

University of Colorado Denver
Master of Humanities and Master of Social Science

Graduate Student Handbook

2017-2018

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Dear Students,

Welcome to the Master of Humanities and Master of Social Science programs (MHMSS). We are happy students have chosen to pursue their graduate studies with us at the University of Colorado Denver (UCD). We are committed to providing students the highest quality education UCD has to offer and to ensuring that their experience navigating program and university policies and procedures goes smoothly.

To this end, we have created this MHMSS Graduate Student handbook to complement the more general UCD Graduate Handbook available on the Graduate School website. We hope that our handbook will answer many of the questions students have about how our program works and what is expected of our students. Please consult it *before* coming in for advising appointments to help students formulate questions or concerns and keep it handy during their time in the program.

We look forward to working with you in our exciting and rigorous program!

The Program Directors

Table of Contents

Welcome Statement.....2

About the University of Colorado Denver

About the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

About the Graduate School.....5

About the Master of Humanities and Master of Social Science Programs

Department Mission.....6

Program Directors, Staff, and Other Important Contacts.....8

Faculty Research.....9

Program Advising.....10

General Expectations and Evaluations of MHMSS Students.....12

Requirements for the MH.....16

Requirements for the MH Track in Philosophy and Theory.....17

Requirements for the MH Track in Visual Studies.....18

Requirements for MSS.....20

Requirements for the MSS Track in Community Health.....21

Requirements for the MSS Track in International Studies.....22

Requirements for the MSS Track in Social Justice.....22

Requirements for the MSS Track in Society and Environment.....23

Requirements for the MSS Track in Women’s and Gender Studies.....24

Thesis and Project Options.....25

Oral/Comprehensive Examinations.....29

General Expectations and Evaluations

Some Important Graduate School Rules

General Information.....32

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER

The University of Colorado Denver's Master of Humanities and Master of Social Science programs are housed within the Graduate School and the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS). With 13 schools and colleges and more than 119 degree programs, the University of Colorado Denver offers a hands-on, real-world education in a vibrant city in the heart of the energetic west. UCD was established in 1912 as an extension center of the University of Colorado. At that time, a single, full-time faculty member ran the school with the help of part-time teachers. By 1940, 1,500 students attended the university. After WWII, veterans flooded the school for its undergraduate, graduate and continuing education courses, and vocational training programs. Since 1974, the University of Colorado Denver has steadily grown, and today the student population numbers just over 20,000. From roots established early 100 years ago, the University of Colorado Denver has held a special place in Colorado's landscape of higher education. It is positioned to create and support partnerships with businesses, neighborhoods, civic organizations, school districts and nonprofit agencies that can best support the economic, social, cultural and educational wellbeing of the region and of the state. CU Denver's Downtown Campus shares the 127-acre Auraria complex with Metropolitan State College of Denver and the Community College of Denver.

THE COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES

Liberal Arts has always been a strong component of the Denver campus and is by far the largest academic unit. In 1971 the College of Undergraduate Studies was established with a Dean and three divisions: Arts and Humanities, Natural and Physical Sciences (including mathematics), and Social Sciences. In 1975, the College was renamed the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) to reflect a more defined liberal arts mission. In 1984, the College was restructured into departments with a Chair heading each primary unit. In 1989, the College of Music was transferred to CLAS and became the Department of Music. The most recent CLAS reorganization occurred in 1998, when fine arts, music and theatre were removed from CLAS and organized into a separate College of Arts & Media.

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

CU Denver's Graduate School is the university's administrative unit that oversees all graduate education for both the Anschutz and Downtown campuses. It is committed to providing excellence in graduate education and strives to provide high quality opportunities for research, creativity, and scholarly work. It counts among its offerings nearly 60 programs, including Masters and PhDs. Students in the University of Colorado Denver's graduate programs come from all over the US and the world. The renowned faculty for these programs are drawn from the most prestigious universities in the United States.

All graduate students at the University of Colorado Denver must abide by the policies of the Graduate School. These policies may be found on the Graduate School website. Students should familiarize themselves with them.

ABOUT THE MASTER OF HUMANITIES AND MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE PROGRAMS

Since the early 1980s, the University of Colorado Denver's Master programs in Humanities and in Social Science have offered rigorous, intellectual studies to post-graduate students interested in moving beyond the boundaries of the specialized disciplines traditionally identified with the liberal arts and social sciences. Global shifts towards 21st century cosmopolitanism call for a different model of graduate education that trains students to bridge the gap between abstract, conceptual thinking and knowledge application in real-world, professional situations. The Master of Humanities and Master of Social Science Programs has long embraced this new pragmatism and cultivated critical, creative thinkers with a strong sense of purpose. Our interdisciplinary curriculum permits students to bring together diverse disciplines to study key questions in the humanities and social sciences and is geared toward educating the whole person. Students are exposed to diverse methodologies, literatures, and ways of framing questions. They pursue their interests across disciplinary boundaries by enrolling in courses from a number of different departments.

