**Department of Sociology**

**School of Social Sciences and Education**

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**Program Description**

The Master of Arts in Sociology program is an advanced study of human social relations. It requires in depth study of institutional, structural, and historical patterns that govern human social behavior. The scope of study at the graduate level includes micro, macro, and global perspectives. The program is designed for students seeking career advancement, pursuing a career in community college teaching, or preparation for doctoral program. For that reason, the program offers three options or “tracks”: a Thesis Option, a Teaching Option, and a Special Project Option. The program of study is enhanced by opportunities for qualified students to work on campus as a Research Assistant, as Teaching Assistants in the Department or in area community colleges, or work in the community via Internship programs.

The MA in Sociology program has common admission and continuation requirements for all graduate students in the program, but different requirements for course work, advancement to candidacy, and graduation, depending on the graduating option chosen by each student.

**Requirements for Admission**

Admission to the Master of Arts in Sociology program requires that the following minimum criteria be met:

1. Baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university.

2. GPA of 2.5 overall and 3.0 in the major.

3. A satisfactory TOEFL score (a minimum of 550) or 213 on the new conversion scale for International students.

4. In lieu of the minimum score requirements listed in item 2. Above, a student may petition the Sociology Graduate Program Coordinator for an exception.

5. A complete admission and application packet.

**Persons seeking admission to the Master of Arts in Sociology program must:**

1. Complete a CSU graduate admission application online at www.csumentor.com to initiate the application process.

2. In addition to the CSU online application form, prospective students must submit a Departmental Application Form specifically for the MA in Sociology at CSUB. Additional materials that must be included with the Departmental Application Form are:

 Personal letter of intent

 Three (3) letters of recommendation from professionals (Form B may be used)

 Example of writing ability (may be a term paper, senior thesis, research article, etc.)

 Evidence that the university graduate writing requirement has been satisfactorily completed (grade of “C” or higher in an approved writing course or passing score on the GWAR exam). Applicants not completing this university graduate writing requirement in their undergraduate program will be required to do so as part of their graduate program.

3. Send the completed Departmental Application Form and all additional materials to:

Graduate Admissions  
c/o Renee Rugnao  
Office of Admissions & Records 47 SA  
California State University, Bakersfield   
9001 Stockdale Highway  
Bakersfield, CA 93311-1022

If you have any questions, please contact the Sociology Graduate Coordinator, by telephone (661) 654-2368.

The academic calendar at CSUB is a quarter system (Fall, Winter, and Spring Quarters). Students are encouraged to start the graduate program in the Fall Quarter of each academic year. However, the Sociology graduate program will consider applications for Winter and Spring Quarters. The Sociology Graduate Program Coordinator, with the advice of the faculty, will consider all completed applications when they are submitted and will notify the candidate of her/his admission status prior to the commencement of the quarter for which the student has been accepted.

**Classification of Graduate Students**

**Classified Standing**

Students who meet the admissions requirements (above) will be admitted as Classified Graduate Students.

**Conditionally Classified Standing**

Students may be admitted to the graduate program under Conditionally Classified Standing (a requirement for financial aid) following consultation with the Sociology Graduate Program Coordinator and demonstrating an ability and commitment to complete an MA in Sociology. Students admitted to the Sociology MA program under Conditionally Classified Standing will have specified conditions, e.g., successfully completing designated courses, including prerequisite course, passing designated examinations, etc. Upon satisfactory completion of all specified conditions, students will be administratively advanced by the Graduate Program Coordinator to Classified Standing.

**Advancement to Candidacy**

Advancement to Candidacy requires the following:

1. Classified status.

2. Completion of 25-quarter units of graduate work at CSUB applied toward the MA in Sociology, all of which are at the 500-level or above and with a GPA of 3.0 or better.

3. A Thesis Proposal approved by the Thesis Committee and filed with the Department; or a Project Proposal approved by the student’s committee and filed with the Department; or an approved proposal for the Teaching Track Option.

**Graduate Advisor**

It is the student’s responsibility, in consultation with the appropriate faculty members, to choose a graduate advisor, choose an MA track or fields of study, and organize a thesis or examination committee leading to Advancement to Candidacy.

**Academic Advising**

Until an advisor is selected, the Graduate Program Coordinator will serve as interim advisor. Upon admission, however, the student should select an advisor as soon as possible. Failure to select an advisor may result in the Graduate Program Coordinator assigning the student an advisor.

**Transfer of Credit**

Students may transfer up to 13.5-quarter units (9 semester units) of credit from another school.

**Continuation**

Continuation in the program is dependent upon the following:

1. The maintenance of a GPA of 3.0 or higher for all graduate work at CSUB.

2. Achieving no grade less than a “C” (2.0) in any course applied to the MA in Sociology, and no more than one course with a grade of “C” (2.0) will be accepted toward the MA in Sociology.

