental Graduate Advisory Committee (GAC).

See the Clemson University Graduate School website for more information on [Graduate Admissions Policies](#).

I. Admission Requirements for Degree-Seeking Students

The requirements for admission currently include the following:

- A Bachelor's degree from an accredited degree program;
- Completion of a minimum of 15 undergraduate semester hours in the social sciences;
 - If the applicant does not meet this requirement, they may be required to take additional classes.
- A grade point average of at least 3.0 for the last four semesters of undergraduate studies.
- Submission of Graduate Record Examination scores on the verbal, quantitative, and analytical sections;
 - A satisfactory set of scores will typically include a minimum score of 154 on the verbal section, 144 on the quantitative section, and a 4.0 on the written section.
- Submission of three letters of recommendation;
 - The letters should come from faculty members of the applicant's previously attended college or university.
 - If the applicant graduated more than ten years prior, letters from employers may be submitted in lieu of letters from former faculty members.
- Submission of a resume or curriculum vitae (CV);
- Submission of a 500-word essay detailing your career aspirations and goals, indicating how completion of the Master's in Social Science program will assist in achieving these goals; and
 - The written statement should thoroughly demonstrate the applicant's proficiency with written communications. Any research experience and/or research-related competencies should be discussed here.
- International Applicants ONLY: Submission of TOEFL, IELTS, Duolingo, or PTE scores is required for applicants whose native language is not English. Scores that are over two years old will not be accepted.

- Per University guidelines, minimum scores include an 80 on the TOEFL iBT, an 8.5 on the TOEFL Essentials, a 6.5 on the IELTS, a 115 on Duolingo, or a 54 on PTE.
- Optional: Submission of a writing sample. The applicant may submit an optional writing sample, separate from the written statement. Preferably, an additional writing sample would further exemplify the applicant's research capabilities relevant to the M.S. in Social Science program.

If there are any questions or concerns about [supporting materials](#), a detailed description about the preparation of such materials can be found on the Graduate School's website linked above.

II. Transfer Credits

University policy does not allow for the automatic transfer of graduate credit. Students with graduate credit earned at another institution, in another department at Clemson University, or before admission to the M.S. in Social Science program must have their prior work evaluated for transfer credit. Coursework must have been completed at a regionally accredited institution to be eligible for transfer to a Clemson University degree program. Requests for transfer of credit to the program must be recommended by the student's advisory committee and approved by the Graduate Coordinator, the Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice, and the Dean of the Graduate School. Requests must be made in writing for each course or credited activity to be transferred. An official transcript, catalog description, and a course syllabus or other supporting documentation must accompany each transfer request. Request for transfer of work taken during your enrollment at Clemson University must be made prior to enrolling in these courses. Special permission must be obtained to take courses elsewhere and then have credit transferred back to Clemson as part of your plan of study. Permission for transfer of credit will be considered only if the circumstances warrant such consideration. Under no circumstances will transfer credit be awarded for research, internships, or master's thesis work performed at another institution.

Generally, all credit earned toward the completion of degree requirements should be completed at Clemson University to ensure that the degree granted is an actual reflection of the student's education at Clemson. Per the *Graduate School Policies and Procedures Handbook*, up to 12 credit hours may be transferred to a Master's level program. However, students should be aware that transfer credit is rarely approved. Please note that should a request for transfer credit be approved, grades earned for transfer courses taken at other institutions will not count toward the student's Clemson University grade point average.

III. Core Requirements for Degree

Each student is required to follow an established curriculum for the M.S. in Social Science degree. The student should expect to work closely with their Advisory Chair and the Graduate Coordinator in planning an academic program that conforms to the student's professional aspirations while simultaneously meeting the requirements of the graduate

program. The curriculum in social science specifies a minimum of 36 hours of coursework for the thesis option and a minimum of 30 hours of coursework for the non-thesis option.

Course requirements for both the thesis and non-thesis options include 15 required hours of Social Science (SSCI) coursework, including Departmental Research and Professional Development Seminar (SSCI 8970), Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences I (SSCI 8010), Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences II (SSCI 8070), Qualitative Methods for Social Sciences (SOC 6060/SSCI 8060), Theoretical Models in Applied Social Research (SSCI 8100), and 6 additional hours of departmental methods electives, independent research, or field experience. Examples of options for these courses include Survey Designs for Applied Social Research (SSCI 8030), Evaluation Research (SSCI 8050), Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences II (SSCI 8070), Ethnographic Fieldwork (ANTH 6030), Independent Study (SOC/ANTH/JUST 8960), or Field Experience (SSCI 8950).

Note: Other courses may be substituted with the express approval of the Graduate Coordinator.

Only courses numbered 6000 and above carry graduate credit. As a rule, graduate students are not to enroll in undergraduate courses. The exception to this standard is that taking a specified undergraduate course may be permitted or required in cases where a course should have been completed during undergraduate studies or a poor grade was earned, and remedial (supplementary) instruction is needed. Supplementary instruction may be necessary when a student's undergraduate degree is vastly different than the degree program in which the student is currently enrolled.

