



Social Science Methods Certificate Program Handbook

Welcome

Mission Statement

The Social Science Methods Certificate Program aims to expand the breadth and depth of methodological training available to UNLV graduate students in the social sciences. The Certificate Program provides advanced interdisciplinary methodological training for graduate students in relevant disciplines. This program encompasses the full range of empirical social science methods and is interdisciplinary by design. Students will gain a broad understanding of the role and forms of method and methodology in the social sciences. Students will gain expertise in the methods most relevant to their research, both in and outside their discipline. An interdisciplinary perspective is emphasized, allowing students the opportunity to make connections with and draw upon the methods and methodologies of other social science traditions. The Certificate Program offers a certification for UNLV graduate students who complete 15 credit hours of advanced graduate research methods courses in the social sciences, at least three credits of which are taken outside of their home department. The Certificate Program is housed in the College of Liberal Arts, but participation is open to graduate students in other UNLV colleges.

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to provide program specific information that is not found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Students are responsible for understanding and following the policies and procedures delineated in this document and the UNLV Graduate Catalog, as well as the NSHE Code, UNLV Bylaws, and the UNLV Student Conduct Code. Questions about policies should be directed to the Graduate College: valarie.burke@unlv.edu or kendall.hartley@unlv.edu.

College Graduate Faculty

A current listing of the graduate faculty can be found in the UNLV Graduate Catalog. Faculty must hold either associate or full graduate faculty status to be involved in graduate education at UNLV. For up to date information regarding graduate faculty status in your department, visit the [Graduate Faculty status web page](#).

Program Information

Certificate in Social Science Research Methods

Contact Information

<https://www.unlv.edu/liberalarts/ssmc>

Certificate Coordinator

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Program Requirements

Program requirements regarding **admission, coursework and culminating experience** are found in the graduate catalog.

Admission Requirements

Applications are available on the [UNLV Graduate College Website](#), along with **application deadlines**.

To be admitted to the program, students must:

1. be admitted to a masters or doctoral program at UNLV for which social science research methods are an appropriate tool of inquiry.
2. have earned at least a B+ in an approved research methods course or equivalent prior to admission to the program.
3. submit a completed application and the required application fee.
4. submit a proposed plan of study that has been approved by the home department's graduate coordinator.

Plan requirements

Completion of the Certificate Program requires 15 credits to be distributed as follows:

1. Core Discipline Methods Coursework I (3 credits). Choose one of the following:
 - a. ANTH 790
 - b. COM 710
 - c. CRJ 702
 - d. ECO 770
 - e. PAF 710
 - f. PSC 701
 - g. PSY 707
 - h. PUA 721
 - i. SOC 701
2. Core Discipline Methods Coursework II (3 credits). Choose one of the following:
 - a. ANTH 770
 - b. COM 712
 - c. CRJ 703
 - d. ECO 772
 - e. PAF 711
 - f. PSC 702
 - g. PSY 708
 - h. PUA 723
 - i. SOC 702
3. Elective Methods Courses (6 credits). Complete 6 credits of advisor-approved methods course electives.
4. Outside Department Methods Course Elective (3 credits). Complete 3 credits of advisor-approved methods course electives from outside the home department.

GPA Requirement

The grade point average for all courses counted toward the Certificate requirements must be at least 3.00. No grades lower than a B- are counted toward the Certificate requirements.

Proposed Plan of Study

As part of the admissions process, Certificate students must submit a proposed plan of study that has been approved by the home department's Graduate Coordinator. Any changes to the proposed plan of study must have prior approval of the Certificate Coordinator.

Certificate Program Benchmarks

The Plan of Study

One of the key components of the Certificate Program is the Plan of Study. When the student applies for the program, a Proposed Plan of Study (PPS) form must be submitted. The student and their advisor should take care in assembling this PPS. The Certificate Program website has a list of courses that may be relevant to the student's research methods training needs. This list is not intended to be inclusive. When developing the PPS, the student and their advisor should consider the following points:

1. The "Core Discipline Methods Coursework I" requirement will typically be the required introductory methods/research design course. The student should already have completed this course by the time they apply to the program.
2. The "Core Discipline Methods Coursework II" requirement will typically be another required introductory course in the student's graduate program.
3. The "Elective Methods Courses" should be selected so that they do *not* duplicate the material covered in the Core Discipline Methods Coursework I & II requirements. The intention here is to use electives for advanced courses. These may be courses in the student's home department.
4. The "Outside Department Methods Course Elective" must be taken outside of the student's home department. The list of relevant courses on the Certificate Program website may be helpful in identifying possible outside electives. *However*, please note that these courses often require very specific prerequisites. Enrollment in courses outside of a student's home department will likely require the permission of the instructor. Please note that this is up to the discretion of the instructor. The student may be asked to demonstrate competency prior to admission.
5. The PPS is intended to be the student's roadmap for the Certificate Program. However, many circumstances can result in the need to make adjustments in the Plan of Study. Students should simply consult with their advisors and submit a revised plan of study should such circumstances arise.

Methods Training From Outside UNLV

There are a number of highly reputable programs outside UNLV that provide advanced social science methods training. An important example of such a program is the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). Each summer, the ICPSR offers a number of high quality social science methods courses through their Summer Program. Programs like these often allow students to arrange with their home institutions to obtain academic credit for their work at the external program. Should students wish to use ICPSR (or other reputable program) credits to fulfill elective credits for the Certificate Program, it is necessary that these credits be transferred to UNLV. This may involve a UNLV faculty member conducting an independent study or directed readings course with the student, where the faculty member will evaluate the student's work for the external program and assign credit UNLV credit. If a student wishes to pursue an option like this, the home department Graduate Coordinator should contact the Certificate Coordinator to discuss the options.

Social Science Methods Colloquium Participation

The Social Science Methods Certificate Program will be sponsoring a Colloquium Series. The Colloquium Series will consist of several presentations each year by affiliate faculty members, invited speakers, and Certificate Program students. Although participation is not required, students are strongly encouraged to present their research at the Colloquium. Each year, the Certificate Coordinator will give Certificate Program students an opportunity to sign up for a presentation slot. These presentations may be co-sponsored by other departments, colleges, units, or speaker series.

Professional Code of Ethics/Discipline Guidelines

UNLV Graduate College policy regarding academic integrity can be found in the graduate catalog.

The Certificate Program has high expectations of its students, among which are adherence to standards of integrity. Students are expected to do their own work, oral and written, honestly. To this end, students should be familiar with the statement on the subject in the Graduate Catalog.

UNLV also requires all members of the university community to be familiar with the honor code and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. Students are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. UNLV will neither protect nor defend students nor assume any responsibility for violations of fair use laws. To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, visit the UNLV copyright Web page. <https://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>

One aspect of integrity is providing adequate citations in written work. The Certificate Program does not have one required format for citations, although professors may impose such a requirement in their courses.

Additional Program Information

Forms and Deadlines

All of the forms listed below are available on the Graduate College website or the Certificate Program website. For an up-to-date list of deadlines, see the Graduate College website.

1. Proposed Plan of Study—before admission

University Resources

Academic Success Center The goal of the Academic Success Center is to help students do well academically and complete their studies on time. They offer or will refer you to such programs and resources as tutoring, advising, skills testing, career exploration and more. They guide students every step of the way to the many established resources created to ensure they complete their educational goals. Learn more about the programs and services the center currently offers.

Alumni Association

With an alumni base 90,000 strong, the UNLV Alumni Association offers a variety of services and opportunities in support of alumni and their families. UNLV alumni are encouraged to support the values of higher learning through advocacy, involvement, and giving.

Commencement Office Located in the UNLV Registrar's Office, the commencement office is the last step in the graduation process. Please check with the commencement office for information on the commencement ceremony and your diploma; for all other information about graduate student degree completion and graduation, including thesis/dissertation requirements and doctoral hooding, please contact the Graduate College.

Office of Diversity Initiatives

The vision of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to advocate, promote, and support the advancement of equity, inclusiveness, and empowerment of a continuously changing collegiate and global community. The mission of the Office of Diversity Initiatives is to provide leadership and support for UNLV's diversity mission: *to nurture equity, diversity, and inclusiveness that promotes respect, support, and empowerment*. This Office also handles UNLV Title IX questions, inquiries, and reporting.

Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The DRC is committed to supporting students with disabilities at UNLV through the appropriate use of advocacy, accommodations, and supportive services to ensure access to campus courses, services, and activities. The DRC is the university-designated office that determines and facilitates reasonable accommodations in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Graduate students with disabilities must disclose to the DRC in order to receive appropriate accommodations.

Office of International Student and Scholars

International Students and Scholars (ISS) ensures compliance with both SEVIS (Student and Exchange Visitor Information System) and federal law, so that the university can continue to be authorized by the U.S. federal government to enroll international students; host and hire international scholars; assist and advise employment eligibility and authorization relating to international students and scholars, and visa, travel, and immigration issues; provide critical and specialized services to the international students and scholars of the UNLV community; and facilitate their transition to the campus and the U.S.

Jean Nidetch Women's Center

The Jean Nidetch Women's Center is committed to creating a supportive and inclusive environment for all genders through programming, services, and advocacy for the UNLV community. The Women's Center has informational resources, brochures, and flyers for a variety of on and off campus organizations to help empower and protect yourself, and learn about your options. They also provide free tampons, pads, and condoms.

UNLV Libraries

UNLV Libraries has always been more than books; they are about encouraging students and creating quality programs that elevate growth and learning. Please visit their website for important information about the services they offer to graduate students.

Graduate & Professional Student Association (GPSA)

The Graduate & Professional Student Association serves all currently enrolled University of Nevada, Las Vegas graduate and professional students. The GPSA maintains the Graduate Student Commons located in the Lied Library room 2141. The facility a working office equipped with a copier, fax, flatbed scanners, color laser printer, office supplies, and computers with printers and a small kitchen area. The GPSA is the graduate student governance body at UNLV; the GPSA Council consists of one graduate student representative from each graduate department, and they meet monthly. The GPSA also provides volunteer opportunities, sponsors social events, and supports graduate student research through the graduate research and travel grants program.

Office of Student Conduct

The Office of Student Conduct is a student-centered, service-oriented office located within the Division of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Conduct collaborates with the UNLV community to provide an inclusive system through enforcement of the *UNLV Student Code of Conduct* by:

- Promoting awareness of student rights and responsibilities;
- Establishing accountability for student choices;
- Creating opportunities for involvement in the process; and
- Striving to uphold the values and ethics that advance the common good.

Office of Veteran Services

The UNLV Office of Veteran Services is staffed with veterans and GI Bill-experienced staff to assist more than 1,000 veterans, dependents, active duty service members, National Guard members, and reservists. Their mission is to develop a welcoming, veteran-friendly campus environment that fosters academic and personal success.

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office

The Financial Aid & Scholarships Office supports higher-education access and persistence by providing financial aid to eligible students. The office partners with student organizations, the UNLV Foundation, the Graduate College, and other external constituents to provide financial aid learning opportunities and scholarship support for graduate students.

Writing Center

This is a free service to UNLV students to help you with any writing project, from papers to creative writing, to resumes, and we can work with you at any stage of the writing process. The center can help you brainstorm, make an outline, work on your drafts, or just be a soundboard for your ideas. The center staff can assist you in person, or via the Online Writing Lab (OWL) page.

University Policies and Procedures

Graduate students are responsible for knowing and acting in accordance with UNLV Policies and Procedures.

To view the most commonly referenced campus policies and procedures, you can refer to the following websites:

- [Academic Integrity](#)
- [Activation for Military Service](#)
- [Change of Address](#)
- [FERPA/Privacy Rights](#)
- [Health Insurance - Mandatory](#)
- [Jeanne Clery Campus Safety and Security Report](#)
- [Proof of Immunization](#)
- [Policies and Procedures on the Protection of Research Subjects](#)
- [Rebelmail Policy](#)
- [Student Conduct Code](#)
- [Student Computer Use Policy](#)
- [Title IX](#)

To ensure compliance with Graduate College policies and procedures, please review the relevant sections of the [Graduate Catalog](#):

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Academic Policies](#)
- [Admission and Registration Information](#)
- [Degree Progression Policies & Procedures](#)

In addition, the [Graduate College website](#) contains additional information regarding policies and procedures.

Nothing in this handbook supersedes any NSHE, UNLV, or Graduate College policy.

Handbook Information

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Revised by:
Rebecca Gill

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Create handbook for new program