



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Applied Sociology MA Graduate Program Handbook

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Applied Sociology MA

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both of these handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) - Open to all graduate students at no cost
- [Plagiarism](#)

Introduction

The program emphasizes methodological skills and academic scholarship to create a strong foundation for careers using sociological knowledge in academic and applied settings. These skills are developed with research oriented seminars and “hands-on” experiences providing advanced training in the application of sociological knowledge, principles, and research skills. Beyond a curriculum appropriate for general applied sociology, the program includes a graduate tracks in Domestic Violence and Medical Sociology as well as instruction and opportunities pertaining to the study of deviant behavior and crime and social inequalities.

Degree seeking students in the Applied Sociology Program may elect to follow either a thesis or a non-thesis course of study. The thesis option is designed for students who plan to enter doctoral programs and is highly recommended for students interested in community college teaching. The non-thesis option is more appropriate for students entering or continuing professional careers following the MA degree.

The degree of Master of Arts is conferred when students have fulfilled the requirements for either the thesis or non-thesis option. Both options require 30 hours of course work.

Comparison of the Thesis and Non-Thesis Options:

Thesis Option - 30 Total Credit Hours

- 6 Hours of Thesis
- 12 Hours of Core Courses
- 12 Hours of Unrestricted Electives Thesis
- Non-Thesis Option - 30 Total Credit Hours
- 15 Hours of Core Courses
- 12 Hours of Unrestricted Electives
- 3 Hours for an Applied Project

Thesis Option

The requirements of the Program include a minimum of 30 semester credit hours, at least half of which must be at the 6000 level or above. Course work includes the following:

A) The four “core” courses (12 credit hours). Students receive an independent learning experience in the core by completing a research study in each of the 12 hours of required courses.

- SYA 5625 Proseminar (3 credit hours): Should be taken as early as possible in the program.
- SYA 6126 Social Theory (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6305 Social Research (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6455 Research Analysis (3 credit hours)

B) An additional four courses (12 credit hours) of graduate level work comprising unrestricted elective course work. These courses are selected in consultation with the student’s faculty adviser. No more than 3 credit hours may be taken in UCF graduate programs outside the Department of Sociology. Coursework taken outside the Sociology department must be approved by the Graduate Director prior to enrollment.

4000 level courses may not be used toward the plan of study for the MA degree. A listing and description of courses offered by the Department of Sociology is found in the "Courses" section of the Graduate Catalog Menu.

Under special circumstances, students may enroll in a graduate level Directed Independent Study course or a Directed Independent Research course to fulfill their unrestricted elective course requirements. These courses, like most graduate seminars, require written research reports. Enrollment in an Independent Study/Research course requires written approval from the student’s Advisor. No more than 6 credit hours of coursework may be taken in a Directed Independent Study or Directed Research course.

C) Thesis:

- Six credit hours of thesis research (SYA 6971)
- Successfully passing a thesis proposal hearing in front of the thesis committee
- Successfully defending the thesis project in front of the thesis committee

Non-Thesis Option

The requirements of the Program include a minimum of 30 semester credit hours, at least half of which must be at the 6000 level or above. Course work includes the following:

A) Five “core” courses (15 hours). The Program Design and Evaluation course (SYA 6657) requires community-oriented research projects to develop research skills in sociology. The remaining 12 hours offers students an independent learning experience by completing a research study in each course.

- SYA 5625 Proseminar (3 credit hours): Should be taken as early as possible in the program.
- SYA 6126 Social Theory (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6305 Social Research (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6455 Research Analysis (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6657 Program Design and Evaluation (3 credit hours)

B) One (3 credit hours) of Directed Research (SYA 6918), Internship or Practicum (SYA 6946), Research Report (SYA 6909), or Directed Independent Studies (SYA 6908) during which the applied project is undertaken.

It is assumed, though not required, that these hours are directly connected to the group/agency for which the project is developed.

C) An additional four courses (12 credit hours) of graduate level work comprising unrestricted elective course work. These courses are selected in consultation with the student’s faculty adviser. No more than 3 credit hours

may be taken in UCF graduate programs outside the Department of Sociology. Coursework taken outside the Sociology department must be approved by the Graduate Director prior to enrollment.

D) An Applied Project evaluated by a three-person committee consisting of:

- A 1-2 page proposal describing what the project and the final product will entail.
- A final product approved and evaluated by the committee.
- A brief statement submitted with the final product indicating how the project is sociologically grounded.