Program Learning Tracks

Research (thesis)

SSCI 8910 Master's
Thesis Research

Professional experience (internship)

INT 8010 Graduate
Student Internship

Teaching practicum

SSCI 8960
Independent Study



The designation of an experiential learning track is a significant step toward the completion of degree requirements. The “choose your own journey” path marks an important departure from a more traditional phase of the program, focused on methods coursework, to an intensive phase of independent study. Three learning tracks are presently available to students: (a) research (thesis) track, (b) professional experience (internship) track, and (c) teaching practicum. Regardless of the selected learning track, students must select an Advisory Committee.

Preparation is fundamental for selecting the learning track that best aligns with the student’s interests, skills, and career aspirations. Once a student is prepared to designate their learning track, they must submit a written memo stating how the chosen learning track meets the goals of the M.S. in Social Science program (see above) and how it will be advantageous to the student’s academic and professional development (e.g., launching a publishing career, improving teaching skills, improving grant writing skills, etc.). In consultation with their Advisory Committee, students should submit their learning-track designation by the end of the second semester in the program.

Learning Tracks: General Overview

Research Track

Expected deliverable: A scholarly thesis published in the Clemson Theses & Dissertations Database.

The thesis is intended to demonstrate the student's ability to plan, organize, research, and report on an original piece of scholarly work. Each thesis will independently accomplish this goal. The resulting scholarly work will provide valuable insight into the student's professional maturity and autonomy, as the completed research should reflect these qualities. The final thesis should mark a significant contribution to the existing body of social science research. The student is responsible for meeting with their Advisory Committee to work out all details of the actual scholarship to be created.

All phases of the thesis research (including the topic, the proposal for the research problem, the design of the study, collection and analysis of the data, and writing of the final report) are primarily the responsibility of the student and are to be supervised by the advisory chair and the committee members. Throughout all phases of the thesis research, the student must work closely with their advisory committee. The student is responsible for ensuring that the completed thesis meets the format specifications of the Graduate School. In preparation for this expectation, graduate students are expected to attend a workshop conducted by the Graduate School on how to format the thesis.

Professional Experience Track

Expected deliverables: A grant proposal, report summary, literature review, concept analysis, survey design and administration, or data management plan.

The internship is designed to allow the student access to a professional environment in which to hone desired professional competencies that are essential for launching their chosen career. Each professional experience is highly individualized, and students will work with their advisory committee to select an appropriate scope of work. The deliverable should address a specific need within the organization (academic unit) where the student is interning. The internship may be completed in one semester and repeated for up to two additional semesters. The internship experience will ultimately be graded on a Pass/Fail basis at the discretion of the advisory committee.

Teaching Practicum Track

Expected deliverables: A developed course including a syllabus, learning outcomes, reading assignments, learning activities, and the instructor's teaching materials (such as lecture and discussion notes); a teaching philosophy; and a reflection on teaching evaluation.

The teaching practicum allows students access to an environment where they can hone the specific skills essential to preparing and delivering course material at the collegiate level. The

student will, in consultation with their advisory committee chair, select a course to instruct and establish overarching individual goals for the teaching practicum. Additionally, the student and advisor will discuss at length the format of the practicum, the grading process, and the timeline for completion of potential deliverables. The practicum may be completed in one semester and repeated for up to two semesters. The teaching practicum experience will ultimately be graded on a Pass/Fail basis at the discretion of the advisory committee.

Timing for Completion

Thesis Track: A total of 36 credit hours is required for the thesis track. Students who plan to graduate in May of their second year typically have the preceding Fall and Spring semesters to complete their thesis. In accordance with University deadlines, a thesis proposal should be prepared and defended by the end of the first semester of the final year, and the final thesis defense should take place by the end of the second semester of the final year in the program.

The thesis proposal defense must take place *at least two weeks* after members of the Advisory Committee have received the proposal draft in writing; likewise, the final thesis defense must take place *at least two weeks* after members of the Advisory Committee have received the final thesis in writing.

Non-Thesis Track(s): A total of 30 credit hours is required for the non-thesis track. Students should determine their anticipated graduation date by evaluating their progress toward degree requirements, including completed and remaining coursework. Refer to Appendix C for a more detailed outline of graduation deadlines.

If a student fails to complete the internship or teaching practicum requirements, they will be allowed to re-enroll in an additional semester. The student will be responsible for amending their **GS2 (Plan of Study)** form and re-filing it with the Graduate School. The student may also alter the composition of their advisory committee before re-filing their GS2 form with the Graduate School.

Advisory Committee

Regardless of their intended learning track, all students should select an advisory committee chair by the middle of their second semester in the program. Thereafter, students will have two advisors: their advisory chair and the Graduate Coordinator. The advisory chair will become the student's primary advisor, and as such, they will be expected to guide the student in matters related to their learning track and general curriculum. The Graduate Coordinator will handle any overarching programmatic or institutional matters that arise (e.g., academic advising, assistantship matters, room assignments, ensuring progress toward the degree, etc.), give final approval of the student's course selections, and will remain available for consultation as necessary.

Students will then select at least two additional faculty members to serve on their advisory committee in consultation with their committee chair. Altogether, three faculty members are needed to form an advisory committee. Members of the advisory committee must hold graduate faculty status, with the chair holding the highest status of graduate directing. The majority of the committee, including the chair, must be full-time Clemson University regular or administrative faculty as defined by the *Faculty Manual*. The full committee must be selected and approved by the start of the third semester (typically Fall of the 2nd year). Students should consult with the Graduate Coordinator regarding the Graduate Faculty status of each proposed member of the advisory committee.