3. Continuous enrollment (being registered for credit-bearing study for three out of four consecutive academic quarters). Students who have not completed all requirements for the thesis must register every quarter.

4. Students failing to meet these stipulations may be dropped from the program. To re-enter, a student will be required to apply for re-admission to the program.

5. Prior to completion of 20 units, a student must complete the following:

a. Select an advisor, form a committee (of at least three faculty members), and file the completed and approved “Declaration of Committee” form (www.csub.edu/Sociology/) with the Department.

b. File an approved “Requirements and Plan of Study” (www.csub.edu/Sociology/) with the Department.

6. Graduate students who have completed all required coursework for their master’s degree, but still need additional time to complete their thesis may maintain “continuous enrollment” by registering for SOC 700 through Extended University.

**Graduation**

Only classified students who have met the following requirements are eligible for graduation.

1. Completion of the requirements listed in the Plan of Study.

2. GPA of 3.0 or better in graduate work at CSUB applied toward the MA in Sociology. No more than one course with a grade of “C” (2.0) will be accepted toward the MA in Sociology.

3. Completion of all culminating experience requirements as stipulated under the Thesis or Non-Thesis options, below.

4. All requirements for the MA in Sociology must be completed before the student may participate in graduation ceremonies.

**Requirements for the Master of Arts in Sociology**

The Department of Sociology offers three tracks for the MA in Sociology: the Thesis Option, the Teaching Option, and the Special Project Option. Three courses are required of all Masters students (BEHS 500, 501 and SOC 502) with the remaining units being comprised of course work established in the Plan of Study developed by the student and his/her committee. Only five independent study units can be applied to the student’s Plan of Study.

Research for the master’s thesis or project that involves data from/about human subjects may be required to be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research (IRB/HSR). For additional details, see page 197.

**Requirements for the MA in Sociology-Thesis Option** (45 total units)

1. **Required Course Work** (15 units)

BEHS 500, 501, SOC 502

2. **Elective Course Work** (21 units)

These units, 10 of which must be at the 500-level and the remaining at the 400-level or above, will be selected based on the advice and recommendation of the student’s advisor and faculty committee.

3. **Thesis Experience** (9 units)

SOC 695

May be taken over several quarters and must be devoted to the following sequential activities:

a. Write and submit a thesis prospectus for Thesis Committee approval. This prospectus must include thesis objectives, proposed literature review, proposed methodology, and predicted findings.

b. Once the prospectus is approved, thesis work up to and including the successful defense of the thesis.

**Requirements for the MA in Sociology-Teaching Option** (50 total units)

1. **Required Course Work** (25 units)

BEHS 500, 501, SOC 502, 597, 598, 693

In addition, all students will be required to serve as a teaching assistant for a lower division sociology class at CSUB for which they will not earn any academic credit.

2. **Elective Coursework** (25 units)

These units, 10 of which must be at the 500-level or above, will be selected based on the advice and recommendation of the student’s advisor and faculty committee.

3. **Culminating Experience in Teaching Sociology** (4 units)

SOC 693

Students must prepare and satisfactorily complete the following:

a. Detailed syllabi for two sociology classes, one of which must be an introductory sociology class and the other a course agreed upon with the student’s advisor.

b. A detailed list of books and reading materials that could be used in the two classes above.

c. A detailed outline of tests, paper topics and guidelines, homework exercises and other items by which students that are enrolled in the above mentioned classes might be evaluated.

d. A research paper on a topic of relevance to the elective class.

e. A sample class lecture on the same topic open to faculty and students-at-large.

**Requirements for the MA in Sociology-Special Project Option** (50 total units)

1. **Required Course Work** (20 units)

BEHS 500, 501, SOC 502, 694

2. **Elective Course Work** (30 units)

These units, 15 of which must be at the 500-level or above, must be approved by the student’s advisor and faculty committee.

3. **Culminating Experience**

There are two ways to meet the culminating experience requirement for the MA in Sociology-Special Project Option, both of which occur by taking for credit, no-credit SOC 694, under the supervision of the student’s advisor and faculty committee.

4. **Agency-Based Project**

a. Submit for approval to the student’s faculty committee a prospectus for the Proposed Project, which shall include a description of the intended project, its objectives, methods that will be used, the scholarly literature that will be consulted, and the timetable proposed for all stages of the project.

b. Present and defend a Final Report on the project to the student’s faculty committee in a meeting open to faculty and students-at-large.

5. **Mastery of Two Areas of Sociology**

a. Submit for approval to the student’s faculty committee a prospectus for two area papers, which shall include the identification of the two areas of sociology for which the student intends to demonstrate mastery. Two lists of proposed readings and a timetable for the preparation, writing, and submission of each area paper are required.

b. The student takes an examination on each area by his/her faculty committee in a meeting open to the faculty and students-at-large.