Despite its emphasis on intersecting disciplines, this interdisciplinarity does not preclude or replace specialization or focus. Rather, it enhances it. Students work closely with a variety of faculty and other graduate students to pursue, expand, and enrich their particular area of interest within a broader intellectual context. In this way, students are exposed to historical and contemporary resources to explore questions that persist across disciplines or themes. This approach fosters analytical rigor and provides a broad theoretical base from which students draw for research and application in their core area of expertise.

Students in our programs have gone on to careers in teaching, public policy, politics, non-profits, arts organizations, film production, law, medical fields; others have gone on to PhD granting programs in such diverse fields as philosophy, urban planning, history, comparative literature, health sciences, and international studies.

PROGRAM MISSION:

The mission of the Master of Humanities (MH) and Master of Social Science (MSS) programs is:

- to provide individually tailored Master's level programs of the highest quality to meet students' needs and interests;
- to build bridges and understanding among and between different fields, including but not limited to American Studies, Anthropology, Cultural Studies, Communication, Economics, Film/ Theater, Fine Arts, History, Literary Studies, Philosophy, Political Science, Religious Studies, Sociology, and Women's and Gender Studies.
- to enable part-time or full-time students whose professional and personal obligations require a program that is flexible to maximize their opportunity for a graduate education;
- to foster excellent graduate education and intellectual opportunities in a culture of respect, diversity, discovery, and equality; and

- to provide training in critical and analytical thinking that equips graduates to engage meaningfully with their communities and the world in productive and ethical ways.

PROGRAM DIRECTORS, STAFF, AND OTHER IMPORTANT CONTACTS

DEPARTMENT INFORMATION	THE UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO DENVER <i>Graduate School Information</i>
<p>Director: Humanities Margaret Woodhull, Ph.D. (Art History, Classical Art, Archaeology, and Architecture) Student Commons Building-3301 303-315-3568 Margaret.Woodhull@ucdenver.edu</p>	<p>Graduate School Dean LSC Suite 1251 303-315-2183</p>
<p>Director: Social Science Omar Swartz, J.D., Ph.D. (Legal Studies, Rhetoric, and Social Justice) Student Commons Building-3201 303-315-3567 Omar.Swartz@ucdenver.edu</p>	<p>Student Progress Coordinator Stephanie Puello LSC Suite 1251 303-315-0074 Stephanie.Puello@ucdenver.edu</p>
<p>Instructor: MH/MSS Jordan Hill, Ph.D. (spatial studies, public history, critical theory and digital humanities) Student Commons Building-3303 303-315-3566 Jordan.Hill@ucdenver.edu</p>	
<p>Program Assistant Angela Beale Student Commons Building-3203 303-315-3565 Angela.Beale@ucdenver.edu</p>	
<p>Graduate Assistants Ji Yoon Student Commons Building-3305 303-315-3570 Ji.Yoon@ucdenver.edu</p>	
<p>MHMSS Fax number: 303-315-3569</p>	
<p>MHMSS Website:</p>	<p>http://clas.ucdenver.edu/mhmss</p>
<p>Graduate School Website:</p>	<p>http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/Pages/default.aspx</p>
<p>Admissions Website:</p>	<p>http://www.ucdenver.edu/admissions/masters/Pages/index.aspx</p>

MEET THE MHMSS FACULTY

MHMSS Core Faculty are involved in a wide range of interdisciplinary teaching and research. Below is a brief overview of each of our professional interests and activities:

Master of Humanities Director, **Prof. Margaret Woodhull** studies the art and material culture of the classical Mediterranean, with special emphasis on women and gender. Trained as an art historian and archaeologist, she considers the role gender played for women's efforts to create public monuments in an era when women's rights were relatively limited. Her work takes into account issues of space, art and architectural design, urbanism, and personal agency as it related to the creation of public art and architecture in ancient Rome. She has been the recipient of a Fulbright Fellowship, Woodrow Wilson Foundation grant in Women's Studies, and the Archaeological Institute of America's Woodruff Traveling Fellowship, among others. She recently published a chapter in the book *Motherhood and Mothering in Ancient Greece and Rome* (2010) entitled "Imperial Mothers and Monuments in Rome" and is working on a book-length study on a related topic based on her research in Italy.

Master of Social Science Director, **Prof. Omar Swartz's** research and teaching specialties include diversity, rhetoric, legal studies, philosophy of communication, and social justice. Specifically, his work focuses on the intersections between the U.S. legal system, the history of social injustice and intellectual intolerance in the United States, and the philosophies of Richard Rorty, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Michel Foucault. Dr. Swartz is the author of *Against the New Patriotism: Essays on Social Justice, 2001-2009* (2014), *Persuasion as a Critical Activity* 2nd edition (2009); *The Rule of Law, Property, and the Violation of Human Rights* (2007); *In Defense of Partisan Criticism* (2005); *The View From On The Road* (1999); *Socialism and Communication* (1999); *The Rise of Rhetoric and its Intersections with Contemporary Critical Thought* (1998); and *Conducting Socially Responsible Research* (1997). He is the co-author of *Neo-Pragmatism, Communication, and the Culture of Creative Democracy* (2009). In addition to the above, Dr. Swartz is the editor of *Communication and Creative Democracy: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (2011), *Transformative Communication Studies* (2008), *Social Justice and Communication Scholarship* (2006). He has also authored more than 100 essays, book chapters, and reviews.