Note: The department chair is automatically an ex officio member of every advisory committee. Once the composition of the advisory committee has been determined, the student must submit the *GS2 (Plan of Study)* form.

Thesis Overview

Thesis Credit

Students must show satisfactory progress toward the completion of the thesis to remain enrolled in the M.S. in Social Science program. Any student who fails to maintain adequate progress towards the completion of the thesis may at any time be placed on academic probation or be terminated from the program on the recommendation of the Graduate Advisory Committee, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Chair.

Timing of the Thesis

The student should expect to begin their thesis (e.g., the written proposal accepted and presented) before or during the first semester of their second year in the program to graduate within the standard two-year time frame. The student must begin planning the thesis during the first year of graduate training by selecting an advisory chair and forming an advisory committee by the middle of their second semester in the program.

The graduate student should expect to work on their thesis during the regular semester and various University breaks (e.g., summer, winter holidays, etc.). However, while thesis work may be conducted during the summer between the first and second years, faculty members are often unavailable to provide guidance during this time, as most only serve a nine-month contract. Thus, students should only expect to have access to faculty members for thesis work during the summer if specific arrangements have been made with these individuals well in advance.

Topic Selection

The student may select any thesis research topic in the social sciences so long as the topic is deemed acceptable by the advisory committee. The student is advised to discuss the proposed topic with their prospective advisory committee members prior to formalizing their thesis topic.

Thesis Proposal

All students pursuing the research track must write a formal thesis proposal. This proposal must be completed and defended before any formal research may begin. Thesis proposals must be defended, at the latest, a semester before the completion and defense of the final thesis, with rare exceptions to this standard. Under no circumstances may the thesis proposal be defended less than two months before the defense of the final thesis. Students must adhere to the proposal guidelines outlined by the Graduate School.

The thesis proposal will be prepared by the student under the guidance of the thesis chair. The proposal will include a detailed statement of the research to be conducted by the student. All proposals must include the following elements:

- A clear definition of the research problem/question;
- A review of the appropriate literature;
- A description of the research design, including specific hypotheses, with justification for these hypotheses and use of the design;
- Proposed methods for processing and analyzing the data (quantitative and/or qualitative) for the particular problem under study with justifications for using these methods; and

- A description of the anticipated results indicating how these or alternative findings will be interpreted.

Students must consult with their committee chair while developing the thesis proposal. The student is responsible for taking the initiative to meet with their advisory committee chair to establish deadlines for stages of the development of the thesis proposal. Students must allow the advisory chair at least two weeks to review each iteration. The chair will establish when it is appropriate to submit iterations for review. Once the chair has indicated their approval, the proposal must then be submitted in final written form to each committee member. The final written proposal must be submitted to the advisory committee members **at least two weeks** before the meeting at which the proposal will be defended. The Graduate Coordinator must also be provided a copy of the proposal. Students should allow faculty **at least two weeks** to review the proposal. Committee members may suggest changes during this time.

Proposal Defense

The Graduate Coordinator and all committee members must be informed of the defense date at least ten working days prior to the scheduled defense. An email notification of the scheduled defense is sufficient so long as a response is provided indicating that the communication has been received. The student will then formally present the thesis proposal at a formal meeting of the entire committee. The proposal defense should be open to all other interested persons as well. If an advisory committee member cannot attend the proposal defense, the Graduate Coordinator must be informed promptly. Every effort should be made to ensure all committee members are in attendance at the proposal defense.

Voting to accept or reject the thesis proposal is limited to the members of the advisory committee. The committee can vote to:

- Accept the proposal as presented by the student;
- Accept the proposal contingent on minor changes stipulated by the committee (and approved by the chair) without holding another committee meeting;
- Require extensive revisions in the proposal stipulated by the committee and reschedule another committee meeting at which the revised proposal will be defended; or
- Reject the proposal and require the student to prepare a new proposal.

If the proposal is rejected by the advisory committee, the student has the option to select a new chair, committee, and/or topic. Committee decisions regarding the thesis proposal must be unanimous. When a proposal is defended and accepted, the advisory committee members will sign the *GS Approval of Thesis/Dissertation Research Proposal*. No significant changes to the proposal (i.e., theoretical or methodological) may be made thereafter without the approval of the entire advisory committee.

Conduct of the Research

Students should plan expect to begin their thesis research no later than the end of the third semester. Thesis research may not begin until:

- The thesis proposal has been approved by the advisory committee, and
- The research protocol has been reviewed and approved by the Clemson University Institutional Review Board (IRB), if applicable.

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice does not compensate students for costs associated with conducting thesis research. No expense incurred by the student will be reimbursed without prior approval. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with departmental policies, procedures, and professional/ethical standards for conducting thesis research.

Final Thesis Review

Students are expected to work with their chair to ensure that a completed, error-free draft of the final thesis is submitted to all committee members. Committee members will then have three weeks to complete their initial reviews of the thesis draft. Failure to complete an initial review within six weeks' time is grounds for the removal of any committee member, including the committee chair.

