MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE PROGRAM
University of Colorado Denver

Master of Social Science Program Options
Thesis or Project

Both options require a total of 36 semester hours.

1) Thesis Option: SSC 6950
   a) This option requires the submission of a master’s thesis meeting all the guidelines of the Graduate School.
      i) Your Master of Social Science thesis (60-100 pages, double-spaced) can be a theoretical paper, a qualitative
         or quantitative research study, an analysis of particular societal or political events, or an analysis of a
         document, text, or cultural/artistic performance.
      ii) A formal proposal following Master of Social Science Proposal Guidelines must be approved and signed by
          three (3) committee members whom you have selected.
      iii) Your proposal must be submitted to the MH/MSS Director or Assistant Director at the beginning of the
           semester during which you register for your first thesis hour:
               (1) Fall Semester – Proposal due October 1
               (2) Spring Semester – Proposal due February 15
               (3) Summer Semester – Proposal due June 15
           (a) It is highly recommended, however, that you submit your proposal during the prior spring semester if
               you want to begin your thesis during the summer.
      b) No one may proceed with a thesis without a signed proposal.
         i) If you fail to meet the deadline and submit your proposal late, there is no guarantee on the timeliness of
            faculty feedback on either the proposal or any subsequent writing you do that semester.
         ii) Without a signed proposal by the end of the semester during which you register for your first semester of
             thesis hours, you will not be permitted to sign up for a second semester of thesis hours. This will delay your
             theses completion and your date of graduation.
      c) Your proposal must strictly conform to the Master of Social Science Proposal Guidelines posted on the program
         website.
         i) In general, a proposal states and defines a problem or question to be studied, describes methods that will be
            used, and briefly describes general categories of literature as well as specific representative articles and
            books that will be reviewed and utilized in your work.
         ii) The program is designed so that you can complete your proposal as your final assignment in the required
             Readings and Research in Interdisciplinary Social Science course, which should be taken the semester
             before you register for your first thesis credit.
      d) Most students need at least two (2) semesters to complete the thesis or project so plan accordingly.
      e) Note that if your work involves research on human subjects, the University of Colorado Denver Human Research
         Committee must approve your plans before you begin.
      f) You should submit chapters or sections to committee members throughout the semester for feedback.
      g) All students (Track I, Track II, Thesis or Project) must pass a mandatory oral exam, which you are responsible for
         coordinating.
      h) A final draft is due at least three (3) weeks before your intended oral defense date.
         i) Your committee will decide whether or not you are ready to defend and must approve the scheduling of a
            defense.
         ii) Your graduation is subject to delay if you do not meet deadlines.
   i) Faculty Committee
      i) You are responsible for assembling a faculty committee consisting of at least three (3) members.
      ii) They must represent two (2) or more disciplines.
      iii) The Chair must be full-time faculty at the University of Colorado Denver or the Anschutz Medical Center.
      iv) All must have graduate faculty status in the College of Liberal Arts, which can be requested for faculty from
          other Colleges or University of Colorado campuses.
      v) You can request one (1) expert outside the University of Colorado Denver or the Anschutz Medical Center, subject to approval through the Dean’s Office.
      (1) You are responsible for initiating such request through the Master of Social Science Director or Assistant
          Director by submitting the requested members’ Curriculum Vitae and writing a very brief statement as to
          why this person is appropriate for your committee.
2) **Project Option: SSC 6960**
   a) 33 Semester Hours of Course Credit + 3 Project Hours
   b) **A Work-Related or Applied Project**
      i) Examples of applied projects include, but are not limited to educational curriculum, grants, program evaluation, and description of professional experience or internship.
      ii) This option must be accompanied by a related scholarly paper of 15-25 pages, double-spaced, in addition to the creative or work-related project.
   c) **A Scholarly Paper:**
      i) A paper of 25-50 pages, double-spaced consisting of a research study; a theoretical paper; an analysis of a cultural, historical or political event or phenomenon
   d) Guidelines are generally less stringent than those for the thesis and the project is not subject to Graduate School format approval.
   e) A project is typically done for three (3) credit hours, but with the consultation of program directors and your advisor, a particularly involved or complex project may earn more credit hours. Such an agreement should be put in writing.
   f) Project guidelines such as proposal and final draft deadlines, human subject review, assembling a three-person committee, and scheduling an oral defense are identical to those outlined in the thesis requirements described above.