Dr. Jordan Hill is an instructor for both Master of Humanities and Master of Social Science. His research investigates violence in human affairs and draws from the fields of public history, spatial studies, digital humanities, political memory and critical theory. He recently co-authored a chapter on "The Sixties" in the groundbreaking digital US history book, *The American Yawp*, as well as having also released the second edition of his book *Intentionally Interdisciplinary: Master's Interdisciplinary Program Directory*. He is currently working on a book manuscript entitled *Cult of the Slaughtered Citizen: The New American Tradition of Constructing Mass Murder Memorials*. Dr. Hill has a passion for teaching courses that empower students to integrate theory and praxis in interdisciplinary research that addresses the intractable problems of the twenty-first century.

PROGRAM ADVISING:

Many present and past students will agree that the most important person in their graduate experience was their **Program Advisor (PA)**, the faculty member of the MHMSS program assigned as their principal advisor upon admission. This is because a student's PA is likely to do much more than recommend courses to fulfill program requirements. A student's PA can also help guide her or him through the necessary steps for completing the thesis or project, and the oral/comprehensive examination. Additionally the PA often provides intellectual guidance as students establish their particular academic interests. Typically, the PA oversees the student's progress through the program and helps to identify intellectual interests, while ensuring their smooth matriculation through graduation.

In addition to the PA, most students will develop primary intellectual mentoring relationships with faculty with whom they have studied; in fact, they are strongly encouraged to seek out faculty whose research and teaching closely align with their own academic interests. These faculty will typically become the student's **Intellectual Graduate Mentors (IGM)**, the faculty responsible for directing the student's independent research and final thesis or project. Typically they become the committee members who oversee the final thesis or project research. Occasionally, the student's PA and their principal IGM will be the same person, in cases where the PA's research and teaching are in line with the student's academic interests. For example, a MSS student whose PA is Dr. Swartz may also be interested in Rhetoric and Law, two of the areas that Dr. Swartz focuses his research and teaching. In this case, he would be the student's PA, and would likely also be his or her IGM.

All incoming students in the MHMSS program have as their PA either the program director or other MHMSS faculty. The PA helps design a course of studies consistent with the student's intellectual interests. Students will receive a letter from the department explaining who their PA will be before their first semester begins. A student's PA serves as her/his primary guide for program procedures during her/his graduate studies in the program.

Students are required to meet with their program advisor (PA) at least once each semester.

It is critical that students stay in touch with their PA in order to stay focused on moving forward in the program. We require students to contact their advisor at least *once a semester* to discuss courses and registration for upcoming semesters. If a student has failed to communicate with her or his PA, it is difficult for program staff to help troubleshoot problems that may come up as a result of not being informed about program or university requirements. Together, the student and the PA plan out coursework for the degree, often in conjunction with a student's IGM, including finding the best courses and instructors to fit the student's intellectual progress. The student should come prepared to advising meetings by having a copy of his or her current transcript, a list of the courses she or he might be interested in taking in the upcoming semester, and/or a list of questions to be answered. The PA will keep track of the student's progress in the student's program file and will monitor and serve as an arbitrator student's relationships with faculty throughout the college.

To help students choose courses, the program office supplies students with a list of recommended and suggested courses (see sample document in the appendix) each semester. The

list is representative of the kinds of course offerings students in our programs often take. **It is not comprehensive.** Often there may be other graduate level courses offered at UCD but not listed that are appropriate for a student to take. So, please check the current course offerings in other departments in addition to our current “Required and Suggested List.” **BE SURE TO CLEAR ALL COURSES WITH YOUR PA BEFORE ENROLLING.**

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATIONS OF MHMSS GRADUATE STUDENTS

Professional and Ethical Expectations

Graduate students are expected to act in a professional manner and in accordance with university policies. These policies can be found at <http://www.ucdenver.edu/academics/colleges/Graduate-School/Documents/GSOCTFORMS/HonorCode.pdf> and <http://www.ucdenver.edu/life/services/standards/Documents/CUDenver-CodeofConduct.pdf>. Students are expected to have read and understand these policies.