4000 level courses may not be used toward the plan of study for the MA degree. A listing and description of courses offered by the Department of Sociology is found in the "Courses" section of the Graduate Catalog Menu.

Under special circumstances, students may enroll in a graduate level Directed Independent Study course or a Directed Independent Research course to fulfill their unrestricted elective course requirements. These courses, like most graduate seminars, require written research reports. Enrollment in an Independent Study/Research course requires written approval from the student's Advisor. No more than 6 credit hours of coursework may be taken in a Directed Independent Study or Directed Research course.

Non-thesis students may substitute up to 6 hours of their elective course work by completing a graduate practicum/internship (SYA 6946). The practicum must be approved by the student's permanent adviser and the department's Graduate Director.

The practicum is designed to help students apply classroom principles and methods in a non-academic setting that is compatible with their career goals. The practicum must take place after the four core courses have been completed. The practicum must be approved by the Advisor and the Graduate Committee. Students should discuss their interest in, and possible locations for, the practicum with their Advisor. When the Advisor has approved the practicum request, the student will notify the Graduate Program Director in writing. The Graduate Director will then present the practicum request to the Graduate Committee. Once approved by the Graduate Committee, the adviser will schedule a proposal meeting with the student's Advisory Committee. Following Committee approval, and in conjunction with their Advisor, students will make initial contact with the organization or agency to discuss the practicum and to establish goals and research objectives. A formal "contract" will be drafted, specifically outlining both the student's and the host organization's expectations of performance during the practicum. Upon completion of the practicum, students will submit a final research report to their Advisory Committee for approval.

Students interested in the practicum should recognize that organizing and scheduling the practicum can take several months to complete. As such, they should begin discussing the practicum with their advisor as soon as possible.

Specialty Track in Domestic Violence

The Specialty Track in Domestic Violence is compatible with the Program's Thesis and Non-Thesis Options. The requirements of the specialty track include a minimum of 30 semester credit hours, at least half of which must be at the 6000 level or above. Course work includes the following:

A) The four required "core" courses (12 credit hours). Students receive an independent learning experience in the core by completing a research study in each of the 12 hours of required courses.

- SYA 5625 Proseminar (3 credit hours): Should be taken as early as possible in your program.
- SYA 6126 Social Theory (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6305 Social Research (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6455 Research Analysis (3 credit hours)

B) The following two specialization courses in domestic violence (6 credit hours)

- SYP 5566 Seminar on Domestic Violence: Theory, Research and Social Policy (3 credit hours)
- SYP 6563 Reactions to Domestic Violence (3 credit hours)

C) Two of the following restricted electives (6 hours)

- SYA 6657 Program Design and Evaluation* (3 credit hours)
- SYP 6561 Child Abuse in Society (3 credit hours)
- SYP 5525 Sociological Criminology (3 credit hours)
- SYP 6515 Deviant Behavior Issues (3 credit hours)
- SYP 6517 Topics in Crime and Deviance (3 credit hours)
- SYP 6522 Sociological Perspectives on Victims (3 credit hours)
- SYP 6546 Crime, Law, Inequality (3 credit hours)
- SYD 6809 Seminar on Gender Issues (3 credit hours)

* SYA 6657 cannot be taken for elective credit by non-thesis students because it is a required course for this option.

D) The thesis option requires:

- Six credit hours of thesis research (SYA 6971)
- Successfully passing a thesis proposal hearing in front of the thesis committee
- Successfully defending the thesis project in front of the thesis committee

E) The non-thesis option requires:

- Program Design and Evaluation (SYA 6657) as a required core. The course requires community-oriented research projects to develop research skills in sociology.
- An additional 3 credit hours of graduate level directed work for applied project.
- An Applied Project

F) For both thesis and non-thesis students no more than 3 hours may be taken in UCF graduate programs outside the Department. Coursework taken outside the Sociology department must be approved by the Graduate Director prior to enrollment.

Under special circumstances, students may enroll in a graduate level Directed Independent Study course or a Directed Independent Research course to fulfill their unrestricted elective course requirements. These courses, like most graduate seminars, require written research reports. Enrollment in an Independent Study/Research course requires written approval from the student's advisor. No more than 6 credit hours of coursework may be taken in a Directed Independent Study or Directed Research course.

E) Non-thesis students may substitute up to 6 hours of their elective course work by completing a graduate practicum/internship (SYA 6946). The practicum must be approved by the student's permanent adviser and the department's Graduate Director.

