The Future of Graduate Education in the College of Social Sciences

Summer 2013

Submitted by
Faculty and Staff
in the
College of Social Sciences
Introduction

On June 5, 2013 representatives from Administrative Council, Faculty Council, and Directors of Graduate Studies joined members of the Dean’s Office to address the question:

What is the future of graduate education in the College of Social Sciences?

Addressing the issue of graduate education in the College of Social Sciences was a next logical step for the college as a whole.

- During the Spring Semester 2013 the faculty in the College approved its first Strategic Plan. Found within this plan are several action steps that relate to graduate education. For example, Action Step 1b encourages the growth of a collaborative culture of interdisciplinarity and Action Step 2a supports the development of interdisciplinary programs. Action Step 2c encourages faculty to explore innovative program options to enhance retention, progression, and graduation rates, while Action Step 2d encourages faculty to initiate undergraduate and graduate certificate programs in specific social science areas and specialties. And action Step 3b encourages faculty to augment opportunities for supervised internships and practica in community settings.

- At the same time a strategic plan was being written, the College itself had entered only its second year of a decentralized graduate school. As of this writing, the College has completed two years as the single point of accountability for our graduate programs.

- New information was also being sent from the Board of Regents. First it was announced that UWG would soon reside in the category of “Regional Comprehensive Universities.” Institutions classified as regional comprehensive universities offer a number of undergraduate and master’s-level programs with some doctoral programs. Typically, associate-level degrees are not offered at regional universities. Graduate programs at regional comprehensive universities are characterized as master’s-dominant. While teaching is a core focus at all USG institutions, the emphasis on basic and applied research is heavier at regional universities than state universities or state colleges, but not emphasized as heavily as research universities.

- And, in a memo dated April 3, 2013, Dr. Houston Davis, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Academic Officer wrote:

Low-Producing Programs:

4) Over the course of late spring and early summer we will also be producing what are known as Program Threshold Reports. Some of you may remember these reports as they were used in past years to identify low-producing programs for the purposes of Comprehensive Program Review. These reports identify any degree program that averaged less than 10 graduates over a rolling three-year period. These programs will be identified as low-producing programs, and we will be asking you to address what you are doing with the program to address its productivity, quality, and viability. The goal is to have a report on low-producing programs and how institutions are responding to low-producing programs to the Board in September, 2013.
Indeed, the time is right to address graduate education in the College of Social Sciences.

However, addressing the role of graduate education in the College is not a task to be completed without some understanding of the national trends in graduate education. Relying heavily upon current literature:

- We recognize that recruitment for graduate programs begins first with our pool of undergraduate students.

- We recognize that increasing graduate enrollment requires that we work more closely with our potential pool of candidates, making sure that our undergraduate students come to think of a graduate education as something realistic, obtainable, and affordable.

- We recognize that the most recent increases in graduate enrollment have come from nontraditional students.

- We are painfully aware of the disparities between races when we review graduate enrollment.

- We recognize that we have a paucity of international students enrolled in our graduate programs.

- We recognize that obtaining a master’s degree as a terminal degree is much more common in our fields of study than in others.

- We recognize that Masters Programs have the strongest connection to the workforce.

- We recognize the importance of mentoring and providing information about career opportunities for students in our Masters programs.

- We recognize that financial support is the most significant factor contributing to the ability to complete a graduate degree.

- We recognize that accelerated programs are growing in both popularity and number.

- We recognize the value of partnering with industry and government to establish graduate research assistantships.

- We recognize the importance of providing internships and work study opportunities for graduate students.
General Information about Graduate Education in the College of Social Sciences

- Four of the six departments within the College of Social Sciences offer graduate degrees. Masters degrees are offered in the departments of Criminology, Political Science and Planning, Psychology, and Sociology. A Ph.D. is offered in the Department of Psychology.

- Each of our active graduate programs meets the Board of Regents definition of a ‘viable program.’ That is, each program has graduated more than 10 students over a rolling three year period.
  - In the two years that the program has been active, 11 students have graduated with a Master of Arts degree in Criminology.
  - Over the past five years, 49 students have graduated with a Master in Public Administration, 76 students have graduated with a Master of Arts degree in Psychology, and 21 students have graduated with a Master of Arts degree in Sociology.
  - Only one student has graduated with a Ph.D. in Psychology – a fact to be expected as the program itself is only two years old.

- Many of the Master of Arts degrees offered in the College can be found on the Bureau of Labor Statistics “Top Growing Occupations.” According to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, by the year 2020, jobs for Master level psychologists are expected to increase 18.2%, jobs for Master level sociologists are expected to increase 18.1%, and jobs for Master level political scientists (MPA) are expected to increase 7.9%.

Graduate Programs in the College of Social Sciences

Deactivated Program

Master of Urban and Regional Planning
Within the very first month of being charged as the single point of accountability for our graduate programs, Dean McCandless met with the new Graduate Studies Associate, Patricia Wells and made it clear that the graduate program, Master in Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) would be deactivated if there was not a significant increase in the number of enrolled students. Dean McCandless made this decision based upon several variables, including but not limited to: low enrollment numbers over the period of a decade, low graduation numbers over the period of a decade, and the current financial situation and challenges that both the University and the College was facing. To further clarify her position, Dean McCandless set a target enrollment of a minimum of ten (10) students by Fall Semester 2012. Choosing the number ten (10) was in line with previous interpretations offered by the Board of Regents for what constitutes a ‘viable program.’
By Fall Semester 2012, there were 13 students enrolled in the MURP program. Of these total 13 students, nine students paid in-state tuition, one student paid out-of-state tuition, and three students served as Graduate Research Assistants and received tuition waivers.

Regardless of increases in enrollment, economic challenges prevailed and all Deans were asked by the Provost to offer a program from their respective colleges to be ‘cut.’

Dean McCandless sent the request for ‘a program to cut’ to Faculty Council. The same request was made of Administrative Council.

On October 3, 2012, during the meeting of Administrative Council it was agreed that the program Master’s in Urban and Regional Planning would be offered as the College’s ‘cut.’

Since that point in time there has been much discussion among faculty, staff, and administrators regarding this decision. After a year long discussion of this decision by many constituencies around campus, the Faculty Senate in their meeting of April, 2013 passed a motion requesting that President Sethna reconsider the deactivation of the Master in Urban and Regional Planning program.