Unprofessional and unethical behavior takes various forms, including (but not limited to) academic dishonesty in courses (e.g., plagiarism), taking time off without permission or acknowledgment from professors, financial aid abuse, and failing to respect the academic and intellectual environment of the classroom and one’s peers. *Such behavior will not be tolerated and can lead to an array of disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.*

Students should avoid arriving late to classes and appointments with faculty, staff, and fellow students. If an emergency prevents a student from keeping an appointment, the student should inform those affected and make arrangements to reschedule. Graduate students should do their best to avoid missing classes in any of their courses. Graduate students are expected to attend class regularly. If a student must miss a class, s/he must inform the instructor in advance or as soon as possible in the case of an emergency. In order to take a leave of absence, a student must inform the program Director prior to taking leave. ***Faculty and staff are often the major source for recommendations for students as they contemplate doctoral programs and future jobs. Student respect and conscientiousness with their faculty garners theirs for the student.***

IMPORTANT POLICIES TO KNOW

Courses and Grades

1. Grading Scale

The faculty of the MHMSS program (those who teach courses that originate from our program, typically listed with HUMN or SSCI prefixes) have agreed on the following grading scale for final course grades submitted to the university. Please note the University of Colorado Denver does not observe A+ as a final grade on a transcript.

A= 95-100	C = 74-76.9
A- = 90-94.9	C- = 70-73.9
B+ = 87-89.9	D+ = 67-69.9
B = 84-86.9	D = 64-66.9
B- = 80-83.9	D- = 60-63.9
C+ = 77-79.9	F = 0-59.9

2. Minimum GPA

A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 in courses applied to the degree is required. Grades of B- or better are accepted for all degree plans; courses applied to a graduate degree may not be taken pass/fail.

3. Probation

A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 or who *receives a grade lower than a B-* will be placed on academic probation by the Graduate School dean. MHMSS Students placed on probation must sign a contract with their PA with the terms for progressing successfully through the program explicitly detailed. In the semester following placement on probation, the student's course work GPA must be at least 3.0 in courses applicable to the degree, and all grades must be at or above a B, or the student will be suspended. At the end of two semesters after being placed on probation, the student must raise his/her cumulative GPA to 3.0 or he/she will be suspended. A student may petition the CLAS graduate dean for an extension of the probationary period in extenuating circumstances.

4. Incomplete Grades

When a student has special circumstances that make it impossible to complete course assignments, faculty members have discretion (which they apply only sparingly and for the most serious situations) to award an incomplete grade "I" to allow the student a full year (or less if stipulated by the professor in a written agreement with the student) to complete the work for a grade. Incomplete grades are not awarded for poor academic performance or as a way of extending assignment deadlines. While not required, a CLAS course completion agreement form (available from the CLAS Advising office) is strongly suggested when faculty and student agree on an incomplete grade. Once the work is completed, the faculty member teaching the course must submit a Change of Record form to change the grade. If the work is not completed within one year, the "I" grade will automatically revert to an "F."

To be eligible for an incomplete grade, students must:

- have successfully completed 75% of the course;
- have special circumstances (verification may be required) that preclude the student from attending class and completed graded assignments;
- make arrangements to complete missing assignments with the original instructor.

University Email and Official Communications

The University of Colorado Denver and the MHMSS program considers a graduate student's university email account the principal means of communicating with students. Official communications, such as tuition billing, program announcements, and university emergency notification systems, all use this address. All MHMSS students are responsible for the

information in any university and/or MHMSS communication sent to this address. Please check email regularly. *Students will be presumed to have received all communications sent to them through this medium.*

Concurrent Registration

Students may occasionally find a course offered at another CU System institution, like CU Boulder, which they would like to take. To do so they must register concurrently. To register, the students must get their PA's approval, a letter stating that they can take the course, and the approval of the Graduate School. They must fill out a Concurrent Registration form. See a program director before proceeding with any such registration requirements.

Course Credit Transfer

Students may transfer up to 12 credit hours of coursework completed at an accredited graduate program other than a UC System school with the permission of the student's PA. It is always a good idea for the student to discuss any outside coursework s/he plans to take while enrolled in the MHMSS program with her/his PA BEFORE pursuing it. Coursework must be relevant to the plan of study as worked out with their PA, and students must provide both syllabi and any paperwork (like writing assignments, official transcripts, etc.) to their PA.

Online courses

MHMSS student may only take up to 3 credit hours (typically one course) of coursework online to be applied toward the degree requirements. The coursework must be relevant to their plan of study as worked out with their PA.

Leave of Absence

Occasionally a student must take time off from pursuing their degree. Before doing so, the student should meet with his or her PA to discuss the implications of a leave for the student's graduation plans. Students who do not take any courses for more than 12 consecutive months are automatically dis-enrolled from the University's system and coded as "inactive." To re-establish their status as active students they must re-apply to the program and be readmitted by the MHMSS admissions committee. Re-admission is NOT guaranteed, but typically is not denied if the student has been in good standing in the program and has a compelling explanation for her or his absence. Depending on the length of time that has passed, a student may only need to fill out an application and pay the application fee. If more than two years have passed, a student may be required to complete an entirely new application packet. Please note, not enrolling in classes for one or two consecutive semesters does NOT constitute a leave of absence, but students doing so should inform their PA.

