

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 6 – M (1)

DATE: March 28-30, 2017

SUBJECT: SDSU Program Modification – Accelerated Track: MS in Sociology

The Department of Sociology and Rural Studies at South Dakota State University seeks to add an accelerated pathway for undergraduate students to obtain a Master’s degree in Sociology at SDSU (Attachment I). Students would be able to pursue the accelerated coursework under Option A (Thesis), Option B (Research/Design Paper), or Option C (Coursework Only) plans of study. Undergraduate students with conditional acceptance into the Master’s program will complete 12 credits of graduate work which will count toward both the undergraduate and the graduate degree.

Existing Program: Substantive Program Modification

- Sociology (MS) – *Add accelerated pathway*

This request has been reviewed by the system Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Executive Director recommends approval.

DRAFT MOTION 20170328_6-M(1): I move to approve SDSU’s program modification request to add an accelerated pathway option for the M.S. in Sociology program.



**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS
ACADEMIC AFFAIRS FORMS**

Substantive Program Modification Program

| | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| UNIVERSITY: | SDSU |
| CURRENT PROGRAM TITLE: | Sociology (M.S.) |
| CIP CODE: | 45.1101 |
| UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT: | Sociology & Rural Studies |
| UNIVERSITY DIVISION: | Arts & Sciences |

University Approval

To the Board of Regents and the Executive Director: I certify that I have read this proposal, that I believe it to be accurate, and that it has been evaluated and approved as provided by university policy.

Dennis D. Hedge

1/12/2017

Vice President of Academic Affairs or
President of the University

Date

1. This modification addresses a change in (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Total credits required within the discipline | <input type="checkbox"/> Total credits of supportive course work |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Total credits of elective course work | <input type="checkbox"/> Total credits required for program |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Program name | <input type="checkbox"/> Existing specialization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CIP Code | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other: Accelerated Program |

2. Effective date of change: 8/15/2017

3. Program Degree Level (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

Associate Bachelor's Master's Doctoral

4. Category (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

Certificate Specialization Minor Major

5. If a name change is proposed, the change will occur (place an "X" in the appropriate box):

- On the effective date for all students
- On the effective date for students new to the program (enrolled students will graduate from existing program)

Proposed new name: _____

Reminder: Name changes may require updating related articulation agreements, site approvals, etc.

6. Primary Aspects of the Modification (add lines or adjust cell size as needed):

Existing Curriculum

Proposed Curriculum (highlight changes)

| Pref. | Num. | Title | Cr. Hrs. | Pref. | Num. | Title | Cr. Hrs. |
|-------|------|-------|----------|-------|------|---|----------|
| | | | | | | Program Requirements for the M.S. in Sociology Accelerated Option: Undergraduate students with conditional acceptance into the M.S. in Sociology will take <u>12</u> credits of graduate work which will count toward both the | |

| | | | |
|--|-----------|---|-----------|
| | | undergraduate and the graduate degree. Coursework will include: | |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SOC 501 The Research Process (3 cr.) • SOC 504 Sociological Inquiry (3 cr.) • SOC 594 Internship (<i>in the Data Center</i>) (2 cr.) • SOC Elective (3 cr.) (<i>approved by the advisor</i>) • SOC 590 Seminar (<i>Orientation</i>) (1 cr.) | |
| Total number of hours required for degree | | Total number of hours required for degree | |
| Option A | 30 | Option A | 30 |
| Option B | 32 | Option B | 32 |
| Option C | 35 | Option C | 35 |
| Total number of hours required for degree | | Total number of hours required for degree | |
| Option A | 30 | Option A | 30 |
| Option B | 32 | Option B | 32 |
| Option C | 35 | Option C | 35 |

The accelerated Master's program will be available to eligible SDSU students conditionally admitted to the graduate program. Once students complete SOC 501 The Research Process, SOC 504 Sociological Inquiry, SOC 594 Internship, SOC 590 Seminar, and a SOC Elective with B or above grades, and graduate with a Bachelor's degree, they will be fully accepted into the program.