In his response to this motion, President Sethna wrote: “It was the decision of the College of Social Sciences to offer up the MURP program. For either the Provost or the President to second-guess this decision would not be appropriate. They should reserve the right to do so under a limited set of circumstances such as if the process were flawed, but I have every reason to believe that the COSS decision was made in good faith and with good data. However, since the Faculty Senate has asked for reconsideration for this particular program, and having noted that the MURP decision was that of the COSS, I am respectfully requesting the Dean to reconsider the COSS recommendation that they send forward to the Provost.”

Following the request from President Sethna, Dean McCandless consulted again with members of the College’s Faculty Council, Administrative Council, and Directors of Graduate Studies in the College.

During the process of reconsideration the leadership team in the college considered many variables. First to be considered was the fact that, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the occupation of Urban and Regional Planners is noted as one of the top growing occupations. In fact, employment opportunities in this field are projected to grow 16.2 % between the years 2010 and 2020.

The leadership team also considered the student impact if this program continued on the path of deactivation. Obviously, deactivating the MURP program would negatively impact the 19 students who were currently enrolled and the dozen or so students who have an application in process. All of these students would lose opportunities. The most obvious opportunity loss, of course, is that their connections to their alma mater will be weakened. Opportunities for connections with faculty who taught in the program, as well as peers who graduated from the program, will be damaged if not totally abandoned. Even more frustrating will be the fact that
our graduates will no longer have a faculty to turn to for additional mentoring or even letters of recommendation. Suffice it to say that we will lose another important community within our College.

The deactivation of this program would negatively impact this College in several ways. ‘Cutting’ this program will send the wrong message to our colleagues. After all, we have only had two years to invest in a program that floundered under the direction of the previous Graduate School for more than a decade. However, in a single year we have increased enrollment by 325% and invested in new initiatives to revitalize this program. Just as important is the fact that urban and regional planning courses are the backbone of a solid public health program and without the MURP program courses important to a public health program would be missing.

In addition to the loss of revenue from the enrolled students the deactivation of the MURP program will negatively impact the GIS certificate program in the College of Science and Mathematics. Due to UWG’s commitment to interdisciplinary studies the GIS program is dependent upon courses within the MURP program and without the MURP program the necessary courses will not be offered.

The College’s stated goal of ‘Serving Humanity. Doing Public Good’ will be damaged. Already our MURP students have earned recognition at the local level. With the deactivation of this program surrounding communities will no longer be able to be helped by the program. This is particularly critical in light of the fact that there are only two other programs of this kind in the state (GA Tech and Savannah State) and not one program of this kind in our service area.

As we considered the impact of deactivation we also considered the challenges currently facing this program. Low enrollment and even lower graduation rates have persisted for over a decade. For example, over the last decade only 10 persons have been awarded a Master’s degree in Urban and Regional Planning. Such a track record does not instill hope for the future. Neither does the graduation record of this program meet the BOR definition of a viable program; that is, for a graduate program to be considered viable the program must graduate ten students over a rolling three year period.

Nonetheless, since June, 2011, the time that the Graduate School was closed and individual colleges were given sole responsibility for their respective graduate programs, much has changed. While we cannot yet brag of a higher graduation rate, we can brag about a significant increase in enrollment.

As we acknowledge the significant increase in student enrollment it is important as well to acknowledge other program successes. For example, The Chalk Level Planning Project, led by Dr. Hee-Jung Jun earned an Outstanding Student Project Award from the Georgia Chapter of the American Planning Association. Undergraduate and graduate students in Dr. Jun’s spring 2012 Housing Community Development course collaborated with the Newnan Urban Redevelopment Authority to develop a plan for the Chalk Level community near downtown Newnan. Students walked the neighborhood, analyzed its strengths and weaknesses, organized a community meeting, and presented final recommendations to Newnan’s URA and Chalk Level residents. An overview of the project was published in the Georgia Planning Association’s e-magazine.
Further, a short video about the project can be found at: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZX8X5mobUQE&feature=relmfu.

In addition to this outstanding work, UWG MURP graduate and former part-time Political Science Instructor, Janet Hyde, was named Villa Rica Community Development Director in June, 2012. And, over the course of the last six months officials from the cities of Carrollton, Douglasville, Bremen, Bowden, McDonough, and Chattanooga have requested students – either for internships or employment. This then explains why that in every case, graduates of this program have found employment in their field of expertise.

The future of the MURP program is as bright as the past few months. To be sure employment opportunities for graduates remain positive. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nationally, employment of urban and regional planners is expected to grow 16 percent in the next eight years. Locally, the Georgia Department of Labor projects a seven percent increase in urban and regional planners and a 40.8% increase in Social and Community Service Managers by the year 2018.

Taking all of this information together, it was the decision of the leadership team in the College of Social Sciences to re-activate the Masters of Urban and Regional Planning program immediately.

In the process of reactivating the MURP program and at the same time we are proposing the following strategies:

1. **Strategy One: Add a Graduate Certificate in Urban and Regional Planning**
   A graduate certificate program in Urban and Regional Planning will provide advanced training to practitioners currently employed in the public, private or voluntary sector who seek to acquire the skills and competencies required to address urban and regional challenges and opportunities. (See Appendix for Proposal)

2. **Strategy Two: Enhance and highlight Internship Opportunities**
   Required internships will separate our program from other competitive, even online programs in urban and regional planning. As stated by Quinderious Roberts, one of the leaders in this field, “the best way to get accurate information about a neighborhood is to go there, meet the residents, and communicate with them. You can analyze all the data you want, but you will never gain perspective unless you conduct field research.” As such, we will begin a media campaign to advertise the positive outcomes of having a required, real field and practical planning experience. Within this campaign we will highlight some of the work and the many employment opportunities that have resulted.
Active Programs with a Student Enrollment less than 20

Master of Arts – Criminology

The MA Criminology is a strong program that helps fulfill the mission of the department, college, university, and discipline. It has produced at a level that exceeds expectations of a newer program (2007). Since 2009 (first cohort class) the program has graduated 19 (with two more expected for summer 2013), far exceeding the BOR standard for a viable program. The main strength of the program is its student body. Not only are they a pleasure to teach, but they are an indispensable part of department functioning. The MA Criminology Program is an investment that has paid off greatly. While it serves many purposes, most notable are its contributions to advanced education, teaching, faculty research, administrative support, and community service.

