SOCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL RESEARCH — PH.D.

Program director
Larry Ortiz

The mission of the Social Policy and Research Program is to extend the distinctive principles of whole person care beyond the individual to include the care of communities and social institutions. The program’s emphasis on an integrative approach to an advanced curriculum in social science, social policy, Christian ethics, and social research provides students with the theoretical and methodological knowledge and professional skills needed to conduct innovative and interdisciplinary research. Graduates of the program are prepared for advanced administrative and research roles in national and international health and human services, policy development and analysis, and education. Graduates of the Loma Linda University Social Policy and Social Research Program will demonstrate:

- Ability to integrate advanced concepts from social science theories, social ethics, and philosophy.
- Ability to utilize critical thinking to distinguish between the moral, ethical, and political differences that affect policies and their consequences.
- Understanding of the conceptual and analytical requirements of policy analysis through the integration of behavioral, political, economic, and social frameworks for understanding human conditions.
- Understanding of the process of defining policy problems, establishing criteria for policy choices, mapping alternative strategies, and applying appropriate analytical and research methods to policy questions.
- Ability to independently define research problems and formulate appropriate questions and hypotheses.
- Understanding of the rationale for particular qualitative and quantitative research methods, and ability to select appropriate strategies for independent research and/or evaluation.
- Competence in utilizing different methods of collecting, recording, analyzing, and interpreting data.

Policy and research specialization

Students admitted to the program have demonstrated evidence of policy and research interests that are compatible with the areas of expertise supported by program faculty. Information regarding faculty areas of expertise is available by contacting the program director. During the first year of study, students further define their interests through advisement. During the second year of study, after passing a comprehensive examination, students are assigned a research mentor who guides them in the development of an individualized program of applied research and policy activities. An applied research product is the result of this year-long activity. This applied activity provides the experience needed for beginning the dissertation process.

During the third year of the program, students are assigned a dissertation committee chair with whom they work closely to develop and defend a dissertation proposal following University guidelines. During the final year of study, students actively engage in dissertation research, culminating in the successful defense of their dissertation.

Combined degrees

Students interested in completing a combined degrees curriculum with social policy and social research and bioethics or social policy and social research and social work should refer to the Combined Degrees Programs section of the CATALOG or contact the Department of Social Work and Social Ecology directly.

Admissions

In addition Loma Linda University (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#admissionrequirementstext) admission requirements, admission to the program is governed by the policies and procedures established by the School of Behavioral Health (http://llucatalog.llu.edu/behavioral-health/#generalregulationstext). Admission requirements include:

1. Master’s degree from an accredited institution of higher education. Examples would include such disciplines as social work (M.S.W.), nursing (M.S.), business (M.B.A.), public health (M.P.H.), education (M.Ed.), and theology (M.Div.).
2. Evidence of adequate academic preparation in graduate education. This includes a minimum cumulative G.P.A. of 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) for graduate/postgraduate work.
3. Strong intellectual abilities, including background in social sciences and statistics.
4. Evidence of research and policy interests that are compatible with the specialized emphases supported by the program faculty.
5. Professional experience and achievement that demonstrate the competence, motivation, organization, and leadership to complete doctoral education in a timely manner.
6. Personal interview.
7. Sample of writing in the form of a published article, academic or professional paper prepared for a research purpose, or an essay prepared for admission to the program.
8. Satisfactory performance on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
9. Curriculum vitae or other description of education and employment history.
10. Three letters of recommendation (including one from an academic source and one from a work supervisor.)

In addition to the above criteria, the application process for the Ph.D. degree in Social Policy and Social Research utilizes a pooled application process by which the top candidates meeting the admissions criteria are selected. The number of new candidates admitted each year ranges from three-to-four students, depending on the total number of students completing the program and the program’s ability to support potential candidates in their area of interest.

