The MA in Applied Sociology

The Program Description
Our Master of Arts (MA) Program in Applied Sociology is designed to help our students understand the social forces that shape their world with practical training in research methods, statistics, and evaluation research. The program's applied focus integrates research approaches and coursework that emphasize faculty core strengths in medical sociology, criminology and criminal justice, and immigration research.

Our graduates are researchers, managers, instructors, policy analysts, and service providers in health care, social service and criminal justice agencies, and in corporate departments throughout the area. Many have continued their advanced studies in PhD programs.

Affordability
As the only public university in Boston, the cost of graduate study is substantially less than that of applied programs offered by neighboring private institutions. The MA program offers a limited number of assistantships. Most graduate assistants work 4.5 or 9 hours per week during the semester(s) they are supported, although occasionally a student may receive a 13.5- or 18-hour assistantship. Assistants receive a stipend in addition to tuition remission and partial fee payment including health insurance. Teaching assistants are expected to complete the program's seminar on teaching.

Applied Courses
Several core courses provide a foundation in the theories and methods used by applied sociologists: foundations of applied sociology; applied sociological theory; social policy analysis; social problems; complex organizations; and research methods. Specialty courses and concentrations develop substantive expertise in areas such as communities and crime, medical sociology, immigration, social psychology, and survey research.

Special concentrations, offered in collaboration with other programs, include forensic services, gerontology, dispute resolution, and counseling. Staff at the Center for Survey Research offer a survey research practicum.

Internship and Capstone Experience
Many students complete an internship that reflects their academic and professional interests. Most internships are research oriented. They enhance one's understanding of the relationship between theory, research, policy, and practice. The internship can be waived for those with comparable experience and for those who complete the program's course on teaching.

All students must complete a capstone requirement to demonstrate their mastery of the knowledge and skills required by applied sociologists. This requirement can be satisfied by a thesis, a research paper, or a comprehensive exam.

Transferring Courses into the Applied Sociology Program
Before enrollment in the program, students should consult with the graduate program director regarding transfer credits if these are intended to satisfy degree requirements. Note: Only two graduate courses can be transferred into the program.

Students may obtain and satisfy degree credits by concentrating in coursework in selected other graduate programs. In particular, full-time students in the MA Program in Applied Sociology may pursue a course of study leading to a certificate in gerontology or dispute resolution. Note: Enrollment in these areas is contingent on approval of the respective program directors.

Completion Requirements
Graduate seminars are scheduled in the late afternoon and evening (2.5 hours, once per week). Full-time students can complete requirements for the MA in two years. All matriculated students, whether full- or part-time, must complete the degree requirements within five years. A special combined BA/MA program for UMass Boston undergraduates enables students to begin graduate coursework in their senior year.

Faculty and Research Expertise
With a strong commitment to research, our nationally recognized faculty guides students through an exploration of the human condition, globalization, culture, and the current issues that affect us all.

Our faculty are engaged with an impressive range of public concerns and issues of global and national importance.

Sofya Aptekar, PhD Princeton University: immigration, race and ethnicity, sociology of culture, stratification and inequality, mixed methods

Paul Benson, PhD University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill: sociology of mental health, medical sociology, public policy

Keith Bentele, PhD University of Arizona: stratification, inequality, political sociology, public policy

Bianca Bersani, PhD University of Maryland: crime over the life course, criminological theories, immigration and crime, quantitative methodology

Philip Brenner, PhD University of Wisconsin-Madison: survey methodology, measurement, quantitative methods, sociology of religion, social psychology, self and identity

Elizabeth K. Brown, PhD SUNY at Albany: law and society, incarceration policy, state-level criminal justice, public opinion

Jorge Capetillo-Ponce, PhD New School for Social Research: social theory, race and ethnic relations, media studies, Latino studies

Mathew J. Creighton, PhD University of Pennsylvania: immigration, health inequality, educational stratification, intolerance and anti-immigrant sentiment, social demography

Xiaogang Deng, PhD SUNY Buffalo: research methods, recidivism study, comparative criminology, and official corruption in China

Stephanie Hartwell, PhD Yale University: drugs and society, mental health, criminality, applied sociology, environmental justice and disasters

Megan Klein Hattori, PhD University of Maryland: medical sociology, global health and fertility, transition age youth and decisions surrounding reproductive health

Philip Kretsedemas, PhD University of Minnesota: immigration, critical race theory, globalization and social change, social welfare policy, contemporary theory

Andrea Leverenz, PhD University of Chicago: communities and crime, prisoner re-entry, gender and crime, urban and community sociology, qualitative research methods

Siamak Movahedi, PhD Washington State University: social psychology, social psychiatry, research methods and statistics

Jason Rodriguez, PhD University of Massachusetts Amherst: medical sociology, aging and life, work and occupations, culture, qualitative methods
**The MA in Applied Sociology**