The program offers the only MA Criminology in Georgia and with its diverse faculty is able to offer a curriculum that addresses the important needs of professional criminal justice (policy, practice, and evaluation) and academic criminology (theory and research). Several graduates obtain important positions with agencies and others enter doctoral programs.

The MA program is sustained mostly by a department that is financially healthy due largely to its online undergraduate program. In fact, it now utilizes Graduate Teaching Assistants in the delivery of online courses, including as instructors of record (advanced students). These TAs receive formal training in online teaching and are closely supervised by professors, thereby ensuring quality control (perhaps more so than the use of adjuncts). TAs have intentions to enter doctoral programs and eventually become professors, therefore the graduate program also plays an important role in training the next generation of scholars in new pedagogical techniques.

The Criminology Department utilizes several Graduate Research Assistants. Faculty members have several roles and responsibilities which can make it difficult to engage in scholarly research, writing, and community collaboration. Without the assistance of RAs, professors would not likely be able to produce at the level of a Robust Tier research university. Criminology professors and graduate students commonly research and write together. For example, the Survey Research Center has relied heavily on Criminology RAs, including on projects such as the Branding Survey and the West Georgia Area Survey (WGAS). In fact, the WGAS would not be possible without them.

Finally, criminology graduate students have been helping build ties with the community largely through internships. Graduate interns perform advanced duties with agencies compared to undergraduate interns. Therefore, especially with limited resources, agencies may rely on them more. The program usually has at least one intern each term including summer. Criminology graduate interns have performed very well and earned a fine reputation, providing excellent community service and reflection of the university in the community.

Even with great success, the Criminology Department is constantly searching for ways to improve and advance the MA Criminology program. In addition to improving the curriculum, the following strategies will be utilized:
1. **Strategy One: Add Alternatives to Entrance Exams**

Recognizing that good students may possess different types of evidence of ability, the department will implement alternatives to its entrance exam requirement, such as the LSAT (law school exam). In fact the department is currently waiving the GRE requirement for its high-achieving undergraduate majors.

2. **Strategy Two: Introduce an accelerated Master’s program**

The Department of Criminology is proposing an accelerated Master’s Program. Students in the accelerated Master’s Program may double count up to 9 hours of coursework and obtain a Master’s degree within 12 months of completing the Bachelor’s degree. This program is designed to allow academically superior undergraduate students the opportunity to complete both a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree after completing 147 credits, as opposed to 156 credits currently required. (See Appendix)

**Rationale:**

- Many students who succeed easily in undergraduate work choose to pursue higher degrees. With the number of schools within our state and around the country offering graduate degrees in criminology and criminal justice, this program will create for us a niche. In effect, we will allow academically superior students to achieve their objective to earn a graduate degree in less time than earning these degrees separately.

- This proposed program meets important goals set by the University. As found in the Vision Statement for the University of West Georgia, Year 2000 and Beyond, “The University of West Georgia will seek to create for students from various backgrounds every possible avenue to intellectual achievement, personal development, and leadership potential without compromising academic excellence.” Specifically, “the University of West Georgia will be characterized by Educational Opportunities for a Wide Range of Academically-Prepared Students.” Too, this proposed program meets one of the University’s “Bread and Butter Goals,” in that we are “developing (another) focused recruitment plan for our graduate education programs.”

- The job outlook for the Criminology major, particularly those with advanced degrees, is excellent. Opportunities in law enforcement, courts and corrections are rapidly expanding. Furthermore, there are a number of federal jobs that require Master’s degrees.

- The undergraduate criminology program has always been a strong program. The number of majors in the program remains consistently high – averaging over 350 majors and 75 graduates per year in the past five years.

- Hastening the degree granting process is not new to the University System of Georgia. In fact, the renowned joint enrollment and early admission programs do just that. These programs are available to select, college-bound high school students whose academic accomplishments indicate that they merit special consideration, and the programs allow these students to get a head start on their baccalaureate degrees. The Accelerated Master’s Degree Program in Criminology is similar to the joint enrollment and early
admission programs in that it will only be offered to University of West Georgia criminology majors whose scholarly records indicate that they are likely to be successful in the program.

3. **Strategy Three: Create Graduate Certificate**

The department is jointly proposing a Graduate Certificate in Applied Research and Evaluation Methods (See Appendix) and will be considering another certificate in Counterterrorism and Homeland Security.

The first certificate program would increase involvement in social science graduate programs in three ways. One, individuals not interested in a full graduate program may find that the certificate program would meet their professional and educational needs. Two, students currently working toward a graduate degree might find the certificate a useful enhancement to their abilities and marketability. Three, with a “head start” on courses, certificate students may decide that they would like to complete a graduate degree program.

The second certificate will be explored with a feasibility study of new faculty and subsequently student interest this coming year.

**Master of Arts – Sociology**

When the Department of Sociology and Criminology split in the spring of 2011, the MA program in Sociology had 4 students. Enrollment has nearly quadrupled since then but, more importantly, the department is on track to consistently graduate 3-5 students per year. It is also worth mentioning that the faculty managed this feat despite only having 3 tenure track faculty members eligible to teach graduate classes, mentor graduate students, and serve on thesis committees. Having made four strategic hires this year (2013) we can confidently build the program with the knowledge that we now have the faculty in place to support increased growth. To that end we have developed four strategies to strengthen our program.

1. **Strategy One: Create Two New Certificate Programs**

We have developed proposals for two new certificate programs: one in Applied Research and Program Evaluation and a second in Nonprofit Management and Community Development (See Appendix). The proposed programs are interdisciplinary and tailored to strengthen existing ties with the community. The proposed programs are in high-demand fields and will require no additional courses to be developed. The Applied Research and Program Evaluation Certificate (AREV) will be jointly administered by Sociology and Criminology, whole the Nonprofit Management and Community Development certificate will involve the partnership of Political Science and Sociology.