Specialty Track in Medical Sociology

The Specialty Track in Medical Sociology is compatible with the Program's Thesis and Non-Thesis Options. The requirements of the specialty track include a minimum of 30 semester credit hours, at least half of which must be at the 6000 level or above. Course work includes the following:

A) The four required "core" courses (12 credit hours). Students receive an independent learning experience in the core by completing a research study in each of the 12 hours of required courses.

- SYA 5625 Proseminar (3 credit hours): Should be taken as early as possible in your program.
- SYA 6126 Social Theory (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6305 Social Research (3 credit hours)
- SYA 6455 Research Analysis (3 credit hours)

B) The following two specialization courses in domestic violence (6 credit hours)

- SYO 6406 Medical Sociology (3 credit hours)
- SYO 6405 Sociology of Health and Illness (3 credit hours)

C) Two of the following restricted electives (6 hours)

- SYD Inequalities in Reproductive Health (3 credit hours)
- SYP 6738 Welfare Policies and Health (3 credit hours)
- SYP Sociology of Alcohol and Health (3 credit hours)
- SYP Sociology of Health and Aging (3 credit hours)
- SYO Food Insecurity and Health (3 credit hours)
- SYO Social Inequalities in Health (3 credit hours)

* D) The thesis option requires:

- Six credit hours of thesis research (SYA 6971)
- Successfully passing a thesis proposal hearing in front of the thesis committee
- Successfully defending the thesis project in front of the thesis committee

E) The non-thesis option requires:

- Program Design and Evaluation (SYA 6657) as a required core. The course requires community-oriented research projects to develop research skills in sociology.
- An additional 3 credit hours of graduate level directed work for applied project.
- An Applied Project

F) For both thesis and non-thesis students no more than 3 hours may be taken in UCF graduate programs outside the Department. Coursework taken outside the Sociology department must be approved by the Graduate Director prior to enrollment.

Under special circumstances, students may enroll in a graduate level Directed Independent Study course or a Directed Independent Research course to fulfill their unrestricted elective course requirements. These courses, like most graduate seminars, require written research reports. Enrollment in an Independent Study/Research

course requires written approval from the student's advisor. No more than 6 credit hours of coursework may be taken in a Directed Independent Study or Directed Research course.

E) Non-thesis students may substitute up to 6 hours of their elective course work by completing a graduate practicum/internship (SYA 6946). The practicum must be approved by the student's permanent adviser and the department's Graduate Director.

Satisfactory Academic Performance

Satisfactory performance involves maintaining the standards of academic progress and professional integrity expected in a particular discipline or program. Failure to maintain these standards may result in termination from the program.

Students must earn a grade of "B" (3.0) or better in each of the core required courses (SYA 6126, SYA 5625, SYA 6305, SYA 6455, and SYA 6657 [for non-thesis students]). Courses may be retaken to achieve a better grade; however, students must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 in their plan of study. A program or graduate status GPA below 3.00 at the end of any semester will result in a student being placed on probation. The student is given the next nine hours of their program coursework to improve their GPA to 3.00 or better. While in this status, a student is eligible for tuition support and employment in a graduate position; however, the program may discontinue either of these until the student resolves their status.

Curriculum

Please visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current curriculum for our program.

Timeline for Completion

2-Year Schedule of Course Requirements for Non-Thesis Option

1st Year of Graduate Training

Fall	Spring	Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SYA 6305: Research Methods (3)• SYA 5625: Proseminar (3)• Elective (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SYA 6126: Sociological Theory (3)• SYA 6455: Research Analysis (3)• SYA 6657: Program Design and Evaluation (3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Optional Semester
Semester Total: 9 credit hours	Semester Total: 9 credit hours	

2nd Year of Graduate Training

Fall	Spring
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approved Elective• Applied Project

Other

Graduate study is a rewarding and challenging experience. Although an exact timetable for graduation depends on outside commitments and responsibilities, the Graduate program is organized around a two-year cycle for degree completion. A supervised practicum is available to help students combine their graduate work with a career interest. Many classes are taught in the evening to accommodate a working student population. Because graduate education demands a great deal of individual initiative, students should give their graduate work high priority and organize their resources toward graduation.

Master's Program Course listing (5000 and 6000 level only): catalog.ucf.edu/content.php?catoid=4&navoid=241.