Upon the suggestions of the advisory committee, the student should make corrections and additions to this thesis draft. Once the committee chair has indicated their final approval, the thesis must be submitted in final written form to the other members of the advisory committee ***at least two weeks*** before the proposed thesis defense date. As with the thesis proposal, students should not expect faculty members to read numerous drafts of the final thesis. Thus, the version of the thesis that is defended during the oral examination is a final draft with few, if any, minor errors. A digital copy of the final thesis should be provided to each member of the committee, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Chair unless a member specifically requests a printed copy. Students must submit an official notification of defense on the Graduate School website prior to the proposed defense date.

Thesis Defense

The student will participate in a final oral examination during which they will defend their thesis to the entire committee at a formal meeting open to all faculty members. This final thesis defense must be passed at least three weeks prior to the student's proposed graduation date. Members of the faculty, members of the Graduate Curriculum Committee, and the Dean of the Graduate School are invited to attend the thesis defense.

Check the [Graduate School Deadlines](#) for additional information on thesis defense deadlines.

The student must ensure that written notification of the thesis defense be submitted in a timely fashion. An official notification may be submitted using the [Thesis Defense Form](#) as designated by the Graduate School.

Following the thesis defense, the committee will vote to:

- Accept the thesis without modification;
- Accept the thesis contingent on minor revisions stipulated by the committee and to be approved by the committee chair without holding another committee meeting; or
- Reject the thesis until specified major revisions are made. In this case, a second defense date must be scheduled.

Decisions about the thesis are determined by a majority vote of the advisory committee. When the thesis defense is accepted, each committee member will sign the *GS7M* ([Final Exam and](#)

[Thesis Approval Form](#)). Once filled out and signed by the advisory chair, committee members, and others as designated, the student must electronically submit the *GS7M* form ***within three days*** of the defense date.

A student who fails the initial defense may be allowed a second opportunity to defend the thesis only upon the recommendation of the advisory committee. Failure of the second examination will result in dismissal from the M.S. Social Science program at Clemson University.

Submission of the Final Thesis to the Graduate School

The Graduate School uses an electronic thesis and dissertation (ETD) publishing system. Students should note that all manuscripts submitted to the ETD system will be subjected to iThenticate anti-plagiarism review. Further details regarding the publishing process are available on the Graduate School website. No fees are associated with uploading and publishing the final thesis online. The published thesis will become available in the online database approximately six weeks post-graduation.

Graduate students must consult the Graduate School regulations and website for more information, as students are expected to adhere to the guidelines and procedures stipulated in these sources of information. Refer to Appendix C for more information regarding Graduate School deadlines.

Professional Internship Overview

Professional Internship Overview

A non-thesis option that satisfies degree requirements is available for students in the M.S. in Social Science program. The student interested in the professional internship experience must submit a non-thesis designation by September 15th of their second year in the program. The student must also form a three-faculty member advisory committee and designate a committee chair prior to beginning their second year in the program. Completion of 30 credit hours is required for the professional internship non-thesis option.

The professional internship learning track was created for graduate students interested in applying their social science knowledge and skills to real-world situations while gaining professional experience. The experience is designed to provide a meaningful, intentional, and highly individualized educational experience outside of the primary academic setting. The graduate student interested in an internship will select a faculty advisor and an internship site before enrolling in the SOC 8960 internship course. Students will enroll in this course for 3 credit hours, with the expectation that students will complete 9 hours/week working at the internship site or on assignments related to the SOC 8960 course. At the beginning of the internship semester, the student will meet with their faculty advisor to draft a simple agreement outlining expectations for the internship experience. This agreement, written as an individualized syllabus, will be signed by the faculty advisor and the student before being submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for their approval.

Role of the Advisory Committee

Several expectations of the faculty advisor-graduate student dynamic will be provided here; however, the student must refer to the *SOC 8960 Internship Syllabus* for an exhaustive list of expectations. Both parties are expected to provide prompt, constructive, and professional communication. The faculty advisor is expected to read and comment on assessments punctually. Additionally, should the student request assistance with their professional development efforts (i.e., attending conferences, networking) the advisor is expected to help. After outlining a thorough timeline and expectations for the internship semester, the student and the faculty member will each sign the syllabus they create together, and this will serve as a guide to the expectations of the advisor-advisee dynamic.

Student Outcomes

The professional experience track is ***not*** simpler than the thesis, nor is it intended to be a more challenging experience. The internship is expected to meet the difficulty of the thesis track, culminating in a deliverable assignment, much like the final thesis is the deliverable of the thesis track. However, the faculty advisor, in collaboration with the graduate student, will determine the nature and content of this deliverable. A general expectation for the deliverable project is that the student highlights how the internship relates to their overarching career goals and addresses any challenges or issues they encountered throughout their experience. The faculty advisor and the student should expect to meet ***at least monthly***, if not more often, throughout the internship semester for check-in meetings. Optimally, the pair will meet more often to ensure the student completes the internship requirements satisfactorily.

