

# SOCIAL SCIENCE, PHD

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The Maxwell School's interdisciplinary Social Science Ph.D. Program is a leading center for creative scholarship for students whose intellectual interests do not easily fit within the confines of a single social science discipline. With guidance from their faculty advisers, drawn from departments throughout the Maxwell School, Social Science doctoral students develop their own programs of interdisciplinary study. Established in 1946 as the nation's first doctoral program in the social sciences, the Social Science Ph.D. Program was founded in the conviction that a broad interdisciplinary education would often better prepare higher education faculty in the social and policy sciences than would narrower, more specialized training in one of the traditional disciplines. The founders of the program believed that many questions about the nature of society rested not just in one discipline, but required the integrated contributions of political science, geography, sociology, anthropology, history, international relations, economics, and public administration. This conviction is reinforced by the growing complexity and interdependence of societies in the modern world. A large majority of graduates take up professorial careers at colleges and universities, though some enter professional and leadership positions in the private, nonprofit and public sectors.

theory requirement, and similarly for research methods seminars. Once coursework is completed, students defend their dissertation proposal and take their comprehensive examinations. After success in the defense and examinations, students begin or continue their dissertation project. The Ph.D. is granted after a successful defense of the dissertation.

## Student Learning Outcomes

1. Critically analyze social issues and phenomena, and how these pertain to specific topics being investigated
2. Discuss and appraise theory generally and apply relevant theories to specific problems and questions
3. Describe, explain, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative research methods generally
4. Choose and use relevant research methods to examine specific questions and problems
5. Formulate, design, and conduct theoretically and methodologically rigorous research, individually or in collaboration with other students and/or faculty

## Social Science Ph.D. Degree Requirements

Coursework requirements for the Ph.D. in Social Science are met by completing 72 credit hours of approved graduate work. Students normally enter the program with an accredited masters degree, from which up to 30 credit hours can be applied towards the Ph.D., leaving 42 credit hours to be earned in residence. Up to 12 of these credit hours may be for dissertation credit.

All students must complete four approved seminars in Social Science Theory and four in Social Science Research Methods, which may be taken in any of the social science departments or disciplines. Any seminar that is part of the required doctoral theory core for the offering department will usually also qualify towards satisfying the Social Science