Thesis Requirements

Students may enroll in thesis hours and begin work on their thesis after they have completed the four core courses and their thesis advisory committee has been approved by the department and the College of Sciences. The permanent advisor will chair the thesis committee and assume primary responsibility in directing the student's research. When a topic has been selected, students, in conjunction with their thesis chair, will develop a thesis proposal. Copies of the proposal will be routed to members of the thesis committee and a proposal hearing scheduled. Once the proposal has been approved, and when appropriate, the research instrument has been referred to the Institutional Review Board for approval, a timetable for the completion of the thesis will be developed and work may begin.

University Dissertation Requirements

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for dissertation formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more. A step-by-step completion guide is also available on [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) Site.

All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Your program or college may have other earlier deadlines; please check with your program and college staff for additional deadlines.

The following requirements must be met by dissertation students in their final term:

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final dissertation document by final submission deadline

Students must format their dissertation according to the standards outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#). Formatting questions or issues can be submitted to the Format Help page in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services](#) site. The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [Workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures.

The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at editor@ucf.edu.

Thesis Committee Composition

A master student's thesis advisory committee must consist of at least three qualified members of the Sociology graduate faculty and be approved by the College of Sciences and the College of Graduate Studies. Prior to the thesis proposal hearing and enrollment into SYA 6971 Thesis Research, the student's thesis advisory committee must be reviewed and approved by the College of Sciences and the Graduate College. This form can be found online at sciences.ucf.edu/sociology/undergraduate-students/graduate-2/program-information/.

For more details about the Thesis Committee, please refer to the UCF Graduate Catalog: catalog.ucf.edu/index.php?catoid=4 > Policies > Master's Program Policies > Thesis Requirements > Thesis Advisory Committee Composition

Thesis Document

Students who elect to write a thesis should begin planning their research early in their plan of study. UCF has strict guidelines for the editorial format of the master's thesis. As such, it is of the utmost importance that students who elect to write a thesis become familiar with the University's requirements and deadlines for organizing and submitting the thesis. The Thesis and Dissertation Manual provides guidelines for preparing, formatting and submitting the thesis and can be found in the Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse.

Thesis Defense

The final step toward completion of the master's degree for thesis students is the thesis defense. The Thesis Advisory Committee is responsible for conducting the defense. At least two weeks prior to the defense the thesis should be routed to the committee members for their review. At least two weeks prior to the defense the student will submit the approved defense announcement to the program assistant who will then post the announcement and schedule the room. Generally the format of the defense includes a presentation of the research by the student and questions from the advisory committee. After the presentation and questions the committee will deliberate and, once finished, inform the student of the outcome. The presentation and question part of the defense is generally open to the public; however, committee deliberations are restricted to the members of the Thesis Advisory Committee.

Project Requirements

The nature and implementation of each project will be determined by the student and her/his advisor. The following examples are intended only to illustrate the variety and possibilities of these projects:

- Write a grant proposal for agency.
- Creation of social media sites for agency; presentations made to campus and community groups to highlight agency's services.
- Program evaluation and recommendations for a community group.
- Develop an agency data base using intake and enrollment forms.
- Develop strategies for client follow-up.

Each project will be evaluated by a 3-person non-thesis assessment committee on a pass/no pass basis. Students who pass will be allowed to graduate assuming all other requirements are met.

Graduate Research

Research is a critical component of training in the Sociology graduate program. Students are expected to begin research activities early in their graduate training and to pursue a research agenda throughout their graduate careers. Coursework is designed to promote the integration of conceptual issues, research design, and

knowledge of Sociology, and to provide students with the skills and experience required to conduct empirical research. Active involvement in research throughout graduate training, such as presentation of research at conferences and meetings and manuscript submission to scientific journals, is strongly encouraged of all students.

Sociology faculty are actively engaged in research projects with topics ranging from deviant behavior to occupational culture. Visit our website for examples of the type of research we engage in: www.sciences.ucf.edu/sociology/research/. Periodically we will highlight faculty and student research projects.

- Criminology/Domestic Violence
- Social Inequalities
- Health, Families and Communities
- Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences

Sociology requires competence and sensitivity in dealing with research participants, colleagues, clients, and supervisees. Students are required to uphold the ASA Code of Ethics (www.asanet.org) and have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate behaviors that may compromise their ability to function as sociologists-in-training, and to take steps to address any problems that arise. Researchers in every discipline have a responsibility for ethical awareness as the status of the profession rests with each individual researcher. It is important to be honest and ethical in conducting research as well as in taking classes. The ethical collection and use of information includes, but is by no means limited to, issues of confidentiality, accuracy, relevance, self-responsibility, honesty, and awareness of conflicts of interest.