The certificates will increase student participation in Master's programs in Sociology, Criminology, and others in three ways. One, new students not interested in our graduate programs may enroll in the certificate program to meet their educational and professional needs. Two, with a "head start," certificate program students may ultimately decide to complete a Master's program. Three, current students may supplement their Master's program with the certificate program, thereby becoming better prepared to enter their chosen profession.
As such, the certificates will make our existing MA programs more enticing to a broad array of prospective students including mid-career professionals, non-traditional students, and our existing undergraduate body. These certificate programs will also advance our new president’s stated mission to strengthen ties to the community by helping local professionals currently employed in the non-profit sector build capacity and develop new skills. The certificate programs also address the Colleges of Social Sciences’ strategic planning objectives to develop innovative certificate programs and establish new interdisciplinary curricula.

2. **Strategy Two: Introduce an Accelerated Master’s Program in Sociology**

We have developed a proposal for an accelerated master’s program in Sociology. Georgia State University has already developed a similar program allowing students to earn a combined B.S./M.A. degree in five years. By incentivizing graduate study, the program will help us attract and keep our strongest students. (See Appendix)

3. **Strategy Three: Community Engagement**

With the addition of four new faculty members we will develop a number of new initiatives designed to broaden engagement with the community and to showcase our graduate program offerings. We will use the Center of Social Dynamics, our qualitative research lab, to host a series of workshops on grant-writing, volunteer mentoring, and applied research methods. The workshops will be tailored to those currently volunteering for or working in the non-profit sector. We are also in the process of strengthening our graduate internship programs. We will amend our MA program curricula to allow students to participate in a rigorous 6 credit-hour internship in lieu of writing a thesis or taking a comprehensive exam.

4. **Strategy Four: Interdisciplinary Synergies**

We have recently taken steps to strengthen ties to other graduate programs in the College of Social Sciences by offering courses that support their curricular objectives. For example, students in the Psychology Ph.D. program will fulfill their graduate statistics requirements by enrolling in a graduate level statistics course in the spring of 2014.

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**Active Programs with a Student Enrollment greater than 20**

**Master of Public Administration**

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program in the College of Social Sciences at the University of West Georgia has robust enrollment numbers. This past spring semester (2013) there were 24 MPA students enrolled.

Robust enrollment in MPA program is expected to continue for several reasons. First, our program is **NAASPA accredited**. NASPAA accreditation indicates that the program has undergone a rigorous peer review process and has been judged to be a quality program. Programs seeking accreditation must be in substantial compliance with the standards of education for the field. Thus, the benefits of graduating from an accredited program when
seeking employment is that employers are assured that the degree has come from a program that is recognized as meeting a standard of quality.

Second, due to ever changing demographic patterns most states, including Georgia, require its cities and counties to develop and update a master plan. Additionally, cities of all sizes in the US and around the world have developed and implemented both urban revitalization and emergency disaster plans. In response to such changes, the MPA program currently offers a Planning Track that covers many aspects of urban and regional planning. In a like fashion, our Comparative Administration track is increasing in popularity as both international students and veterans, who have amassed international experience, find this area of study beneficial to their career goals.

**Master of Arts in Humanistic/Transpersonal Psychology**

In 1967, Abraham Maslow, the father of Humanistic Psychology, received a call from Dr. Jim Thomas, who was then professor of psychology at West Georgia College. He asked if there was someone, perhaps one of his students, who could come here and establish a program rooted in the tradition of Maslow’s thinking. Maslow recommended Dr. Myron (Mike) Arons who established the MA program as the first program in humanistic psychology in the entire world within an academic setting. Since that time the program has flourished, has enrolled students from all 50 states and from every continent except for Antarctica, and graduates on average 15 students every academic year.

The University of West Georgia Psychology Department is unique from other psychology programs in that our theoretical roots are in the humanistic, critical and transpersonal psychology traditions, with an emphasis on consciousness studies, existential-phenomenological philosophy, counseling and psychotherapy, spirituality and transpersonal studies, human development and potential, critical disciplines, and integrative mind-body medicine. Our innovative program further fuses the wisdom of ancient traditions with classical foundations of modern psychology and recent developments in cognitive neuroscience. Some courses center on intensive studies of some of the great psychologists including the depth psychological work of Freud, Jung, Horney, Lacan, pioneers within the English Object Relations tradition, R. D. Laing and Fritz Perls, and important figures within the marital and family therapy tradition. Courses have also centered on the continental, phenomenological thought of Edmund Husserl, Soren Kierkegaard, Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Alfred Schutz, Paul Ricoeur, and J. H. van den Berg, and the themes of the existential-phenomenological tradition are regularly interwoven throughout other classes.

The important work of such pioneering American third-force psychologists is also regularly discussed, including the writings of William James, Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, Arthur Combs, Virginia Satir, Sidney Jourard, Rollo May, and Amedeo Giorgi. These and other influential thinkers illuminate psychological life in the service of clarifying both a truly human psychology and understanding of the lives we live. Finally, the perennial philosophy, spiritual traditions, and fourth-force psychology are explored through the writings of Charles Tart, Aldous Huxley, Ken Wilber, Frances Vaughan, Michael Washburn, Krishnamurti, Tarthang Tulku, and the classics of Hinduism, Buddhism and Taoism.
We also believe that to fully appreciate the positive transformations fostered by a truly human psychology, students should be exposed to a critical examination of how traditional psychology approaches psychological life. Historically, humanistic, phenomenological, and transpersonal psychology developed as reactions to problems in the traditional accounts of the human psychological condition. Knowing what those problems are, by direct examination and explication of them, can enrich our appreciation of the contributions being made through the human science tradition and help us orient to its viable alternatives. Hence, there are many courses and ongoing discussions in the program focused on traditional in psychology. These include: Personality and Motivation • History and Development of Psychology • Perceptual Psychology • Research Methods • Advanced Social Psychology • Developmental Psychology • Advanced Abnormal Psychology • Psychotherapy and • Psychological Assessment. These offerings in our curriculum pull from, and often reformulate, traditional accounts within psychology. Here, our intention is for the student to know what the tradition is, to disengage its sense from its nonsense, and to see the value of possible alternatives. Finally, the program has always reached to consider other cultural contexts besides American life, for the value that these situations may have in helping us to understand and flesh out more holistic portraits of psychological life.

