Sociology at UCLA

JEFFREY ALEXANDER AND HOWARD E. FREEMAN

In a discipline in which departments are often characterized by irreconcilable controversies and factional disputes, UCLA's department stands out as a pluralistic community that fosters interaction, communication, and mutual understanding. At UCLA the micro and macro meet: leading ethnographers and survey researchers work side by side; noted Marxists, functionalists and phenomenologists participate in the same colloquia, and persons with a variety of outlooks share membership on the same student committees. Ambitious students committed to obtaining the Ph.D. experience a stimulating educational career in a department that prides itself on diversity, but whose faculty understands that its program must be structured and coherent.

Graduate training can be no better than the faculty responsible for it. No department in the nation can match the diversity of UCLA's faculty, which have provided leadership for some of the most important areas in the discipline. The list of fundamental theory and research is long. Pioneering work has been done on alienation, collective behavior, ethnomethodology, deviance, sociological theory, class analysis, international stratification, social psychology, evaluation research, and role theory.

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Degree Requirements

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Jeffrey Alexander is director of Graduate Studies of UCLA's Department of Sociology. He has written *Theoretical Logic in Sociology* (4 volumes). *Twenty Lectures: Sociological Theory Since World War II*, and *Structure and Meaning: Essays in Sociological Theory*. Howard E. Freeman is chair of UCLA's Department of Sociology. His most recent books include *Evaluation: A Systematic Approach* (3rd edition, with Peter K Rossi), and the forthcoming *Handbook of Medical Sociology* (4th edition) edited with Sol Levine. Direct correspondence to the Department of Sociology, University of California, Los Angeles, California 90024.
to the Ph.D. are accepted. A student may enter either after receipt of a bachelor's degree or after master's level training in other universities. Persons without master's degrees are awarded them upon satisfactory completion of the first two years of work. Every effort is made to have students complete the doctorate in four years of work, although the individual interests of students may extend this period one or two years.

Master's Program

In the two years of work required for the master's degree, core requirements are minimal so that students can participate in a wide array of seminars. There are only two required course sequences.

All new students take a two-quarter course in sociological analysis, team taught by two faculty members and designed to provide an understanding of the interplay of theory, method, and empirical substance in order to familiarize students with the range of sociological practices and to illuminate how various kinds of sociological inquiry work. The other requirement is that they complete one of eight, two-quarter sequences in sociological methods (comparative and historical methods, marxist methodology, techniques of demographic and ecological analysis, measurement of sociological variables, experimental sociology, survey research methods, ethnographic fieldwork, and ethnomethodological methods). The other seven courses required for the master's may be chosen from the wide range of substantive and methodological courses that are offered in the department or in other social science departments of the university.

Students are required to complete a major research paper during their second year. This paper and the student's overall academic record is evaluated by the faculty in order to judge whether or not the student should be encouraged to proceed to the doctoral program.

Doctoral Program

After the master's, students specialize in one or sometimes two of the department's area programs. These area programs not only provide an intellectual structure for our advanced students but a social milieu for students and faculty alike.

Faculty in the area of phenomenology, ethnography, and ethnomethodology are renowned for their finely graded studies that demonstrate the negotiated grounds of social order. They are actively engaged in research that demonstrates the constructed character of phenomena like conversation, natural and social science, and crime and mental health.

In macrosociology, the research and theorizing are directed more to social and institutional arrangements, but the faculty demonstrates the same depth and range. Among the major research projects currently under way are studies of the political and economic structures of capitalist and communist countries, the