Time Limits for Completion of Degree

Graduate students at UCD have 7 years to complete the degree from the beginning of their coursework until they turn in the final thesis or project and complete oral exams. Occasionally, a student must exceed this limit because of unexpected leaves of absence or other limitations. In order to extend the time limit, the student's PA must petition the graduate school dean for

permission to extend. Coursework older than 7 years, which a student wishes to use toward the degree, is subject to approval by the student's PA and, per college rules, must be reviewed by an outside faculty member who teaches in the area. If the work is not approved for credit toward the degree, the student will be required to make up the credits by taking new courses in order to complete the degree.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for the Master of Humanities Program

Students in the Master of Humanities program follow a 36-semester-hour plan of coursework. 30-33 of these hours go toward core required courses and electives. The remaining hours go toward thesis or project hours.

Three Core Master of Humanities Courses:

All Master of Humanities students are required to complete **three** core courses (9 credit hours) towards their 36-hour curriculum. All students in the Master of Humanities (MH) program must take the following three required courses:

1. HUMN 5025 – Foundations and Theories in Interdisciplinary Humanities (3 credits, *offered every fall*). Introduces student to interdisciplinary scholarship and practice in the disciplines that comprise the humanities and beyond. The focus of the course is introducing students to critical theory and the scholarly conversations pertaining the social, political, economic, cultural and ethical dimensions of modernity. *This course must be taken in the first fall semester as an MH student in the program.*
2. HUMN 5013 – Interdisciplinary Methods and Practice (3 credits): Introduces students to a wide array of scholarly methodologies in the humanities and social sciences. Students will learn the key practices and processes for developing themselves into young scholars conversant in a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary methods and practices. *This course must be taken in the first spring semester and an MSS or MH student in the program.*
3. HUMN 5924 - Directed Research and Reading in Interdisciplinary Humanities (3 credits, *offered every spring*): Must be taken in preparation for the thesis or project. Course provides background reading, theory, and research approaches to assist students in developing a thesis, project, or individualized theme for the oral exam based on their interdisciplinary focus.

MH Elective Courses:

In addition to the core courses, students must complete a total of 21-24 credit hours of studies centered on a coherent theme related to Humanities studies. Students who will complete the degree with a project (worth 3 credit hours) will take 24 hours of electives; those pursuing a thesis (6 credit hours) to finish the degree, will need 21 hours of electives.

They develop a plan of coursework with the approval of the PA and/or IGM.

Within this framework, a total of two independent study courses (HUMN 5840) and two 4000-level undergraduate courses may be taken to count toward the degree. All independent study

contracts must be approved by one of the program directors regardless of the presiding instructor. The remaining course work must be 5000/6000-level courses offered through various departments.

The Women and Gender Studies Certificate: UCD also offers several graduate certificates that students may pursue simultaneously with the Master of Humanities. Currently the Women's and Gender Studies Graduate Certificate is most popular among MH students whose academic interests are focused in these areas. Please consult with your academic advisor for further details and requirements.

Master of Humanities Tracks:

In addition to the self-structured option, there are currently two concentrations, called "tracks," in the MH program in which students may choose to focus their studies. These include:

- Ethnic Studies
- Philosophy and Theory
- Social Justice
- Women and Gender Studies
- Visual Studies

Each of these tracks has additional required courses that go toward fulfilling the 36-credit hours for the MH plan. Please see the appendix for the additional track requirements.

Requirements for the Master of Social Science Program

Students in the Master of Social Science program follow a 36-semester-hour plan of coursework. 30-33 of these hours go toward core required courses and electives. The remaining hours go toward thesis or project hours.

Three Core Master of Social Science Courses:

All Master of Social Science students are required to complete **three** core courses (9 credit hours) towards their 36-hour curriculum.

1. SSCI 5020 – Foundations and Theories in Interdisciplinary Social Science (3 credits, *offered every fall*) Introduces student to interdisciplinary scholarship and practice in the disciplines that comprise the social sciences and beyond. The focus of the course is introducing students to critical theory and the scholarly conversations pertaining the social, political, economic, cultural and ethical dimensions of modernity. *This course must be taken in the first fall semester as an MSS student in the program.*
2. SSCI 5013 – Interdisciplinary Methods and Practice (3 credits, *offered every spring*): Introduces students to a wide array of scholarly methodologies in the humanities and social sciences. Students will learn the key practices and processes for developing themselves into young scholars conversant in a range of disciplinary and interdisciplinary

methods and practices. *This course must be taken in the first spring semester and an MSS or MH student in the program.*

3. SSCI 5023 - Research Perspectives in Social Science (3 credits, *offered every spring*): Introduces interdisciplinary social research through a critical examination of various methodological approaches. Each student formulates a research proposal which includes a research question, a review of the literature, and methods of study. *This course may only be taken when a student has completed 21-24 credit hours and should be used to prepare her or his thesis or project proposal. (Failure to produce a successful proposal in this course may prevent a student from registering for thesis hours later).*

Elective Courses:

In addition to the core courses, students must complete a total of 21-24 credit hours of studies centered on a *coherent theme* related to Social Science studies. Students who will complete the degree with a project (3 credit hours) will take 24 hours of electives; those pursuing a thesis (6 credit hours) to finish the degree, will need 21 hours of electives.