**Faculty and Research Expertise...cont’d**

**Russell Schutt, PhD University of Illinois, Chicago:** research methods, sociology of organizations, homelessness and mental health services, sociology of law

**Cinzia Solari, PhD University of California, Berkeley:** gender and migration, work and globalization, social theory, global ethnography

**Lakshmi Srinivas, PhD University of California, Los Angeles:** media and popular culture, media reception, spectatorship, public culture, consumption, globalization, ethnography, Bollywood Cinema

**Leslie Wang, PhD University of California Berkeley:** family, gender, globalization/transnationalization, Asia, qualitative methods

**Kevin Wozniak, PhD American University:** justice, law and society, politics and policy

**Reef Youngreen, PhD University of Iowa:** social psychology, status processes, deviance

**Heather Zaykowski, PhD University of Delaware:** victimization, youth violence, communities and crime, law and society

**Funded Research**

Faculty are conducting research and other sponsored programs thanks to the Russell Sage Foundation, U.S. Department of Justice, National Institutes of Health, National Institute of Mental Health, American Sociological Association, National Science Foundation, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, National Endowment for the Humanities, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and many others.

**Research Resources for Graduate Students**

Resources for graduate students at UMass Boston include computing laboratories, a survey research center, centers and institutes that conduct research on a range of social policy issues, an active graduate student organization and extensive online and shelved library resources. Our membership in the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) provides access to hundreds of datasets for research on important topics. The Boston area itself provides a rich environment for making valuable academic connections and finding career opportunities.

Other opportunities for professional experience include making contributions to the departmental journal, co-authoring articles with faculty for scholarly publications, presenting research reports on faculty projects, and presenting at academic conferences.

**Admission Requirements**

A strong undergraduate record in sociology and related subjects, with at least a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) in sociology and related course work. Applicants with an overall GPA of at least 3.0 will receive preference, while those below 2.7 will not be considered. Applicants who do not hold a BA in sociology should have at least 18 semester credits or the equivalent in undergraduate sociology or another social science field related to program objectives.

Applicants must successfully complete undergraduate courses in sociological theory, research methodology, and statistics. Candidates admitted to the program who are deficient in any of these areas may be required to complete these undergraduate courses not later than the end of the second semester of residence in the program.

**The Application Process**

Applicants should submit all materials by October 1 for Spring Admission and January 31 for Full Admission.

Our online application and instructions are available at www.umb.edu/admissions/grad/apply. Documents not submitted with the online application should be mailed to the following address:

Office of Graduate Admissions  
University of Massachusetts Boston  
100 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125-3393

A completed application includes these materials:

- Completed application form and required fee.
- Official transcripts for all undergraduate and/or graduate programs attended.
- Results of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
- Three letters of recommendation from individuals acquainted with the applicant’s interests who are qualified to evaluate his or her potential for sustained graduate study in applied sociology. At least one of the letters must be from a faculty member with whom the applicant is studying or has studied.
- A statement of approximately 1,200 words on academic and career interests in applied sociology, including the applicant’s desired area of specialization in the program.
- A written sample from coursework in sociology or a related discipline.

**International Students:** Most international applicants are required to submit TOEFL or IELTS test scores. A Declaration and Certification of Finances form must also be completed. International students should see the Graduate Admissions website for additional instructions. Also, the UMass Boston Office of Global Programs hosts a student orientation and a mandatory workshop on immigration regulations each term.

To be added to our mailing list, contact:

Enrollment Information Services  
University of Massachusetts Boston  
100 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125-3393  
Tel: 617.287.6000 (TTY/TDD: 617.287.6010)  
email: enrollment.info@umb.edu  
Visit the University’s web site at: www.umb.edu

If you have questions about the program, please write or call:

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College of Liberal Arts  
University of Massachusetts Boston  
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**Additional Opportunities for Graduate Study**

To learn about the PhD Program in Sociology, the Accelerated BA/MA in Applied Sociology, the Graduate Certificate in Forensic Services, and the Graduate Certificate in Survey Research, visit www.umb.edu/academics/cla/sociology/graduate programs.

**About UMass Boston**

UMass Boston, part of the five-member University of Massachusetts system, is an urban public university. Large enough to offer a broad-range of academic choices, UMass Boston is also small enough to maintain a closeness of community.

Its modern harbor campus, three miles from downtown, is situated on a peninsula surrounded by Boston Harbor and Dorchester Bay. The campus houses research and teaching laboratories, a greenhouse, two theatres, an art gallery, an observatory, intramural and intercollegiate athletic facilities, extensive computer resources, and the Healey Library.

Concerts, lectures, and plays on campus offer additional opportunities for a rich and satisfying student life, and the extensive cultural resources of Boston are nearby and easily traveled to using public transportation.

Fact Sheet Revised: 8/14/15