



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY SENIOR HONORS THESIS PROGRAM 2016 - 2017

Fall Sociology H190A * Spring Sociology H190B
Professor Mary Kelsey and Professor Laleh Bebehanian

IMPORTANT NOTICE: There will be **TWO Information Sessions** for the Honors Program:

1. **Friday, April 22, 2016**, from 12:00-1:00 PM in 402 Barrows – this session will feature a panel of students who are currently in the honors program and it will be a great opportunity to find out more about the program, as well as how they came up with their research question and design.
2. **Thursday, May 5, 2016**, from 10:00-11:00 AM in 420 Barrows – this session will touch upon course content and structure for the 2016-2017 honors thesis program. Applicants are strongly encouraged to attend this information session.

WHAT IS THE HONORS THESIS PROGRAM?

The Sociology Senior Honors Thesis Program provides an opportunity for senior sociology majors who are accepted into the program to write an honors thesis. Honors students participate in the year-long Senior Honors Seminar, Sociology H190A (4 units) in the fall and H190B (5 units) in the spring.

Each student conducts an independent research project as part of their participation in the seminar, and writes an honors thesis (minimum 35-page paper of acceptable honors quality). One grade is assigned for 9 credits upon completion of H190B, based primarily on the thesis paper and participation in the course. Sociology H190A fulfills an elective requirement in the major, and H190B fulfills either a seminar or elective requirement. Students earn honors in the sociology major by successfully completing this course and the thesis, as well as maintaining the required 3.5 GPA in the major and 3.3 cumulative GPA.

Sample Honors Thesis Titles include:

- “Dieting Like a Man: Gender Portrayals in Weight Loss Advertisements”
- “The Visible Hand: Ownership Structure and Disciplinary Regimes in the Restaurant”
- “The Consequences of Saving Now and Buying Later: The Consumer Credit Reporting System as a Means of Social Control”
- “Status Group Struggles and Organizational Interests: Understanding Affirmative Action at UC Berkeley”

ENROLLMENT

Sociology H190A/B is offered as two small sections, limited to 15 students each. The Honors Instructors for next year will be Professor Mary Kelsey and Professor Laleh Bebehanian. Both sections will meet on Tuesdays from 12-2pm.

ELIGIBILITY

Applications for the Sociology Senior Honors Program will be accepted from declared sociology majors who have completed at least 75 units and who plan to graduate by or before Fall 2016. Students must have at least a 3.5 major gpa and a 3.3 cumulative gpa at the time of application in order to qualify for admittance to the program. The sociology major gpa needs to include at least four upper division sociology courses completed at UC Berkeley.

SELECTION PROCESS

Admittance into the Senior Honors Thesis Program is determined by a committee, which includes the two instructors. This committee reviews the applications anonymously and decides which students will be admitted to the course. The selection process is based on the information provided in the application and proposal. The committee will consider topic areas, possible research methods, degree of preparation, and clarity of expression in making these decisions. The committee will also decide which section/instructor to assign each admitted student to, usually based on subject and method areas indicated in the proposal.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications for the Sociology Senior Honors Program will be accepted from declared sociology majors during two application periods. The spring application period will admit up to 20 students and during the summer application period we will admit up to 10 students.

The *Spring applications* are due in the Undergraduate Advising Office in 424 Barrows Hall no later than 4PM **Friday, May 20, 2016**. Applications will be reviewed by the committee in mid-June after spring semester grades are posted. Students will be notified by email in early July in time to register for the course during Phase II.

The *Summer application* deadline will be 4PM, **Friday July 29, 2016**. Students planning on applying during the summer application cycle should notify Undergraduate Advisor Cristina Rojas of your intent by **May 20, 2016** so that you can be placed on an interest list. If you wish to be added to this list, please send an e-mail to socadv@berkeley.edu and include your name, phone number, and summer e-mail if different. If you will be eligible to apply to the Honors Program after taking summer session courses, please specify what courses you plan on enrolling in during summer session. Summer applications will be reviewed by the committee as soon as summer session grades are available and students will be notified via e-mail of their status before the first day of instruction in the fall semester.

ABOUT YOUR TOPIC

In preparation for applying to the Honors Thesis Program, we would highly encourage you to do the following:

1. Begin reading works that are related to your research area – it will show or reflect that you have done preliminary research. Reading works in your proposed area of study will help you understand the current issues and trends relating to your topic. A bibliography is a new requirement for the 2016 application process.
2. Be mindful when considering your area of study that your research has to be completed and synthesized within a 9 month period.
3. Review the “Proposal Format” and “Resources” sections on The Office of Undergraduate Research Haas Scholars Program web-site about writing a research proposal. For more information, please visit the following link:

<http://hsp.berkeley.edu/proposal-format-and-policies>
4. Some students may find it helpful to review examples of previous Honors Thesis papers. You may come by 424 Barrows Hall during drop in hours M-F 9-12PM and 1-4 PM to review theses from prior participants in the honors program. Students may not copy or check a thesis out for overnight reading; however students may leave their CallCard and review one thesis at a time within the department.
5. Consider speaking to faculty and/or graduate students about your interest in the honors thesis program. Discussing your potential research project with others, as well as learning how others have identified their own research question, may help you further develop or refine your intended thesis project.



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If you are interested in participating in the Sociology Senior Honors Thesis Program, please complete the following application. Applications must be turned in to 424 Barrows Hall no later than **4 PM Friday, May 20, 2016** for the *Spring Application* deadline, **OR** by 4PM, **Friday July 29, 2016** for the *Summer application* deadline. Electronic submissions will also be accepted to socadv@berkeley.edu. Please refer to the attached description of the honors program for more information about enrollment, eligibility and selection. Be sure to fill out this top page completely.

Name _____ SID# _____

Email Address _____ Phone # _____

Email Address in June and July (if different) _____

Expected Graduation Term & Year _____

On a separate sheet of paper, please address the following questions. Your responses should be typed on a single side of the page. Please type *only* your SID# at the top of each page; **do not put your name anywhere on these pages as applications are read anonymously.**

1) Please explain why you would like to enroll in the Senior Honors Program in Sociology, what role you see the Honors Program playing in your overall program of undergraduate studies, and how you see the Honors Program contributing to your plans for a job or further training after graduation.

2) Please describe two topics and potential research questions that you might pursue as an Honors Thesis project. Describe one in some detail--about one page--and the second one in one or two sentences. [This is not a contract! Many students change their plans. On the other hand, this exercise will help you focus on the commitment that an Honors Thesis entails.]

3) What types of sociological methods have you thought about using in your research for your thesis?

4) What have you done so far that may help you with a thesis in at least one of your topic areas (i.e. related courses, papers, books you've read, methods classes)?

5) Please include a short bibliography (at least 3 sources) with your application