At the end of the internship experience, the student must demonstrate that they are able to apply professional insights, theories, and skills from their master's coursework to their internship duties. The student should be able to thoroughly evaluate their internship experience and assess the effectiveness of the institutional culture and business practices they observed throughout the internship. The student will develop marketable skills beyond what they have learned through their coursework, setting the student up for success following the completion of the graduate degree. Based on the student's performance in the internship role, their timely completion of assignments, and the quality of their deliverables, the course will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. The student and faculty advisor are expected to precisely outline standards for passing the class at the beginning of the internship semester. The student is expected to uphold all institutional and departmental standards throughout the internship experience as a representative of Clemson University and the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice.

Teaching Practicum Overview

Teaching Practicum Overview

The teaching practicum, another non-thesis option that satisfies degree requirements, is available for students in the M.S. in Social Science program. The student interested in the teaching practicum must submit a non-thesis designation by September 15th of their second year in the program. The student must also form a three-faculty member advisory committee and designate a committee chair prior to beginning their second year in the program. Completion of 30 credit hours is required for the professional internship non-thesis option.

The teaching practicum is an experiential learning opportunity that allows students to explore a potential career path in teaching or to merely develop proficiency in skills relevant to success in the workforce. In consultation with their faculty advisor, the student will select a college-level course to help instruct. The student and their faculty advisor will be responsible for designating the goals of the teaching practicum. A deliverable should be determined at the outset of the practicum, ideally during the early meetings of the student with their advisor. The student and faculty advisor must plan the practicum well in advance, setting all appropriate deadlines for deliverables and assessment before the practicum semester begins. Together, the student and advisor will outline an agreement, written as an individualized syllabus, which will be signed by both parties before eventually being submitted to the Graduate Coordinator for their approval. The graduate student will ultimately be graded for their performance on a Pass/Fail basis during the teaching practicum.

Learning Outcomes

The student is expected to treat the teaching practicum as a professional experience, much like they would treat the internship. At the conclusion of the teaching experience, the student should feel confident in their ability to develop academic materials and manage a course at the collegiate level. The student should be confident in their ability to complete the following tasks by the end of the practicum:

- Develop a clear and comprehensive course syllabus.
- Set achievable learning outcomes for students enrolled in their course.
- Establish a grading breakdown for the course, including the creation of actual assignments that students will be expected to complete throughout the semester.
- Create lecture materials, such as presentations. Lecture aids, such as speaking notes/guides, should be included with submitted presentations.
- Deliver a professional and well-structured lecture that covers material relevant to course learning objectives.
- Elaborate on a personal teaching philosophy and explain how they implement this philosophy in an academic setting.
- Reflect on the teaching practicum and provide an honest account of the experience, providing details on how the teaching practicum has prepared the student to achieve their career goals.

Role of the Advisory Committee

Several expectations of the faculty advisor-graduate student dynamic will be provided here; however, the student must refer to their signed syllabus with their advisory chair for a more

comprehensive list of expectations. However, several core expectations will be outlined in this section of the handbook for reference. Notably, both parties will be expected to provide prompt, constructive, and professional communication. The faculty advisor is expected to read and comment on assessments punctually. Additionally, should the student request assistance with their professional development efforts (i.e., attending conferences, networking) the advisor is expected to help. After outlining a thorough timeline and expectations for the internship semester, the student and the faculty member will each sign the syllabus they create together, and this will serve as a guide to the expectations of the advisor-advisee dynamic.

For additional resources related to the teaching practicum, please refer to the [Office of Teaching Effectiveness and Innovation](#) website.

Assistantships

Graduate assistantships are distributed by the Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator and the Graduate Advisory Committee. All full-time students in good academic standing (as defined by GPA and progress toward the degree requirements, among other criteria) are eligible for consideration for assistantships and other University financial support. Preference will be given to excellent students making continuous, consistent, and acceptable progress toward completing the degree requirements. Graduate students in the program may only be supported for up to four (4) regular academic semesters. Students are usually required to work 20 hours per week for their assistantship position. Generally, graduate assistants in the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice are assigned as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs).

Graduate teaching assistants will help grade exams, meet with students, and hold review sessions, among other duties. All graduate assistantships are considered both professional work experiences and educational experiences. Thus, students should treat the assistantships as they would any paid, professional job in the “regular” workforce. Students should use this opportunity to develop academic skills, learn about various research areas, and form mentoring relationships with their faculty advisors. As employees, GTAs represent and reflect on the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice and the M.S. in Social Science program. Professional deportment and presentations of self are expected throughout the assistantship experience.

A limited number of Graduate Research Assistant (GRA) positions are available, through which the student will conduct supervised research or assist with funded study from any source administered by the University. More often, a GRA position may become available for graduate students through the Center for Criminal Justice and Social Research (CJSR), or sometimes through the opportunity to more intensively assist a faculty member with their research efforts.

Students are not guaranteed continuation of financial support. Assistantship support is offered on a semester-by-semester basis and is contingent upon the availability of funds and the student’s satisfactory progress toward the degree. Eligibility for continued support is defined by academic performance in courses and reasonable progress through the program. The continuation of assistantship support depends on educational and assistantship performance of high quality. Grades below B, incompletes, inadequate job performance, and no or minimal progress toward a degree are grounds for terminating assistantship support from semester to semester. Those graduate students receiving financial support from the program will be assessed on their progress toward thesis completion and on how well they perform their assistantship duties.