The University of Arizona's Code of Research Ethics provides our students additional guidelines for responsible practice in research. This code of ethics can be found here: facultygovernance.arizona.edu/sites/facgov/files/code-of-ethics-research.pdf.

Criteria for Dismissal

Students are subject to federal and state laws and local ordinances as well as regulations prescribed by the University of Central Florida and the Florida Board of Governors. The breach or violation of any of these laws or regulations may result in disciplinary action. Breaches of state law, UCF requirements, or program expectations (including satisfactory academic performance) are grounds for dismissal from the plan of study and the university. Detailed conduct regulations and procedures are presented in The Golden Rule Student Handbook (goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Students may be dismissed from the Sociology Master's Program if they violate any of the regulations set forth by the university and the Florida Board of Governors. In addition, the Sociology program requires that students abide by the American Sociological Association code of ethics (asanet.org/). Violation of the ASA code of ethics may result in dismissal from the program. Conduct inappropriate to the profession of Sociology may also result in dismissal.

Human Subjects

All theses and research involving original data collection from human subjects, including surveys, must obtain approval from UCF's independent board, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), prior to starting the research. Graduate students and the faculty that supervise them are required to complete training on IRB policies, so this needs to start well in advance of the research start date. The Online CITI IRB Training Program must also be completed. For access to the training program please visit the Office of Research Website: www.research.ucf.edu > Compliance > IRB > CITI. It is imperative that proper procedures are followed when conducting research on human subjects. In addition, should the nature of the research or the faculty supervision change since the IRB

approval was obtained, then new IRB approval must be sought. Failure to obtain this prior approval will jeopardize receipt of the student's degree.

Office of Research and Commercialization: (research.ucf.edu/) > Compliance > IRB.

Animal Subjects

If the student chooses to conduct research that involves animal subjects, he or she must gain Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval prior to beginning the study. For access to the IACUC submission forms, please visit the Office of Research website: research.ucf.edu/ > Compliance > IACUC > Animal Use Approval Form.

If you have questions regarding human or animal subjects, please contact an IRB Coordinator at 407-823-2901.

Patent and Invention Policy

UCF has three fundamental responsibilities with regard to graduate student research. They are (1) to support an academic environment that stimulates the spirit of inquiry, (2) to develop the intellectual property stemming from research, and (3) to disseminate the intellectual property to the general public. UCF owns the intellectual property developed using university resources. The graduate student as inventor will according to this policy share in the proceeds of the invention. The full policy is available online from the Graduate Catalog: catalog.ucf.edu/index.php?catoid=4 > Policies > General Policies > Patent & Invention Policy.

Faculty Research Projects

Sociology faculty are actively engaged in research projects with topics ranging from deviant behavior to occupational culture. To learn more about the research projects, the Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences, and community partners, please visit the sociology department's website.

Financial Support

The Department of Sociology makes every effort to obtain financial support for graduate students to the extent that funds are available. The primary source of funds is the departmental assistantship. As funds are often limited, financial support cannot be guaranteed to all students, regardless of year in the program or excellence of performance. The Graduate Director in collaboration with the Graduate Committee examines the availability of assistantships and other sources of financial support (e.g., fellowships) each year. Students with qualifying assistantships or university-wide fellowships will receive financial packages that include an assistantship or fellowship stipend, tuition remission, and health insurance. Qualifying fellowships are accompanied by tuition waivers. Qualifying assistantships include single appointments of at least .50 FTE (20 hrs/week) or two appointments of at least .25 FTE (10 hrs/week). Tuition remission is in the form of either tuition waivers or tuition payments that cover in-state (resident) tuition. Non-resident students with financial packages are not charged out-of-state tuition or the non-resident financial aid fee.

Many fellowship deadlines fall very early in the application process. Students interested in fellowship opportunities are encouraged to submit their application materials by the priority deadline.

Additional financial assistance exists in the form of scholarships, federal loans, and Federal Work Study programs. Students should consult the graduate catalog (www.graduate.ucf.edu) or the financial aid office (finaid.ucf.edu) for descriptions and requirements of graduate financial support. The Graduate Director also distributes this information to students via email throughout the year as it becomes available.