To date, the Master’s Program has *always accepted more students than it can support financially*. Nevertheless, we receive support for 15 graduate research assistants each year @ $3,000 per semester for each student. Occasionally a number of additional students may receive either an in-state or out-of-state tuition waiver to assist them in their matriculation. Students who receive the GRAs are required to work up to 20 hours a week with the professor to whom they are assigned. Typically their assignments range from helping faculty with their research or in some cases, generating research projects that are consistent with both the student and faculty member’s interests. The support our students receive comes from the COSS. Students are evaluated at the end of each semester to access their performance for continuing the assistantship into the next semester. Students are expected to complete their studies within 6-8 semesters with support, since they are limited to 9 credit hours as GRAs.

Since students are not supported during summer sessions, many do not matriculate, but opt to seek employment to cover living expenses for the following academic year. For summer 2013, we have 24 students enrolled in summer courses. For spring 2013, the total enrollment was: 28 (Female) 29 (Male) for a total of 57 students enrolled.

Students who enter the program can choose among three areas of study: Non-Thesis Track (45 hours), Thesis Track (33 hours total), and Clinical Track (60 hours). Approximately 30% of students choose the clinical track, 50% non-thesis, 19% thesis, and 1% thesis and clinical track. Students pursing the clinical track must be supervised in a 300 hour practicum by one the licensed professors. Under all three plans of study, students must satisfy a comprehensive oral exit exam.

This past year approximately 30% of MA students were accepted into doctoral level or equivalent programs for further study. Those programs include: UWG, Duquesne, Georgia State, Pace, Mercer, and Saybrook.
Even with great success, the Psychology Department is constantly searching for ways to improve and advance the MA program.

1. **Strategy One: Introduce an accelerated Master’s program**

The Department of Psychology is proposing an accelerated Master’s Program for the degree program in Psychology. Students in the accelerated Master’s Program may double count up to 9 hours of coursework and obtain a Master’s degree within 12 months of completing the Bachelor’s degree. This program is designed to allow academically superior undergraduate students the opportunity to complete both a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree after completing 147 credits, as opposed to 156 credits currently required.

**Ph.D. of Psychology**

In 2007, after many years effort by the University and Department, the Psychology Department was granted a Psy.D. in Individual, Organizational, & Community Transformation. In 2011, the Board of Regents allowed the Psy.D. to transition to a Ph.D. in Psychology: Consciousness & Society. This is the first “in-discipline” Ph.D. program outside of the three major research universities in the University of Georgia system. The program was revamped to better reflect the granting of a Ph.D., as the Psy.D. is often seen as more of a praxis degree. As the Department had always aimed to create a Ph.D., the changes were slight but not insignificant.

This outstanding program is grounded in the Department's approach to psychology as a distinctively human science. It trains scholars and practitioners at the highest level of the discipline to serve as consultants, leaders, and teachers who can affect interventions at the individual and organizational level in community, corporate, and educational settings. The program draws on two strong themes within humanistic psychology, an interest in consciousness and experience and an articulation of the broader context of sociality in the realization of human values within community. There are three theoretical approaches to the program’s attempt to analyze the intersection of consciousness and society: Critical, Humanistic & Transpersonal. Our program remains within the college’s vision of a multi-disciplinary academic framework.

Outside reviewers of the program, chosen from a list of prominent psychologists, noted that the program “promises to garner an outstanding national and international reputation that will be a credit to the university.” The following positive remarks from reviewers were of particular note: 1) “the outstanding admixture of alternative approaches”; 2) the renowned and stellar reputation of the faculty who were referred to as “top notch,” “highly visible,” “capable of directing quality research”, “nationally recognized” and “outstanding” scholars”; 3) the emphasis on qualitative research as a prescient and an important contribution to the field. Recently a new section of the American Psychological Association division on research has been devoted solely to qualitative research. This bold new initiative squares perfectly with the aims and trajectory of our Ph.D. program.

The Psy.D. program began in 2007 with four students all receiving a research assistantship of $3,000 per academic year. Since that time the program has expanded to 43 students, the majority of whom have been awarded graduate teaching assistantships (GTAs) or graduate research assistantships (GRAs) at some point during their studies. The stipend for teaching and research positions is much higher than in the first years, but remains one third less than comparable or competing institutions. The GTA’s training exceeds SACS standards; their teaching evaluations
are on par with faculty. GTAs generate approximately 3,500 hours of undergraduate credit, mostly within the 1000-2000 level courses, although those with particular skill and expertise may teach non-general undergraduate courses. If the performance of research and teaching assistants remains high, they can receive support for up to four years. The College of Social Sciences provides a travel budget for these students, which is competitive and awarded to those who present at peer reviewed conferences. There are a number of students who have finished classes who are paying tuition and one student who is paying full tuition. With the help of the College of Social Sciences and Distance Learning, our Ph.D. students are also active in on-line teaching in the Department.

Our doctoral cohorts are comprised of students with a wide variety of interdisciplinary backgrounds. Some can teach in other areas, e.g., counseling education, theology, gender studies, and philosophy. Applicants are from all over the country and many are international students. We have students from Kenya, India, Nigeria, Argentina, and Trinidad; our domestic range includes students from California, New York, Tennessee, Alabama, Texas, Connecticut and other states. We also draw strongly on the best suited students within our Master’s program. In one cohort, 80% of accepted applicants were out of state although the balance of in state and out state and international students varies each year.

One of our doctoral students received his degree in 2012, and another is set to receive his degree in the summer of 2013. Both of these students have accepted tenure-track positions that begin in the fall of 2013. Two other students have proposed and are on their way to finishing their dissertations. One of these students has been offered a teaching position, but declined to continue dissertation research for one more year. The average time of completion for a psychology Ph.D. nationally is 7.2 years, without any curriculum changes, and our students have responded well to the changing demands of the program.

Students (and one former student) have over nine published peer reviewed papers. At least 4 papers are under current review. Students have presented over 40 papers and 18 posters at national academic conferences. A similar number of papers have been presented at local academic conferences. This amounts to a total of nearly 100 papers/posters in the past four years. The finished dissertation by Dr. John Roberts is under consideration for publication by Routledge Press.

The following is just a small sample of the wide variety and praxis related work engaged in by our doctoral students.