The department may terminate assistantships on the basis of poor performance, failure to meet academic requirements (GPA or credit hours), or lack of funding. Every effort will be made to provide adequate notice if an assistantship is being reduced or terminated. Students may explore additional graduate assistant opportunities at [Clemson Job site](#). **Disclaimer:** Students employed full-time inside or outside the University are not eligible for assistantships.

Financial Support for Academic & Professional Development

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice values the professional development of graduate students enrolled in the master's program, primarily by providing funding opportunities to participate in professional conferences and to support thesis research needs (i.e., incentive cards). Limited, competitive funding is available each year to support professional development activities for students. The process of applying for departmental funding is outlined in more detail below.

Policy and Procedures

Competitive and limited funding is provided on a reimbursement basis. Receipts must be provided to the main office of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice (SACJ) before funds may be dispersed. Occasional funding can be provided at the time of purchase. For example, entrance exams may be funded at the time of purchase, provided that the applicant completes the purchase within the SACJ main office (132 Brackett Hall). Students may request up to \$500 in funding to supplement their educational or career-based opportunity needs.

Graduate students should consult the program CANVAS page for a guide on departmental funding. Here, students may find more information on the specific steps involved in acquiring said funding. Importantly, these guidelines should be consulted *before* funding is dispersed, as approval is required in advance for each purchase made by the student. Please allow sufficient time for funding requests to be processed (at least two weeks). Any questions may be directed to department administrators via the sacj@clemsun.edu email.

Awards

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice recently introduced the *Excellence in Social Science Graduate Studies* recognition, awarded each year to a student who exemplifies the mission of the M.S. in Social Science program. The student selected for this award demonstrates an exemplary capacity to communicate and apply their knowledge of the social sciences while simultaneously “engaging with the social, scientific, economic, and professional challenges of our times.”

Throughout their time in the M.S. Social Science program, this student has not only maintained a high level of academic achievement, but they have also demonstrated a profound ability to engage in theoretically sound, empirically sophisticated research that reflects a significant contribution to the field of social science. Students are nominated for the *Excellence in Social Sciences Graduate Studies* award by faculty members, who will be asked to provide a written explanation about how this student demonstrates the mission and values of the M.S. in Social Science program, as well as why this student deserves the award. The award is presented annually at the conclusion of the academic year.

International Students

International students who are graduate teaching or research assistants must arrive in the United States by August 1st.

Academic Matters

All international students (new and continuing) are required to complete their SEVIS Check-In at the start of the Fall semester. The SEVIS Check-In is completed through the iStart Portal, and students are not required to visit International Services in person to complete this process. The U.S. government requires all graduate international students to be enrolled full-time (9 credit hours) each Fall and Spring semester. This regulation has limited exceptions, and each exception requires review by International Services before enrolling less than full-time. If a student has a question or issue with maintaining full-time enrollment, please ask them to contact International Services for guidance. The U.S. government does not allow international students to enroll in more than one online course per semester.

Authorization to Work

It is important to reiterate that international students who are graduate teaching or research assistants must arrive in the United States by August 1. This deadline allows the student to satisfy the requirement of being in the country for 14 days before applying for a social security number while simultaneously ensuring that graduate assistants are hired in time for their contract start date of August 15. Failure to obtain a timely employment authorization will result in a loss of pay.

International students must work with Clemson's [International Services Office](#), a part of the [Office of Global Engagement](#), to ensure that proper documentation is provided for approval to work at Clemson. The student may also want to make an appointment to meet the International Human Resource specialist to discuss their individual tax situation.

Verification of English Skills Test (VEST) Requirements

All new international graduate students who have been offered student-facing assistantships* are required to take the Verification of English Skills (VEST) test if:

- TOEFL speaking score was below 26
- IELTS speaking score was below 8.0
- PTE below 74
- Overall Duolingo score was less than 130

*Does not include research assistants or graders unless they will teach the following semester, in which case it is required.

International students who never submitted English proficiency scores for admission must still be screened for English language proficiency. If a student wishes to be exempt from the VEST because they use English as a native language or have used English as their primary language from age 6 through high school, they will have the option through this [exemption form](#).

Thriving as a Graduate Student

Academic Performance

Graduate students in the M.S. in Social Science program must maintain an academic performance level at or above a 3.0 GPA in all graduate work. The continuation of University or external agency financial support and internship placement will be contingent on academic performance at or above a 3.0 GPA. Although a “B” average is expected of all students receiving departmental assistantships, a cumulative GPA of higher than 3.0 is preferred and expected of students receiving such support.

Any student whose grade point average falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Subsequently, students placed on academic probation must complete all forms related to their proposed plan for success in order to be retained in the program during this probationary period. Students on academic probation may be terminated from the program on the recommendation of the advisory committee and with the approval of the Graduate Coordinator and the Chair of the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice.