In order to apply, students must:

1. Be enrolled in a Bachelor's degree program in Sociology,
2. Have earned 90 undergraduate credits with a GPA of 3.25 or higher,
3. Meet all degree requirements as stipulated by Regental or University policy,
4. Submit to the Department of Sociology and Rural Studies, a statement of interest identifying how the Master's degree in Sociology will contribute to their academic and career goals,
5. Submit at least two letters of reference regarding his/her ability to participate in the program,
6. Submit a writing sample to the Department of Sociology and Rural Studies,
7. Submit scores for the GRE, and
8. Submit the application for admission to the graduate school.

7. Explanation of the Change:

The Department of Sociology and Rural Studies seeks to add an accelerated pathway for undergraduate students to obtain a Master's degree in Sociology at SDSU. Students would be able to pursue the accelerated coursework under Option A (Thesis), Option B (Research/Design Paper), or Option C (Coursework Only) plans of study. Undergraduate students with conditional acceptance into the Master's program will complete 12 credits of graduate work which will count toward both the undergraduate and the graduate degree. These credits will include SOC 501 The Research Process, SOC 504 Sociological Inquiry, SOC 590 Seminar, SOC 594 Internship, and one additional elective approved by the advisor. Dr. Diane Kayongo-Male is assigned as the dedicated advisor to work with students admitted into the accelerated Master's program starting Fall 17.

Admission to the accelerated program is targeted to students completing a degree in Sociology but is open to students from other disciplines. For these students the 12 credits could be elective credits or part of Sociology Minor. These students must meet the basic requirements including: 3.25 or better GPA, two letters of recommendation for the accelerated program from SDSU faculty or equivalent, a written statement indicating how participation in the program will further their career and personal goals, and submission of writing sample indicating they can work at the graduate level. The faculty will review these applications looking for ability to perform at the graduate level and fit with the department's strengths.

Students will be advised by a dedicated advisor who will meet with them upon acceptance into the program and at least once during each semester they are enrolled in both the Bachelor's and Master's Programs. In addition, students will take the Orientation course where they will work very closely with the instructor to

learn about the requirements for the program, construct a draft plan of study, meet with faculty to determine whose areas of interest match their own, and develop an understanding of how graduate school differs from undergraduate programming. Students will apply to the program prior to the April 15th deadline. If accepted, they will begin graduate courses in the Summer or Fall. Upon completing the coursework required for the accelerated Master's and the system, university, college, and major undergraduate requirements, no later than the following Spring semester, they will receive their undergraduate degree. Students can expect to graduate with their Master's within 5 semesters of being admitted into the accelerated program. To graduate with the Master's Degree, students must complete the requirements for Option A, B or C with an average of a B and pass the oral exam.

Students would first complete two of the required courses and the orientation course offered in summer or fall. They would work with their advisor to identify one additional course for Spring semester and to develop the internship experience. In the second year (first year as a Master's student only), students would complete the required courses and internship, followed by work on the thesis, applied option or complete their coursework and pass their oral exams.

The development of accelerated programs is new but growing phenomena in Sociology as more jobs are available for Master's trained workers with skills in data analysis. Currently, an accelerated option is offered at University of Louisville, George Mason University, University of Maryland, University of Colorado – Colorado Springs, Hunter College, University of Massachusetts, and American University.

The accelerated option is in response to three trends. First, the Education Advisory Board (EAB) and others studying graduate education trends have determined that the growth area in Masters' programs lies in professional Master's programs that are designed to prepare students for specific career opportunities (Understand the Changing Market for Professional Master's Programs, April 2015: <https://www.eab.com/research-and-insights/academic-affairs-forum/studies/2015/understanding-the-changing-landscape-for-professional-masters-programs>). The M.S. in Sociology will focus student effort toward careers related to data management and research and evaluation, all fields that are growing, particularly in occupations related to financial, professional and business services; education; healthcare; and state and local government. Second, the American Sociological Association has also focused on the importance of an applied focus for students pursuing a Master's degree, and indeed, many of the positions available in the field at the Master's level require a strong focus on data analysis (Spalter-Roth & Van Vooren, 2011). Third, the department has identified a strong undergraduate interest in the accelerated option for the M.S. in Sociology. Students will benefit from expedited degree attainment. The change will also situate the program well to pursue accreditation of the Master's program with the Commission on the Accreditation of Programs in Applied and Clinical Sociology.