- Students within the context of a mediation process called restorative justice have worked with the founder of the approach, Dominique Barter, and have utilized these skills in a number of settings, such as a girls camp in Carrollton as well as in collaboration with the local judicial system.
- Students and the program have partnered with Common Bonds Institute to work globally on mental health issues.
- Louis Boynton traveled to Amman, Jordan to lead a workshop on restorative justice.
- Kate Brady heads a national qualitative study on disabilities as she works on her dissertation.
• William Campbell was awarded the Project ReNeWal Domestic Violence Hero Award for pro-bono services provided to a family shelter, including fundraising preparation, technology support, and organization for the last several years (2008-2012). Campbell implemented an assessment using UWG based methodologies in pre and post qualitative evaluation of the impact and results concerning the program. This work was done in collaboration with Jonathan Skalski who provided substantial expertise and analysis concerning the process and research. Mr. Campbell traveled to Haiti to assist after the devastating earthquake there.

• Michael Frazier has worked with youth in an integration of meditative and sports activities entailing mentoring locally and has worked as well in South Africa.

• Ms Pauline Waweru has worked to develop more sensitive and holistic approaches to assist traumatized immigrants to the United States.

• Ms. Christina Wright and Louis Boynton have worked on needs assessment in the Carrollton area coordination with faculty, Dr. Jeannette Diaz. Mr. Boynton is the webmaster for the Mental Health Disaster website, from a grant obtained by Dr. Larry Schor.

• A number of doctoral students work with student athletics on holistic approaches to sports performance and physical/psychological care.

• Mr. Richard LaFleuer has interned at Disney World, working on organizational leadership and development.

• The Ph.D. program has ties with The Atlanta Foundation which is a center for grant applications and research. The Executive Director of that foundation has spoken at UWG and shown great interest in the success of the doctoral program.

New Programs on the Horizon

Department of Anthropology
Planning for the future growth of the department of Anthropology requires that we consider our position to offer a Master of Arts in Anthropology, especially for students interested in archaeology. With our current faculty we would be able to advise MA or MS students on a variety of thesis topics related to prehistoric archaeology and cultural anthropology, including early and late prehistoric archaeology, artifact analysis/methods, subsistence and settlement patterns, and Southeastern Indian culture. In addition, we could provide technical training in archaeological survey and excavation methods, mapping and geographic analysis (GPS, total station mapping, GIS), artifact analysis, curation, technical report writing, and public interpretation. Adding the resources available through the Waring Laboratory and our Biological and Forensics Anthropology Laboratory our students would have the resources and collections needed to develop and complete some of the aforementioned projects. Upon completion of the program, our faculty and college contacts would place us in an excellent position to help our graduates find work, internships, and Ph.D. programs.

Department of Mass Communications
Preliminary research is in progress to explore the feasibility of offering an online Master of Science in Media Theory and Research. The program will primarily target communication professionals and alumni who are astute at message-making in a digital, multimedia landscape,
but desire a broader and deeper understanding of the relationship between mass media and society within the framework of communication science which spans social/behavioral and critical/cultural theories and scholarship. The program will examine the strengths and limitations of said theories and scholarship as well as economic, ethical, legal/policy, and social implications of mass media within the context of freedom of speech, freedom of press, media competition, media convergence, diversity, and social responsibility. Concomitantly, graduates will be well poised to affect heightened social responsibility and responsiveness as communication professionals and educators.

**Graduate Studies Associate**

As we consider the future of graduate education in our College it is just as important to re-evaluate the job description of our Graduate Studies Associate.

The current job description of our Graduate Studies Associate (GSA) was developed by committee during the transition of the closing of the Graduate School. The result was a common job description that would be used by all Colleges as each College moved forward in hiring a GSA.

After two years the time is now to both review and change, as necessary, the tasks expected of our GSA, deleting those tasks that are being handled by other offices around campus and incorporating new tasks as we continue to address the national trends in graduate education.

The new job description of our Graduate Studies Associate with new tasks highlighted follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Work:</th>
<th>This position will be the primary lead in the College of Social Sciences Dean’s office for all graduate studies programs within the college, including degree and non-degree programs.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Research and report on changes/trends in relevant graduate studies programs and recommend future directions for graduate programs within the College.</td>
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<td>Assist DGS with the retention, progression, and graduation of students in COSS graduate programs.</td>
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<td>Monitor research and report on workforce needs to help make the transition from graduate studies to successful employment.</td>
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<td>Coordinate marketing the college’s graduate programs locally, regionally and abroad.</td>
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<td>Coordinate all communications with applicants for graduate programs.</td>
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<td>Responsibility/Duty</td>
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<td>Review and evaluate graduate applications; focus is on students' eligibility to study in Masters and Doctoral level programs. Serve as liaison with applicable Enrollment Management offices (i.e., Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, etc.). Manage graduate student services and consult with faculty and students on issues, college and university procedures and policy. Serve as Chair of &quot;Director of Graduate Studies&quot; monthly meetings with college Dean and Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. Advise DGSs of recommended strategies regarding the development of and changes to graduate policies and procedures. Implements policies and procedures within the department. Provide updates to the faculty and students regarding the best way to help students move toward graduation. Serve as Database Manager. Coordinate activities and agenda for program reviews. Conduct data collection and prepare reports for directors, associate deans, and dean. Coordinate programs and activities for all Graduate Programs and give at least two seminars fall/spring semester to potential students. Coordinate educational and professional development seminars for undergraduate/graduate students in cooperation with DGS and relevant on-campus and off-campus units. Develop marketing and communication strategies specific to the graduate and adult-learner population. Develop, execute and evaluate marketing and recruitment initiatives. Create marketing and recruitment materials for all graduate programs. Plan, schedule and coordinate recruitment activities, advertising, communication and follow-up with prospective students. Support prospective students throughout the graduate school search and application process (i.e., pre-qualification, necessary documents, any missing information, etc.). Provide guidance and information to prospective students. Manage certain graduate events which include: Commencement, Graduate Research Day, etc. Maintain communication with prospective students and work to increase the percentage of complete applications. Publish GRA/GA job openings and maintain web link to ensure all required paperwork is completed and qualifications are met for the position. Maintain graduate student records and ensure confidentiality of student academic and personal records. Develop Excel databases which include the use of appropriate Banner jobs needed for student information retrieval, registration, etc. Evaluate COSS international graduate student applications; verify transcript analyses, TOEFL scores and test scores. Continue to serve as DSO until International Office hires new employee. All other duties as assigned.</td>
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APPENDIX

Item 1: The Graduate Certificate Program in Urban and Regional Planning

The Graduate Certificate Program in Urban and Regional Planning will require 12 credit hours, to include two required courses and two elective courses from the following courses that are already offered within the department:

Core Courses
- PLAN 5704 Planning Theory and Practice
- PLAN 6702 Land Use Planning

Elective Courses (Any two courses)
- PLAN 5701 Technology and Sustainable Economic Development
- PLAN 5705 Computers in Politics, Planning, and Management
- PLAN 5721 Housing and Community Development
- PLAN 5722 Environmental Planning
- PLAN 5723 Transportation Planning
- PLAN 5742 Sustainable Development
- PLAN 5784 Planning Seminar
- PLAN 5785 Topics in Planning
- PLAN 6285 Planning Methods

Item 2: Proposal for an Accelerated Master’s Program in Criminology

The Criminology degree is well suited for an accelerated program. The core program (60 hours) plus courses for the major (48 hours) totals 108 hours required for the degree, twelve hours short of the 120 hours required for graduation. Currently undergraduate students are required to take an additional twelve hours of general electives to fill the gap, but these courses have very few limitations and can be lower division courses. By supplanting these general electives with double counted graduate level courses, the rigor of the undergraduate degree is bolstered without compromising the graduate program requirements. This strategy is similar to other programs in the USG system for up to nine hours. For example, the B.A. /M.B.A. program in the Department of Political Science and International Affairs at Kennesaw State University describes their program as follows:

“…this option offers the opportunity of simultaneously satisfying partial degree requirements for a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in an accelerated program of study. Upon completion of the undergraduate degree, with a satisfactory undergraduate grade point average, and a grade of “B” or better in all graduate courses completed, the student may move to full graduate status in the same graduate program, and the courses taken as an undergraduate can be applied toward the graduate degree.”
The accelerated program is also consistent with the SAC’s requirement that master’s programs be more advanced academically than undergraduate programs (3.6.1). Students in the accelerated program are required to complete the entire 36-hours of the master’s program. Furthermore, only exceptional students with high grade point averages and outstanding performance in undergraduate classes will be admitted to the program. Admitting students of such high caliber will strengthen the graduate program.

**Admission Requirements:**
Students typically apply for the Accelerated program in their junior year.

Prior to submission of the standard application for admission to the Graduate School, all prospective students must meet the following prerequisites:

1. Declared criminology major
2. 3.2 grade point average overall, 3.5 grade point average in criminology courses
3. 60 hours of undergraduate coursework, with at least three courses (9 hours) in the major
4. Transfer students must have completed a minimum of thirty (30) hours at UWG

In addition to the application for admission to the accelerated program, all students:

1. Must have two letters of recommendation from faculty in the criminology program
2. Letter of interest

**To Maintain Eligibility:**
1. Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average in all coursework.
2. Students must receive a grade of B or better in the double counted courses.
3. Completion of all requirements for the Master’s program.

**Additional Information:**
1. Up to 9 hours of graduate credit may be double counted
2. Students not completing the Master’s degree may apply earned credit toward the Bachelor’s degree. Earned credit may not be applied towards the core curriculum.
3. Senior Seminar is not required for students in the Accelerated program.
Item 3: Proposal of an Accelerated Master’s Program in Sociology

The accelerated master’s program in sociology provides academically superior undergraduate students the opportunity to receive both their BS and MA degrees in five years by double counting up to 18 hours of coursework. Students in the accelerated program may obtain an MA in sociology within 12 months of completing the requirements for the BS. Students who double count the full 18 hours can receive both a Bachelor’s and a Master’s degree with as few as 138 hours. Under the standard degree programs, students need at least 156 credits.

Nine of the 18 double-counted hours will be 4000-level classes that are already cross-listed at the 5000-level. Three courses that are required of all sociology undergraduates (SOCI 4000, SOCI 4003 and SOCI 4053) will be taken at the graduate level (SOCI 5000, SOCI 5003 and SOCI 5053). The undergraduate program currently allows for 9 hours of undergraduate electives. In the accelerated program, the remaining 9 hours of double-counted graduate level sociology classes will substitute for these undergraduate electives.

Admission Requirements
Students may apply for the accelerated program if they meet the following requirements:
1. Formally declared major in sociology.
2. Overall grade point average of 3.2.
3. Sociology grade point average of 3.5.
4. Successful completion of a minimum of 60 hours of undergraduate coursework with at least three courses (9 hours) in sociology.
5. Transfer students must have completed a minimum of 30 hours of coursework at the University of West Georgia.

In addition to the application for admission to the Graduate School, all students must submit
1. Letters of recommendation from two faculty members in the sociology program
2. A letter of interest

Program Requirements
In order to successfully complete the accelerated program, students must
1. Maintain a 3.0 grade point average on all coursework.
2. Receive a grade of B or better in the double-counted courses.
3. Complete all requirements for Plan I or Plan II of the Master’s program. Senior Seminar (SOCI 4984) is not a requirement for students admitted to the accelerated program.

Students not meeting these requirements or discontinuing the accelerated program may apply all earned credit to the Bachelor’s degree in sociology. Earned credit may not be applied to the core curriculum.
Item 4: Certificate in Nonprofit Management and Community Development

The Graduate Certificate in Nonprofit Management and Community Development is a collaborative program housed in the College of Social Sciences and administered jointly by the departments of Political Science and Sociology. The program is designed for students who want to learn how to establish, administer, or work for non-governmental and non-profit organizations. While conventional certificate programs have an exclusively managerial focus, our program supplements managerial training by also equipping students with the theoretical and practical skills to engage in grassroots advocacy. For those already employed in the non-profit sector, our certificate offer an opportunity for additional training through courses on grant-writing, program evaluation, and data analysis techniques (quantitative and qualitative).

Our program will be of use to students interested in work involving a broad range of organizations, including social service, cultural, educational, religious, and community organizations. Due to the strength of faculty partnerships with community-based organizations in Carrollton, our program offers opportunities for students to network and gain practical experience in the non-profit world by interning at a wide range of local, regional, and international organizations.

Recent cuts in local and statewide service provision have created new employment opportunities in the non-profit sector. As non-governmental organizations emerge to fill this vacuum, the demand for professionally trained and credentialed experts continues to grow.

To fulfill program requirements students must take 15 credit hours in the courses listed below. The program can be pursued simultaneously with such programs as Public Administration, Sociology, Criminology, Psychology, and Planning. The certificate is also eligible to students who are not seeking MA degrees in the Social Sciences.