In addition to these funding opportunities, the Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences also offers paid positions as telephone interviewers. Interested students are encouraged to speak with the Graduate Director about work possibilities.

Assistantships and Tuition Remissions

Students with assistantships may be assigned to assist a faculty member with teaching- or research-related duties. Assistantship assignments are determined based upon departmental and faculty need. To be employed and to maintain employment in a graduate position, the student must be enrolled full time, maintain good academic standing, and meet all of the training requirements and/or conditions of employment. To be awarded and continue receipt of a tuition remission, the student must be enrolled full time, maintain good academic standing, and either employed in a graduate position (GTA, GRA, GA), receiving a University fellowship, or (if employed off-campus) employed in a position where payment is processed through the College of Graduate Studies.

For complete information about university assistantship and tuition remission, please see the UCF Graduate Catalogue: catalog.ucf.edu/index.php?catoid=4 > Financial Information.

GTA Training Requirements

If the student is hired in the position of Graduate Teaching Associate, Graduate Teaching Assistant or Graduate Teaching Grader, there are training requirements that must be met in order for the contract to be processed. The required training programs are offered by the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) and more information can be found at the following websites: fctl.ucf.edu/ > Events > GTA Programs.

Students who are non-native speakers of English and do not have a degree from a U.S. institution must pass the SPEAK test before they will be permitted to teach as Graduate Teaching Associates (position code 9183) or Graduate Teaching Assistants (position code 9184). The SPEAK test is not required for students who will be appointed as a Graduate Teaching Grader (position code 9187). Additional information including how to register for the test can be accessed through the GTA Information section of the College of Graduate Studies student website.

GTA Performance Assessment

At the completion of each semester the student is employed as a GTA, the student's performance will be evaluated by the faculty adviser. These assessments will be used to review strengths and weaknesses in the student's performance in preparation for future employment. The faculty adviser will provide a written statement of their evaluation and one copy will be placed in the student's file and the other copy will be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and made available to the student.

International Students

Several types of employment are available to international students, including on-campus employment. For more information about the types of employment available to international students, and the requirements and restrictions based on visa-type, please see the International Services Center's website: global.ucf.edu/ > Current Students > Employment.

Graduate Student Associations

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) represents the concerns and interests of graduate students. The GSA also serves to enrich their personal, educational and professional experiences. Visit the GSA website at facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/.

Professional Development

Conference Presentations

Research is a critical component of training in the Sociology graduate program. Students are expected to begin research activities early in their graduate training and to continue a research agenda throughout their graduate career. As a part of this agenda, students should present their research at professional conferences whenever possible. The Sociology Department has a strong presence at several regional professional meetings including the Mid-South Sociological Association (midsouthsoc.org/) and the Southern Sociological Society (southernsociologicalsociety.org/). The American Sociological Association is the major professional association in the discipline and also holds a meeting annually. A list of regional and national meetings can be found on the website of the American Sociological Association (asanet.org/). Professional meetings are also held focusing on specialized areas within the broader discipline of Sociology (e.g., Criminology, Gerontology, Criminal Justice, Environment). Students are encouraged to contact faculty who present at these meetings for more specific information. UCF also hosts a graduate research forum each year. This local event is a wonderful opportunity to gain experience presenting research (see below for more details).

Every year, the Sociology graduate faculty hosts a series of workshops including presentations on professional development activities. Students are encouraged to attend these workshops whenever possible.

Presentation Support

The College of Graduate Studies offers a Graduate Presentation Fellowship that provides funding for master's, specialist, and doctoral students to deliver a research paper or comparable creative activity at a professional meeting. Students must be the primary author and presenter. More information can be found on the Graduate Studies website: graduate.ucf.edu/presentation-fellowship/.

Instructor Training and Development

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. They offer several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

GTA Training (mandatory for employment as a GTA)

This training provides information and resources for students who will be instructors in a two-day workshop. The seminars cover a variety of topics, including course development, learning theories, lecturing, and academic freedom. Those interested in additional training can also attend an optional training session that normally follows the mandatory training.

Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program

This certificate program (12-weeks) consists of group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors. Textbooks and materials are provided.

For more information: fctl.ucf.edu/ > Events > GTA Programs or call 407-823-3544.

In addition to training offered through the FCTL, the Sociology department offers SYA6660: Seminar in Teaching that provides additional training specific to teaching sociology.