Program requirements

Social science theory and policy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 600</td>
<td>Colloquium</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 610</td>
<td>Diversity Theory in Practice and Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 613</td>
<td>Social Science Concepts I</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 614</td>
<td>Social Science Concepts II</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 615</td>
<td>Economic Theory and Social Policy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 656</td>
<td>Organizational Theory and Policy</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 658</td>
<td>Methods of Policy Analysis and Research</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Religion

SPOL 615 Economic Theory and Social Policy

SPOL 656 Organizational Theory and Policy

SPOL 658 Methods of Policy Analysis and Research

SPOL 600 Colloquium

SPOL 610 Diversity Theory in Practice and Research

SPOL 613 Social Science Concepts I

SPOL 614 Social Science Concepts II

SPOL 615 Economic Theory and Social Policy

SPOL 656 Organizational Theory and Policy

SPOL 658 Methods of Policy Analysis and Research
Students must pass a comprehensive examination consisting of three separate tests in: Social Concepts, Statistical Analysis, and Statistical Methods. Concepts and Analysis are sit down exams, administered at the completion of the core curriculum (typically during the Autumn Quarter of the second year of the full-time curriculum). The Methods examination consists of submission of a publishable paper after students have completed SPOL 673, typically following the conclusion of the second year of full time study.

Concept Paper
Prior to the beginning of SPOL 681, Dissertation Proposal I, students submit to the Doctoral Faculty a short concept paper, 3 to 5 pages, briefly describing their plan for dissertation research.

Candidacy
Students must successfully complete:

1. required course work,
2. the comprehensive examination,
3. the applied research requirements, and
4. the defense of the dissertation proposal before advancing to candidacy.

Dissertation
The Ph.D. degree candidacy is spent in full-time dissertation research, culminating in the successful defense of the completed dissertation. Dissertation research for Ph.D. degree candidates follows University guidelines. Details regarding these requirements can be obtained from the program director.

Normal time to complete the program
5 years based on full-time enrollment; part time permitted

Courses
SPOL 588. Special Topics in Social Policy and Social Research. 1-5 Units.
Reviews current knowledge and/or research methodologies in specified areas of social policy and social research.

SPOL 599. Independent Study. 1-8 Units.
Limited to Ph.D. degree students who wish to pursue independent investigations in social policy and/or social research under the direction of a department faculty member.

SPOL 600. Colloquium. 1 Unit.
Provides students with an academic seminar to explore and discuss relevant topics in the field of social policy and social research.

SPOL 610. Diversity Theory in Practice and Research. 3 Units.
Contemporary theories of diversity examined from a critical perspective that also includes intersectionality. Opportunity to apply these theories using a cultural humility framework for engaging diverse populations in policy practice and research.

SPOL 613. Social Science Concepts I. 4 Units.
Part one of a two-part sequence. Reviews key theories, writers, conceptual frameworks, and seminal ideas from social science at-large (economics, sociology, psychology, geography, political science, social work) that have laid the foundation for contemporary social policy analysis and social research—particularly applied social science. Students expected to read a wide selection of material under faculty guidance; and extract concepts, tools, methods, and applications useful to social policy analysis or practice. Multiple faculty and guests lead in the discussion and reading, as well as critique writing.

SPOL 614. Social Science Concepts II. 4 Units.
Part two of a two-part sequence. Reviews key theories, writers, conceptual frameworks, and seminal ideas from social science at-large (economics, sociology, psychology, geography, political science, social work) that have laid the foundation for contemporary social policy analysis and social research—particularly applied social science. Students expected to read a wide selection of material under faculty guidance; and to extract concepts, tools, methods, and applications useful to social policy analysis or practice. Multiple faculty and guests lead in the discussion and reading, as well as in critique writing.

Prerequisite: SPOL 613.
SPOL 615. Economic Theory and Social Policy. 4 Units.
Provides an introductory grounding in the basic ideas and concepts of macroeconomics and applies them to understanding current and recent developments in social policy. Students learn to evaluate macroeconomic conditions—such as unemployment, inflation, growth, and income distribution—and gain understanding of how such conditions impact the provision of health and human services.