Professional Conduct

It is imperative that students recognize the graduate education as a *professional* experience as well as an academic one. Awarding an advanced degree requires more than merely achieving a minimum grade-point average and completing academic requirements in courses, seminars, and research activities. A graduate education also encompasses the development of acceptable professional standards. Thus, students must conduct themselves as professionals in their dealings with undergraduates, faculty, staff, and other graduate students. Students' conduct during the field placement experience must reflect positively on them, the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice, and Clemson University. Any violation of these professional standards may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

Office Space & Supplies

Students have access to a shared open space in 123 Brackett Hall on the campus of Clemson University. Students may also reserve a private study carrel at Cooper Library in two-hour blocks. Office supplies, the copier, and scantrons are located in the Department's main office in 132 Brackett Hall. Office supplies are meant to be used for work tasks associated with the assistantship position.

Student Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to initiate the required actions and meet the deadlines specified by the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice and the Graduate School. While the Graduate Coordinator and the advisory chair are committed to assisting the student, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to ensure that all necessary forms are correctly completed and filed with the Graduate School and, as appropriate, with the Department Chair and Graduate Coordinator.

Communication

Announcements related to the M.S. in Social Science program, the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice, and Clemson University will be sent to students via their

University email address. All students are expected to check their Clemson email account regularly, as this will be the program's primary method of communication. Announcements, updates, and various deadline reminders may also be sent as an announcement via the M.S. in Social Science CANVAS page.

Importantly, students will be expected to utilize their @clemson.edu account rather than their @g.clemson.edu account. The University intends to terminate the Clemson Gmail in the near future, alternatively employing Microsoft Outlook. Students will still have access to Google Suite applications such as Google Drive, Google Docs, and Google Slides but will primarily use Microsoft Outlook for email communication.

CANVAS Page

The M.S. in Social Science program utilizes a CANVAS page as a central location for program resources and relevant information. Here, students can access a copy of the program's graduate handbook, various professional development resources, a calendar of program deadlines, and more. Announcements will be sent out periodically via the CANVAS page, highlighting upcoming deadlines and opportunities relevant to the program's students. Please note that the CANVAS page is a supplementary source of information, and the Graduate School website must be consulted for information not contained within the program CANVAS page.

Library Support

Clemson Libraries offer extensive support services to help fulfill students' research needs. Visit the [library's home page](#) to access these services. Amanda McLeod (amcleo2@clemson.edu) is the Clemson librarian assigned to assist students in the M.S. in Social Science program. Students should feel free to contact her directly or through the [library portal](#).

Health and Wellness

Student Health Services strengthens Clemson University by providing quality medical and mental health care, public health leadership, and initiatives that enhance the academic success of our students and promote the health, safety, and well-being of the campus community. Visit their [website](#) or call them at (864) 656-1541.

Resume/Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Students are encouraged to begin preparing their resume or CV from their first day in graduate school. Students should consult their advisor, fellow graduate students, and Clemson University's [Center for Career and Professional Development](#).

Clemson Student Resources

Clemson University offers a wide variety of resources for students, including clubs, student organizations, leadership, and advisory groups. Graduate students should consider participation in these organizations as a professional development opportunity.



Policy Receipt Acknowledgement

I, _____ (please print) hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood the policies and requirements set forth by the Department of Sociology, Anthropology and Criminal Justice. I am fully responsible for being familiar with the complete content of the *M.S. in Social Science Graduate Handbook* as well as *Clemson University's Graduate School Policy Handbook*. I understand that I must conduct myself professionally in my interactions with undergraduate students, faculty, staff, and other graduate students. I acknowledge that any violation of these professional standards may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

Student Name (Printed)

Date

Student Signature

Date

CUID #

Graduate Coordinator Signature

Date

Appendices

Appendix A: Course Map and Elective Options

Below is a recommended course map for the on-time completion of the degree. This course map illustrates the standard course progression through the social science curriculum. When planning their curriculum, students should be aware that some courses are not offered on an annual basis, but rather may be offered on a biannual basis. Thus, choosing to postpone a course may delay student progress toward the degree.

During their second year of study, students will designate a thesis or non-thesis learning track. The required courses will diverge based on the path chosen, and as a result, both a thesis and a non-thesis course map are outlined below. Students should ensure that they review the appropriate course map when planning their studies.

Notably, all M.S. in Social Science students are required to take a methods course every semester. Students should ensure that they meet this requirement prior to the start of classes each semester.

Thesis Track

Course Map 2024-2025	
Fall, Year 1	Spring, Year 1
SSCI 8970: Departmental Research and Professional Development Seminar (3 cr)	SSCI 8060/SOC 6060: Qualitative Methods for the Social Sciences (3 cr)
SSCI 8010: Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences I (3 cr)	SSCI 8070: Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences II (3 cr)
Elective (3 cr)	SSCI 8100: Theoretical Models in Applied Social Research (3 cr)
Fall, Year 2	Spring, Year 2
SSCI 8910: Master's Thesis Research (Thesis Track Only, 3 cr)	SSCI 8910: Master's Thesis Research (Thesis Track Only, 3 cr)
SSCI 8030: Survey Designs for Applied Social Research (3 cr)	Elective (3 cr)
Elective (3 cr)	