Pathways to Success Workshops

Coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies, the Pathways to Success program offers free development opportunities for graduate students including workshops in Academic Integrity, Graduate Grantsmanship, Graduate Teaching, Personal Development, Professional Development, and Research. For more information and how to register, please visit graduate.ucf.edu/pathways-to-success/.

Graduate Research Forum

Sponsored by the College of Graduate Studies, the Graduate Research Forum is an opportunity for students to showcase their research and creative projects and to receive valuable feedback from faculty judges. Awards for best poster and best oral presentation in each category will be given, and all participants will receive recognition. The College of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Student Association invite all UCF students, community, and employers to attend the Graduate Research Forum. For more information, contact: researchweek@ucf.edu.

Graduate Excellence Awards

Each year, the College of Graduate Studies offers graduate students who strive for academic and professional excellence the opportunity to be recognized for their work. The award categories include the following:

Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant – This award is for students who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. (Not intended for students who are instructor of record)

Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching – This award is for students who serve as instructors of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the student's teaching and the academic contributions of those activities.

Award for the Outstanding Master's Thesis – This award recognizes graduate students for excellence in the master's thesis. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's thesis research. Excellence of the master's thesis may be demonstrated by evidence such as, but not limited to: publications in refereed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field. The university award will be forwarded to a national-level competition sponsored by the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) when the thesis discipline corresponds to the annual submission request.

For the nomination process and eligibility criteria, see the College of Graduate Studies: graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/.

Departmental Graduate Excellence Awards

In addition to the awards offered by the University, the Sociology department also offers two graduate excellence awards.

Excellence in Graduate Teaching - This award recognizes graduate students who have taught their own courses. Eligibility is open to any Sociology graduate student who has been an instructor of record for their own course while a student at UCF.

Graduate Student Paper Competition - This award recognizes excellence in a professional paper written by a graduate student. Eligibility is open to any Sociology student who has written a professional paper that goes beyond a term paper for a course.

Other

For information about the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) thesis and dissertation awards, see their website: csgs.org/ > Awards.

For grant-proposal writing resources: uwc.cah.ucf.edu/.

Job Search

Career Services

career.ucf.edu/

Graduate career development issues are unique and include evaluating academic and nonacademic career choices, discussing graduate school effects on career choices, as well as learning, evaluating, and refining networking and interviewing skills. Whatever your needs, the offices of Career Services and Experiential Learning offer services and resources to aid in the career exploration and job search of Master and Doctoral students in every academic discipline.

[The American Sociological Association](http://www.american-sociological-association.org/) is an excellent resource for information on careers in sociology. An employment service and a job bank provide information on positions in the field.

[The Chronicle of Higher Education](http://www.chronicle.com/)'s job page is a resource for finding research and faculty positions in the sociology discipline.

Forms

- [College of Graduate Studies Forms and References](#)
A complete listing of general forms and references for graduate students, with direct links, may be found here.
- [Graduate Petition Form](#)
When unusual situations arise, petitions for exceptions to policy may be requested by the student. Depending on the type of appeal, the student should contact his/her program adviser to begin the petition process.
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)
If a student would like to take advantage of special resources available on another campus but not available on the home campus; for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories and library collections, this form must be completed and approved.

Useful Links

- [Applied Sociology MA](#)
- [College of Sciences](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)
- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
- [Housing, off campus](#)
- [Knights Email](#)
- [Learning Online](#)
- [Library](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [UCF Global](#)
- [University Writing Center](#)

Graduate Faculty

Asterisk = has previous committee experience, which qualifies the person to serve as vice chair

Anthony, Amanda *

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Social Inequalities, Identities, Social Psychology, Culture and Consumption

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Armato, Michael

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

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Carter, J. Scott *

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Racial and Gender Inequality, Attitudinal Measurement, Urban and Regional Subcultures, Race and Politics, Inequality and Education

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Websites: <http://carter.cos.ucf.edu/>

Carter, Shannon *

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Donley, Amy *

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Contact Info: Amy.Donley@ucf.edu

Ford, Jason *

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Prescription Drug Misuse, Alcohol and Other Drug Use, Criminological Theory, Life Course Criminology

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Gay, David *

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Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology
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Sikorska, Elzbieta *

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Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology
Research interests: Social Gerontology, Medical Sociology, Sociology of Organizations, Quality of Life and Care, Successful Aging, Alternative Housing for Older Adults, Hospice/Palliative Care, Medical Education
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Contact Info

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