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. Further, graduates of the 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 should 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. Years one and two are largely composed of course work and comprehensive examinations. Upon completing required course work, students engage in the development of an individualized program of applied research and policy activities directed by a faculty member. An applied research product, usually a publishable paper, is the result of a year-long activity and often serves as the third comprehensive examination.

After completing all required course work and passing three comprehensive examinations, students choose a dissertation committee chair and committee with whom they work closely to develop and defend a dissertation proposal—following University guidelines. Upon successful defense of the proposal students are admitted to candidacy and actively engage in dissertation research, culminating in the successful defense of their dissertation. Consistent with Faculty of Graduate Study policy, the department requires a two-publication dissertation. More information is available from the program director.

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

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 600</td>
<td>Colloquium</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPOL 610</td>
<td>Diversity Theory in Practice and Research</td>
<td>3</td>
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<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>
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<tr>
<td>SPOL 656</td>
<td>Organizational Theory and Policy</td>
<td>3</td>
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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 PhD 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

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 588</td>
<td>Special Topics in Social Policy and Social Research (Statistical Analysis Practicum) 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPOL 654</td>
<td>Research Methods I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPOL 655</td>
<td>Research Methods II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 501</td>
<td>Advanced Statistics I</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 502</td>
<td>Advanced Statistics II</td>
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<td>PSYC 503</td>
<td>Advanced Multivariate Statistics</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFTH 601</td>
<td>Statistics I</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFTH 602</td>
<td>Statistics II</td>
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<tr>
<td>MFTH 603</td>
<td>Statistics III</td>
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<tr>
<td>STAT _</td>
<td>Advanced Course in statistics or methods</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Under the guidance of faculty, students collectively conceptualize and analyze a research question from a data set. A scholarly product is a required outcome.</td>
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Noncourse requirements

Comprehensive examination
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.
SPOL 615. Economic Theory and Social Policy. 4 Units.
Provides the basic ideas and concepts of macroeconomic theory and applies them to understanding current and recent developments in social policy. Students learn to evaluate macroeconomic conditions—such as unemployment, inflation, growth wages, 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 social policy and social research. 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 654. 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 665. Statistical Practicum Seminar. 2 Units.
Students collectively conceptualize and analyze a research question from a data set. Requires a scholarly product outcome.

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 objective(s).

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. 1-6 Units.
Credit for dissertation research. Total of 18 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.