Total Hours: 36

Non-Thesis Track

Course Map 2024-2025	
Fall, Year 1	Spring, Year 1
SSCI 8970: Departmental Research and Professional Development Seminar (3 cr) SSCI 8010: Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences I (3 cr) Elective (3 cr)	SSCI 8060/SOC 6060: Qualitative Methods for the Social Sciences (3 cr) SSCI 8070: Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences II (3 cr) SSCI 8100: Theoretical Models in Applied Social Research (3 cr)
Fall, Year 2	Spring, Year 2
SSCI 8030: Survey Designs for Applied Social Research (3 cr) Elective (3 cr)	Elective (3 cr) Elective (3 cr)

Total Hours: 30

Electives: Medical Sociology (SOC 6800), Sex and Gender (SOC 6610), Globalization and Social Change (SOC 6330), The Community (SOC 6590), Anthropology of Religion, Magic, and Witchcraft (ANTH 6270), Law, Culture, and Society (ANTH 6280), Human Ecology (RS 6010), Sociological Theory (SOC 6040), Ethnographic Fieldwork (SOC 6030), Quantitative Methods for Social Sciences II (SSCI 8070), Survey Designs for Applied Social Research (SSCI 8030), Evaluation Research (SSCI 8050)

Experiential Electives: Based on their designation of the thesis or non-thesis track, students will enroll in the appropriate experiential elective course. Students pursuing the thesis track will enroll in Master's Thesis Research (SSCI 8910), while student selecting the non-thesis track will enroll in Independent Study (SOC 8960).

Appendix B: Program Timeline

Below is a chart of suggested timelines for thesis and non-thesis track students alike. Please note that this program timeline is highly encouraged, but it is not fixed, as there is expected to be some variation among cohorts and cohort members.

Program Timeline				
YEAR 1				
	Coursework	GS2 Plan of Study	Thesis	Non-Thesis
By End of Fall 1				
Exceeds Expectations	3.67+ GPA		Very familiar with the thesis-track option	Very familiar with the exam-track option
Meets Expectations	3.0 GPA			
Does Not Meet Expectations	GPA below 3.0 or any Cs		Does not identify prospective MS track (thesis or exam)	Does not identify prospective MS track (thesis or exam)
By End of Spring 1				
Exceeds Expectations	3.67+ GPA		Topic and Method Identified, Committee Selected	Exam emphasis areas selected
Meets Expectations	3.0 GPA	GS2 Submitted¹	Topic Identified, Advisor Selected ²	Advisor Selected
Does Not Meet Expectations	GPA below 3.0 or any Cs		Committee not selecte	
Summer	External Internship, Summer Research Assistant Hourly, etc.			

Program Timeline				
YEAR 2				
	Coursework	GS2 Plan of Study	Thesis	Non-Thesis
By End of Fall 2				
Exceeds Expectations	3.67+ GPA			
Meets Expectations	3.0 GPA	Final GS2 Submitted	Thesis Proposal Defended ³	Comprehensive Exam Date Set
Does Not Meet Expectations	GPA below 3.0 or any Cs		Proposal Date Not Set	
By End of Spring 2				
Exceeds Expectations	3.67+ GPA			
Meets Expectations	3.0 GPA	GS2 Submitted¹	Thesis Defended	Comprehensive Exam Completed
Does Not Meet Expectations	GPA below 3.0 or any Cs		No Thesis Defense Planned	
GRADUATION				
Summer	External Internship, Summer Research Assistant Hourly, etc.			

¹The GS2 Plan of Study should be resubmitted again prior to the semester you graduate with coursework updated. If you plan to graduate in May, you should submit and have your GS2 Plan of Study approved before January (specific dates can be found on the Graduate Website).

²The Thesis Advisor should be **selected by the middle of your second semester**. The advisory committee should be selected **by the beginning of the third semester** (Fall).

³**The Thesis Proposal should be defended by the end of the semester prior to the intended graduation.** If you plan to defend your thesis and graduate in May, you should defend your thesis proposal by December 31. Note that many faculty travel during winter break, so you should not expect committee members to be available after final exams.

For this program, the traditional graduation is the end of the fourth semester (May), however many students opt to spend part of the summer to complete their thesis and graduate in August (exactly 2 years post matriculation).

Many students choose to spend their summer interning or working on their thesis and/or other research projects. However, faculty are not obligated to any summer commitments, and if you anticipate needing guidance during the summer, you should discuss this possibility of summer work with your Chair/Advisor.

Appendix C: MS in Social Science Deadlines

MS in Social Science Deadlines

<u>Anticipated Graduation:</u>	December 2024	May 2025	August 2025
<i>Submit Final GS2 Form</i>	Aug. 14, 2024	Jan. 2, 2025	May 6, 2025
<i>Apply to Graduate</i>	Sept. 10, 2024	Jan. 29, 2025	June 3, 2025
<i>Last Day to Defend</i>	Nov. 8, 2024	March 28, 2025	June 27, 2025
<i>Final Thesis Approval</i>	Nov. 22, 2024	Apr. 11, 2025	July 11, 2025
<i>Submit Final Thesis</i>	Nov. 29, 2024	Apr. 18, 2025	July 18, 2025
<i>Required Revisions</i>	Dec. 6, 2024	Apr. 25, 2025	July 25, 2025
<i>Order Graduation Regalia</i>	Check with the campus bookstore .		
<i>Graduation Dates</i>	Dec. 19, 2024	May 8-9, 2025	Aug. 8, 2025