FAQs About MS in TCCS

What is the MS graduate program in Transnational, Cultural, and Community Studies (TCCS)?
The TCCS program is a two-year master’s program for people from diverse backgrounds who are passionate about social justice and want to address the particular experiences of both historical and new racial/ethnic groups in the US. The curriculum includes courses and seminars on transnationalism, critical and postcolonial theories of population movements and factors contributing to the success of historically marginalized groups, transdisciplinary research methods and applications emphasizing community perspectives and partnerships, migration and diaspora, and community development, among others. Our Capstone Project is designed to integrate student learning from the TCCS curriculum about a TCCS-relevant topic of the student’s choice. Our students will be prepared to work with diverse communities in the US or abroad in various roles.

What makes your TCCS graduate program unique?

- **Diverse faculty and students:** Our program draws upon nationally recognized faculty at UMass Boston that have expertise and research experience in themes relevant to transnational migrations, cultures and communities. Our 2015 cohort includes students from diverse life experiences, areas of studies, and ways to further social change, and is representative of UMass Boston rich mix of immigrant, first generation to graduate from college, and U.S. born students from many cultural, racial/ethnic, and religious groups. UMass Boston is a federally recognized Minority Serving Institution, designated as an Asian American Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institution (AANAPISI) by the U.S. Department of Education.

- **Transdisciplinary Curriculum:** We offer an innovative master’s degree program that integrates many disciplines, such as ethnic studies, cultural studies, sociology, anthropology, psychology, public health, public policy, literary and media studies. The complexity of the questions posed by immigration, racial and ethnic disparities, uneven power relations, and the need to interact proactively and effectively with individuals, communities and societies affected by these phenomena call for analyses from disciplines. Students work with faculty from different disciplines to develop unique programs of study and transdisciplinary capstone projects.

- **Transnational Focus:** Our program addresses the experiences of both historical and new racial/ethnic groups in the US, including Native Americans, African Americans, Latinos/as, Pacific Islanders, and East, Near East, South, and Southeast Asian Americans, using comparative perspectives and with the emphasis of connecting the local lived experience with the global forces of population movements.

- **Community Partnerships:** A goal of TCCS is to impart an understanding of the processes of community formation and development needed to support the development of healthy communities. Specifically, MS students will learn to conduct community assessments using a transdisciplinary method approach. We also aim to develop future community leaders via community-engaged research and opportunities.

- **Social Justice Focus:** Our program offers a pathway for students to UMass Boston’s research institutes, which conduct research on issues relevant to key racial and ethnic groups in New England and nationally. These partnerships offer students opportunities for research in their own or the Institutes’ projects.
  - The Institute for Asian American Studies;
  - The Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy;
  - The William Monroe Trotter Institute for the Study of Black Culture, and;
  - The Institute for New England Native American Studies.

- **Student-centered, developmental approach:** Our transdisciplinary approach and commitment to prepare diverse students for professional roles in communities most impacted by societal inequalities in emerging fields, requires a student-centered, culturally and developmentally informed approach to advising and

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mentoring. The program aims to foster learning for educational success and collaborative and transformational leadership by creating a TCCS learning community drawing on student, faculty and institutional strengths and partnerships. A student-centered, developmental approach begins during admission and continues through the program, connecting you to diverse learning communities and professional development opportunities as they articulate a vision and build the competencies you need to actualize your future career plans. Upon entering the program, students will be assigned an academic advisor who will help you navigate the program and coursework and identify faculty and other resources consistent with your academic and professional goals. Students will work with their advisor and program faculty to select electives and areas of concentration, connect with relevant research opportunities and community partners, and identify a Capstone Project topic and mentor(s).

- **Convenient Schedule:** We offer a two-year graduate program with evening classes (typically from 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.), so you can pursue your education while working a job.
- **Convenient Location:** Located in Dorchester, UMass Boston is accessible on the Red Line subway (with free, frequent shuttle buses from the JFK/UMass Boston stop) and two minutes from the Southeast Expressway, Route 93. Safe, on-campus parking is abundant for evening students.
- **Tuition Reduction for State Employees:** Commonwealth of MA employees are eligible for free tuition at state colleges and universities. State employees are required pay for all fees and books.

**How would students describe the TCCS program?**
Students value the social justice basis of the TCCS. Also, the program offers interesting and relevant courses in which students can learn from each other’s unique as well as complementary academic interests and career experiences. The schedule of evening courses with experienced, engaging faculty who are themselves from diverse backgrounds makes it possible to manage a workload that includes full-time jobs and families. Students also enjoy the many benefits of the cohort model, establishing personal and professional contacts with their classmates enduring long after graduation. Finally, students benefit from their access to UMass Boston’s rich diversity in student body, Ethnic Institutes, academic programs and community partnerships dedicated to addressing meaningful social justice issues for diverse and underserved groups.

**How long will it take me to earn the MS degree?**
On a full-time basis (3-4 evening classes per semester) students can complete the program in 2 years. Due to the sequence of courses, there is no spring admission, only fall admission.

**Can I complete the program part-time?**
Yes. Our program is designed for working professionals. Part-time students take 2 evening classes/semester.

**Does the MS program offer funding or financial support?**
Yes. We offer a limited number of graduate assistantships.

**What careers do your graduates pursue?**
Our students bring together their prior life experiences and program training in creative ways, seeking work in the US or abroad as researchers, educators, service providers, community planners, policy analysts and advocates, or in organizations and agencies, be it community-based, governmental, or non-governmental.

**Can I transfer credits from previous graduate work?**
Students may transfer relevant coursework towards the TCCS degree earned from other institutions and earned at UMass Boston. The TCCS Program Director considers transfer credits on a case-by-case basis.