They develop a plan of coursework with the approval of the student's PA or IGM.

Within this framework, a total of two independent study courses (SSCI 5840) and two 4000-level undergraduate courses may be taken to count toward the degree. All independent study contracts must be approved by one of the program directors regardless of the presiding instructor. The remaining course work must consist of 5000/6000-level courses offered through various departments.

Master of Social Science Tracks:

In addition to the self-structured option, there are five concentrations, called "tracks," in the Social Science program in which students may choose to focus their studies. These include:

- Community Health
- Ethnic Studies
- International Studies
- Social Justice
- Society and Environment
- Women's and Gender Studies

Each of these tracks has additional required courses that go toward fulfilling the 36-credit hours for the MSS plan. Please see the appendix for the additional track requirements.

Theses and Projects Options:

All MSS and MH Track students must culminate their degree plan with a thesis or a project. Those pursuing a thesis must complete 6 credits of thesis hours (either SSCI 6950 or HUMN 5950) or 3 credits of project hours (either SSCI 6960 or HUMN 5960).

Every student who wishes to graduate whether they are pursuing the Master of Humanities Thesis or Project Option, or Master of Social Science Thesis or Project Option must complete a comprehensive oral exam related to their final study topic.

Originating the thesis question will be the most important step in completing the thesis, and no one can give a cookie-cutter approach to this task. This will look different for each student, but here are some suggestions to finding a question:

- Think about the topics in your chosen field that are interesting *to you*, the student.
- Review the literature on these topics.
- Talk to faculty members both from our program and other programs/institutions about potential projects and thesis questions.
- Begin to formulate a question based on interests, current gaps in the literature, and availability of resources.
- Before going any further, students should meet informally with their PA and thesis committee members about their question and the resources they plan to use to answer this question. This meeting aims to make sure that faculty agree that the question and resources chosen to answer this question will meet the thesis requirements and appear to be feasible given the timelines and expected scope of this project.
- If students are considering the use of human subjects in their research, they must obtain approval from the Colorado Multiple Institutional Review Board (COMIRB) before beginning their research. Students can go to the COMIRB website for complete information on policies, procedures, and forms.

The Faculty Committee

To finish the program, every MHMSS student must complete a culminating study pursued in conjunction with a committee made up of at least three faculty members. The committee is generally comprised of a chair and 2 readers. All must have “Graduate Faculty Status” (GFS). If a qualified prospective member does not have such status, the program advisor may petition the Graduate School Dean to award a temporary special graduate faculty status to that person. During a student’s coursework, s/he should always be considering a faculty member’s expertise and its appropriateness for a student’s thesis, project, or non-thesis/project topic. A chair should be an intellectual mentor whose work or research interests are close to those of the student. The chair must be a full-time faculty member of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at UCD. Readers can be faculty whose interests intersect, but who may not have expertise. They can be part-time but must have GFS. In some cases, one outside reader may be requested. Students must consult the PA for details and approval.

Thesis or Project:

Thesis: A rigorous scholarly study typically 12,000-20,000 words (ca. 60-100 pages) in length, a thesis is subject to Graduate School guidelines and review. When completed, copies are submitted to the Graduate School for binding and distribution to the University's library and the student's graduate program. The thesis is defended to the student's faculty committee in an oral defense when the work is defensible (e.g., it is as near to completion as possible).

Project: The project option can be a shorter version of the thesis. That is, it can be a rigorous academic study of a topic, but is typically only 6000-10,000 (ca. 30-50 pages) in length. It may, alternatively, be a creative project, such as a literary work or artistic creation, film production, or an educational curriculum. In the latter case, the creative work must be accompanied by a 3000-4000 word (ca. 15-20 page) scholarly paper, in the form of a critical appraisal of the work, based on scholarly modes of analysis. A project is subject to review at the program level but does not get submitted to the Graduate School for review or binding. One copy only is submitted to the MHMSS program. The project is defended to the student's faculty committee in an oral defense when the work is defensible (e.g., it is as near to completion as possible).

Procedures:

Proposals: In order to proceed with a thesis, project, or non-thesis/non-project, all students must submit a proposal approved by the committee (and approved by one of the program directors in cases where one of the directors is not serving on the committee). The proposal is produced in the final semester of coursework. The final required courses for both MH (HUMN 5924) and MSS (SSCI 5023) students are designed to enable the student to produce the proposal. The proposal is written following program guidelines (see appendix). **PLEASE NOTE: The student must convene and meet with committee members at least once during the proposal writing process to discuss the study topic and work on a strategy for its analysis.**

Once final approval has been granted, committee members and the PA must sign the MHMSS **Thesis Approval Form** indicating their approval of the thesis or project proposal. This form can be found on our website. These signatures give the go-ahead to complete the project in terms of collecting data and analyzing this data and/or performing original analyses on an existing dataset and forming conclusions based on these analyses. The proposal ensures that the committee and PA are aware of and agree with the feasibility of the student's thesis plans. Their approval also serves to protect students as long as students complete the thesis or project as laid out in the proposal.

