Honours in Sociology and Social Policy

Our Department offers Honours in two fields: Sociology (available for students with majors in Sociology and/or Social Policy) and Socio-legal Studies. Honours graduates from our Department have gone on to further study – both in Australia and abroad or have used their Honours degree to secure exciting professional employment.

Overview

Honours in our Department is a student-focused experience. After completing two supporting seminars in Semester One, each student works one-on-one with a supervisor to complete a thesis on a topic of the student’s own choosing. Potential thesis topics cover the range of sociology, socio-legal (including criminology) and social policy social policy topics, from the most personal micro-level research on the social networking experience to the broadest macro-level research on globalisation – and everything in between. Theses may be theoretical, qualitatively empirical, quantitatively empirical, or any combination of the three. We go to great lengths to encourage the ambitions of highly motivated students, but we also provide a high level of support to ensure that all students have a positive Honours experience.

Entry requirements

Candidates for admission to Honours in Sociology and Socio-legal studies should have gained an average of 70% or above across 48 senior credit points in the intended subject area/s. Students enrolling in Sociology Honours must have completed SCLG3602 Sociological Theory and Practice.

Students whose bachelor’s degree was undertaken at another university, or students who completed their Bachelor’s degrees at the University of Sydney more than two years ago, should contact one of the Department’s Honours
Coordinators to discuss whether the classes they have taken are equivalent to these prerequisites. Highly motivated students who may not have completed all of the requirements are encouraged to contact one of the Departmental Honours Coordinator for more information about admission.

**Important note:** Meeting the minimum entry requirements does not guarantee you entry into the Honours programme. Honours places can only be granted where there is supervisory capacity. This will usually be determined in consultation with the relevant Honours Co-ordinator.

**Applying for Honours**

The following is a list of documents/ information we would require for an Honours application:

- Proof of citizenship/ residency (not necessary for Domestic internal student if we already have this information in our records)
- Official transcript (if applicant is an external student)
- Proof of contact with Coordinator and evidence a Supervisor is willing to support the research project to be conducted for Honours study
- Submission to the Coordinator of a maximum two-page document outlining the research topic to be undertaken for the Honours thesis, including, but not limited to, engaging with: (i) relevant academic literature; (ii) proposed theories and methods; and (iii) whether ethics clearance will be required and, if so, what issues might arise as a result.
- Subject area (if Honours subject area has not been nominated in the application)

**Seminars**

Honours students register for four seminars:

**Society Honours:**

- SCLG40101 Advanced Sociological Theory – Semester One
- SCLG40102 Advanced Social Science Methodology – Semester One
The heart of the Honours degree is the completion of a research-based thesis of 18000-20000 words. Students design and execute their theses in cooperation with a supervisor assigned by the Department. Students are encouraged to contact potential supervisors in advance, and are invited to request specific supervisors (though it is not always possible to meet such requests). Recent thesis titles include:

- Alternative Dispute Resolution, Indigenous Justice and the “Care Circle” Pilot
- Developing a Generational Model of Youth Engagement in Politics
- Feminism, Sexual Identity and “Raunch” Culture
- The Politics of Queer Manhood
- Sorting Out Autism Spectrum Disorders: Evidence-Based Medicine and the Complexities of the Clinical Encounter

A wide variety of research methods can be used in thesis research. In recent years, students have written theses based in data from interviews, archives, media, surveys, and censuses. Theoretical theses are also possible. The Department of Sociology and Social Policy is broadly open-minded about the kinds of theory, data, and methods that can be used in Honours research.

Thesis Supervision

A condition of entry into Honours is that prospective students seek out an
appropriate member of staff within the Department of Sociology and Social Policy who is willing and able to supervise the research to be undertaken for the Honours thesis. Students can work under the supervision of any member of the academic staff in Department of Sociology and Social Policy, including postdoctoral fellows. Names, research interests, and contact information for these people can be found on the relevant staff pages of the Departmental website.

Click here to link to Academic Staff

**Assessment Criteria and Procedures**

Seminar scores are marked by the respective seminar convenors, while the thesis is marked by 2-3 members of the academic staff (with the advice of the full Honours Examiners' Committee) as described above. Work is marked according to Faculty-wide Honours marking standards. Attendance is expected at all Honours seminars and workshops, and all Honours work is expected to be submitted on time. There is no explicit penalty for non-attendance or late work. Such cases are rare, and are dealt with on a one-by-one basis by the Honours Coordinator and the Departmental Honours Examiners' Committee.

**Contacts**

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