SPOL 654. Research Methods I. 4 Units.
Advanced quantitative research methods. Emphasizes experimental and quasi-experimental designs, and examines specific methodologies used in conducting research in the area of health and human services. Topics include measurement issues, research design, sampling, and statistical interpretation. Addresses survey research, time-series designs, and more advanced techniques.

SPOL 655. Research Methods II. 4 Units.
Advanced course in qualitative and mixed research methods. Emphasizes selected qualitative and mixed research methodologies specific to social policy and clinical and health services research. Topics covered include theoretical bases for conducting qualitative research; research design; data gathering, including interviewing, observation, archival and historical research, and data analysis and writing. Introduces various methods for integrating qualitative and quantitative methodologies.

SPOL 656. Organizational Theory and Policy. 3 Units.
Explores the complexities of large organizations; how organizations are born, evolve, and survive. Examines bureaucratic systems, formal and informal structures, communication patterns, and philosophical approaches that influence effectiveness and efficiency of services delivery. Implications of these on the development and implementation of social policies explored.

SPOL 658. Methods of Policy Analysis and Research. 4 Units.
Examines approaches to policy analysis and assesses the strengths and limitations of various methods. Explores a range of theoretical frameworks and analytical methods used for understanding and analyzing contemporary policy challenges. Addresses ethical issues and the role of values in shaping analysis. Incorporates the empirical methods used to support policy analysis and structure policy research.

SPOL 664. Applied Research for Social Policy. 2 Units.
Provides students with a series of formal exercises simulating primary applied social research strategies used in the development of social policy. Explores the contributions of social research to social policy through studies of public records and data bases; clinical contexts; social experimentation; program planning, development, and evaluation; and action research.

SPOL 671. Applied/Structured Research I. 2-4 Units.
Provides students the opportunity to advance knowledge and skills in a specialized area of study. Part of a year-long sequence that culminates in an applied research product at the end of SPOL 673. Research mentor develops with the student a plan for the year, with objectives for each quarter. Research plan approved by the Program Committee. Evaluation based on accomplishment of quarterly objectives.

SPOL 672. Applied/Structured Research II. 2-4 Units.
Provides students the opportunity to advance knowledge and skills in a specialized area of study. Part of a year-long sequence that culminates in an applied research product at the end of SPOL 673. Research mentor develops with the student a plan for the year, with objectives for each quarter. Research plan approved by the Program Committee. Evaluation based on accomplishment of quarterly objectives.

SPOL 673. Applied/Structured Research III. 2-4 Units.
Provides students the opportunity to advance knowledge and skills in a specialized area of study. Part of a year-long sequence that culminates in an applied research product at the end of SPOL 673. Research mentor develops with the student a plan for the year, with objectives for each quarter. Research plan approved by the Program Committee. Evaluation based on accomplishment of quarterly objectives.

SPOL 681. Dissertation Proposal I. 2 Units.
Development of the dissertation proposal. Research advisor develops with the student mutually agreed-upon objectives. Evaluation based on accomplishment of these objectives.

SPOL 682. Dissertation Proposal II. 2 Units.
Development of the dissertation proposal. Research advisor develops with the student mutually agreed-upon objectives. Evaluation based on accomplishment of these objectives. Prerequisite: SPOL 681.

SPOL 683. Dissertation Proposal III. 2 Units.
Development of the dissertation proposal. Research advisor develops with the student mutually agreed-upon objectives. Evaluation based on accomplishment of these objectives. In addition, student must successfully defend a dissertation proposal according to program and Faculty of Graduate Studies guidelines. Prerequisite: SPOL 681, SPOL 682.

SPOL 697. Research. 4,8 Units.
Credit for dissertation research. Total of 20 units required. May be repeated for credit.

SPOL 699. Dissertation. 4-12 Units.
Should be taken during the last quarter of registration prior to completion and defense.