To help ensure the successful completion of the master's thesis, stay in close contact with committee members as well as the PA. Students may need to formulate their questions and initiate contact with faculty members before deciding who will serve on the thesis committee. If at any time after the proposal has been approved students become aware of changes that they need to make to their questions, and they should immediately contact their three committee members and the PA to make them aware of any changes. Major changes may require a new proposal and/or committee.

Registering for thesis/project hours: Once the final proposal is completed and approved by the committee and program director and all coursework is completed, the student may begin registering for thesis or project hours.

Thesis or project hours are taken with the committee chair **by completing a CLAS Special Processing Form (sometimes called an Individualized Instruction Form)**, available on the Registrar's web site or at the program office. The form must be signed by the student, the chair, and the Graduate School Dean. The Dean's Office will keep one copy and return the original to the student to submit to Records. Once processed, the form will generate a grade report sent to the chair/instructor, who is the instructor of record and awards the final grade. While a student is working on the thesis or project, s/he will receive an IP (In Progress) on the transcript in lieu of a grade. Once the study is completed and successfully defended, the chair will award a final grade and will submit Grade Change Forms to convert the IPs to that final grade.

Thesis and project hours may be spread out over multiple semesters. In other words, they do not have to be taken all at once. Students rarely register for all hours in one semester. Rather, they typically spread them out over 2-3 semesters.

PLEASE NOTE: Once a student has already signed up for thesis or project credit, s/he needs to continuously register for these credits (regardless of whether it is fall or spring—summer does not count). Students must take 6 thesis hours or 3 project hours, and cannot exceed that number. If a student pursuing a thesis accidentally registers for project hours, there will be a \$100 change fee imposed by the registrar to switch it to thesis hours. The same is true of the reverse situation. Thus, pay attention, and register carefully.

It is strongly advised that students plan to defend their studies in the semester in which they register for the last of their thesis or project hours. If they do not, then they are required to register as a **Candidate for Degree**. The program advisor will email the call number for **Candidate for Degree** at the beginning of each semester, but students may also contact the Graduate Coordinator in the Graduate School for this information. This requires students to pay the equivalent of one credit hour of graduate tuition in the semester in which they defend. This must be done in the semester after the last of the credit hours is completed. In order to avoid this unnecessary expense, plan wisely and defend during the last semester a student registers for thesis or project hours.

Finishing up: Often students successfully complete all degree requirements and pass the defense, but must make revisions to the final study, making it impossible to submit the work by the end of that semester. In this case, thesis students may walk in graduation and have 60 days to complete the revisions. Students completing a project may have up to 90 days to complete revisions. Once the revisions are completed, approved, and the final study submitted, the committee chair will submit the final grade and the University will award the diploma at the end of the semester. The student does NOT need to register for anything further in future semesters. **HOWEVER**, the student must again complete the online **Application for Graduation** form in order to generate the diploma. Further instructions for graduating are listed below.

Thesis Format Review:

Prior to final submission of the thesis, the thesis formatting must be reviewed. Guidelines for formatting the thesis are found on the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences webpage. Each semester there will be a deadline for this process that can be found on the Graduate School website.

This deadline is typically three weeks prior to the deadline for defending a thesis, so it is likely that students will submit their theses for format review prior to the defense. For review, submit an unbound draft (at least 2/3 complete) of the thesis to the Graduate School Office (1380 Lawrence St., Suite 1251). For further questions, please contact the Graduate School office at (303) 315-5829.

Thesis Submission:

Once the thesis is completed and defended, at least two and ideally all three members must sign the cover page. Two copies of the thesis are then submitted to the Graduate School. Check the CU Denver Graduate Student Advising page for details about final submission.

Oral Defense of the Thesis or Project for All MHMSS Students:

Procedures:

As noted, all MHMSS students must complete an oral examination. This is held in the final semester of being registered for thesis or project hours. To prepare for the defense, students should have mastered knowledge of their topic and have a final draft of their paper, thesis, or project completed.

To prepare, contact all committee members the semester before a student plans to defend and discuss scheduling and progress with them. At the beginning of the semester in which a student wishes to defend, contact them again to discuss possible defense dates. Check the Graduate School web site for important deadlines regarding oral exams.

Once a date has been agreed upon, the student must submit a **Request for Examination Form** to the Graduate School (available on the Graduate School website). It is advisable to have the committee chair initial the date of the defense, since no signature line is included. This form must be submitted to Graduate Coordinator (LSC 1251) two weeks prior to the scheduled defense, but not later than the posted semester deadline for submitting the **Request for Graduate Examination/ Thesis Defense**. An **Exam Report** form is generated from the **Request for Graduate Examination/Thesis Defense** and emailed to the chair and program director before the defense. The chair should bring this to the defense.