Overlap with Existing USG Programs
The University of Georgia in Athens offers both an MA and a certificate program in non-profit management. Georgia State University also offers a graduate certificate program in non-profit management. Georgia Southern has developed a 15 credit online program.

Schedule of Coursework
Courses in the program will usually be offered in an unconventional format appropriate for working professionals. Most of the courses are offered as once-a-week evening classes. Also departments may occasionally offer the courses online (fully or hybrid), on weekends, and Macmaster.

Learning Outcomes
1. Demonstrate theoretical and practical knowledge in reference to one of the following types of non-profit organizations: social service, education, religious, cultural, or community-based organizations.
2. Demonstrate knowledge about how to establish, fund, and operate a non-profit organization.
3. Be able to assess an organization’s effectiveness in achieving its goals.
Admission
1. Applicants to the program must meet the College of Social Sciences requirements and:
2. Submit three letters of recommendation
3. Submit a statement of purpose that includes reasons for seeking a certificate in Nonprofit Management and Community Development
4. Have a minimum overall 2.50 GPA

Program of Study
The certificate requires five courses consisting of 15 credit hours. Courses in statistics, data analysis, and research methods are offered by several departments. Course substitutions can be made with the approval of the certificate faculty adviser.

1. Foundation course:
   a. POLS 5215 Management of Nonprofit Organizations

2. One course in program evaluation:
   a. CRIM or SOCI 6275: Planning and Evaluation

3. One course in research methods, for example:
   a. SOCI 6613: Qualitative Research
   b. SOCI 6660: Institutional Ethnography
   c. POLS 6202: Research Methods for Public Administration
   d. SOCI 6275 Planning and Evaluation
   e. CRIM or SOCI 6015 Managing Data

4. One of the following electives in your area of interest or expertise:
   a. SOCI 5734 Social Work Skills
   b. SOCI 6255 Delinquency, Family, and the Community
   c. POLS 5721 Housing and Community Development
   d. POLS 6209 Theories of Public Organization
   e. SOCI 6700 Social Movements, Protest and Change

5. Internship
   a. SOCI 6286 Internship (Can be waived for those who can provide evidence of equivalent experience)

Overlap with Existing Degree Programs and Additional Course Needs
Students enrolled in the Nonprofit Management and Community Development may use certificate courses toward the completion of MA degrees in Public Administration and Sociology. Since both departments regularly teach these courses, no additional courses are required to support the certificate program. However, once established, classes in grant-writing and community development will be developed. Also, students seeking the certificate in
conjunction with other MA degree programs in the college of Social Sciences must consult their graduate advisors to ensure that they are on track to meet degree requirements.

**Program Evaluation**
The Directors of Graduate Study for the Political Science and Sociology MA programs will share responsibility for annual evaluation of the program’s learning objectives. Both departments have developed sound procedures for SACS evaluation.

**Item 5: Certificate in Applied Research and Evaluation Methods**
The Graduate Certificate in Applied Research and Evaluation Methods is a collaborative program housed in the College of Social Sciences and administered jointly by the departments of Criminology and Sociology. The program is designed for students who aspire to work in academic, governmental, non-profit, and commercial sectors. However, the certificate is also tailored to mid-career professionals whose jobs require advanced training in a variety of quantitative and qualitative evaluation strategies and research methods. The demand for program evaluation is growing as both private and public grant funding agencies require well-trained experts to evaluate the efficacy of programs that they have funded. Students will receive training in applying statistical and qualitative research techniques to analyze and provide feedback on programs in a variety of governmental and non-governmental sectors. To fulfill program requirements students must take 15 credit hours in the courses listed below. The program can be pursued simultaneously with such programs as Sociology, Criminology, Public Administration, Psychology, and Planning. The certificate is also eligible to students who are not seeking MA degrees in the Social Sciences.

**Overlap with Existing USG Programs**
No other institution in the University System of Georgia has a graduate degree or certificate program in program evaluation.

**Schedule of Coursework**
Courses in the program will usually be offered in an unconventional format appropriate for working professionals. Most of the courses are offered as once-a-week evening classes. Also departments may occasionally offer the courses online (fully or hybrid), on weekends, and Macmaster.

**Learning Outcomes**
- Develop data collection instruments and procedures appropriate for specific research projects.
- Show specific knowledge in at least one sphere of program evaluation
- Be able to apply qualitative and quantitative research techniques

**Admission**
- Applicants to the program must meet the College of Social Sciences requirements and:
- Submit three letters of recommendation
Submit a statement of purpose that includes reasons for seeking a certificate in Applied Research and Evaluation Methods

Have a minimum overall 2.50 GPA

Program of Study
The certificate requires five courses. Courses in statistics, data analysis, and research methods are offered by several departments. Course substitutions can be made with the approval of the certificate faculty adviser.

1. Foundation course:
   CRIM or SOCI 6013 Social Research

2. One course in applied statistics and data analysis, for example:
   CRIM 6003: Applied Statistics in Criminology
   CRIM or SOCI 6015: Managing Data

3. One course in qualitative research methods:
   SOCI 6613: Qualitative Research
   SOCI 6660: Institutional Ethnography

4. One course in research methods, for example:
   POLS 6202: Research Methods for Public Administration
   POLS 6204: Public Policy Analysis and Evaluation
   GEOG 5551: Introduction to GIS and Mapping Science
   CRIM or SOCI 6275: Planning and Evaluation
   EDRS 6303 School-Based Research Methods

5. One elective in your area of interest or expertise:
   education, planning, child development, nonprofit management, public administration, social or environmental policy, nursing, or criminology.

Overlap with Existing Degree Programs and Additional Course Needs
Students enrolled in the applied research and evaluation program may use certificate courses toward the completion of MA degrees in Sociology or Criminology. Since both departments regularly teach these courses, no additional courses are required to support the certificate program. Both majors allow six credits outside of the department to count toward the major and an additional three with DGS approval. Also, students seeking the certificate in conjunction with other MA degree programs in the college of Social Sciences must consult their graduate advisors to ensure that they are on track to meet degree requirements.

Program Evaluation
The Directors of Graduate Study for the Sociology and Criminology MA programs will share responsibility for annual evaluation of the program’s learning objectives. Both departments have developed sound procedures for SACS evaluation.