Arrange a place for the defense. Most MHMSS students defend in the MHMSS conference room in the Academic Building, Room 3208. Students can contact the MHMSS Program Assistant to book the conference room in the office at: (303) 315-3565. One month before the exam confirm arrangements with committee members and reservations.

The exam should run at least one hour, but it is recommended that students reserve the space for at least 2 hours in the event that it gets started late or runs long. All three committee members must be present for this defense. In the event of an emergency that prevents one committee member from attending the defense (not including the committee chair), the defense can proceed with the members who can attend and the student will schedule a separate meeting with the missing faculty member at an alternate time.

Preparing for the Orals: Discuss with committee members all timetables for submitting drafts of work. Some readers only want to see the final draft; others will ask to see it chapter by chapter. The chair should regularly see versions of a student's work. It is up to the student to design an agreeable plan with all committee members and to stick to the arranged schedule.

The program directors suggest that students submit a final draft to their chair 4 weeks in advance of the defense. With the chair's approval, readers should have a final draft at least 2 weeks in advance of the defense. However, students should discuss the preferred time-table with their committee members, as their respective schedules may require more or less time for reading and preparing comments. **Students should ask faculty to consider any out of town plans or deadlines they might have that may require adjustments to their time table.**

Oral Exam Format: Students should prepare a 10-15 minute presentation based on the topic studied. This can include a brief overview of the study, a description of the findings and their relevance, a recapitulation of the issues, and/or a statement about what was feasible and what threads of the study the student might pursue later. Often students include some sort of visuals, such as a Powerpoint presentation. If using visuals, please bring a computer with necessary cords and video connectors and notify the chair and the Program Assistant so a projector is available.

The remainder of the defense consists of the committee members engaging the student with questions about the work. Be prepared to answer any and all questions related to the thesis or project.

A majority of the thesis committee members must vote for one of the following two outcomes: *Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory*. At the conclusion of the defense, the committee informs the student of their decision. Satisfactory passing may: 1) be approved with no required revisions, or 2) be approved provisionally on the condition of revisions being completed by the student. Unsatisfactory means the committee fails the student on his or her effort. Committee members must all sign the Exam Report at the defense.

According to Graduate School rules, if a student receives a Conditional Pass, the committee will clearly define the requirements for the student to receive an unconditional passing grade. These requirements must be completed to the satisfaction of the committee within four months. Failure to satisfy these conditions will result in failure of the oral defense. A student who fails the defense is subject to immediate dismissal from the program on the recommendation of the graduate program and concurrence of the Graduate School Dean. The committee may alternatively recommend to the program director that the student be allowed to retake the defense. The retake must be completed by the end of the next academic semester. The original **Exam Report Form** noting the failure is signed by the committee and returned to the Graduate Coordinator in the Graduate School (LSC 1251; Campus Box 163). A new **Exam Report Form** will be generated if/when the examination is rescheduled. Students must meet registration requirements and be registered during the semester in which the repeated defense is scheduled. If a student fails the defense twice, s/he is subject to immediate dismissal from the program.

Preparing to Graduate:

Advancement to Candidacy and Graduation Requirements

In addition to completing the final study and defending, students must complete some required paperwork and submit it to the Graduate School in order to graduate. After completing or registering for all program-required, non-thesis coursework, and during the semester that the student plans to defend her or his thesis or project, the student should apply for graduation by completing the **Application for Admission to Candidacy Form** which can be found on our website or on the Graduate School Forms website. The form must be filled out **electronically**. Allow adequate time to complete and submit this form, as it must be signed by the program director before submitting to the Graduate School. The form must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator in the Graduate School Office currently located in the Lawrence Street Center, Suite 1251. At the same time, the student should fill out the **Application for Graduation** in your UCDAccess portal.

Both of these forms have deadlines early in the semester and must be completed by then. To see deadlines, go to the Graduation deadlines page located on the MHMSS website or the Graduate School website.

General Information

Funding

Financial Aid

The University of Colorado Denver administers various forms of financial aid for graduate students: fellowships, scholarships, and a number of awards from outside agencies. Graduate students wishing to apply for these or long-term loans should contact the Financial Aid Office (303)315-1850 as soon as possible. Students can also visit their website for more information.

Assistantships

The Master of Humanities/Master of Social Science program does not offer any kind of assistantships at this time.

Outside Employment

Graduate school is very demanding, and previous students warn that it may be difficult to work full time, or even part time, while also devoting time to graduate studies and training requirements. If a student chooses to pursue outside employment during his or her time as a graduate student, he or she should discuss this with the PA. Unless officially approved by the PA (e.g., as an internship site), outside employment should not at any time be represented by the student as fulfilling any requirement of the program; however, students should at all times strive to conduct themselves in accordance with the APA Ethical Guidelines and Code of Conduct (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html>).

Attaining Colorado Residency

Applicants residing in another state who are admitted to the program will pay out-of-state tuition rates until establishing residency in Colorado. For information about residency classification, basic requirements for residency, and residency forms, please visit the Financial Aid website under Costs and Financing.

Appendix: MHMSS Tracks