Optional Ph.D. Emphasis in Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences (QMSS)

Students pursuing a Ph.D. in Anthropology, Communication, Education, Geography, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, or Statistics and Applied Probability may petition to add an interdisciplinary emphasis in quantitative methods in the social sciences (QMSS). QMSS emphasis is intended for students who wish to develop and use cutting-edge quantitative methods on social science research. Our curriculum is designed to provide students with the rigorous mathematical and statistical background necessary for advanced quantitative work, while also providing a broad interdisciplinary perspective on the use of quantitative methods in social sciences. To that end, students who petition to add the QMSS emphasis, must complete two quarters of calculus, one quarter in linear algebra, and a one-year sequence of statistics. (These requirements can be waived if equivalent courses have already been completed.) QMSS students must also complete at least three quantitative social sciences methods courses (at least two of which are outside the student’s home department), enroll in the QMSS colloquia for at least three quarters, and present their own original quantitative social science research at the QMSS colloquia at least once.

Students that add the QMSS emphasis are expected to write a Ph.D. dissertation that is focused on an issue that is appropriate to the QMSS emphasis. For instance, the dissertation could develop a quantitative method that could be applied to social science fields beyond the student’s discipline, or adapt a quantitative method used in a social science field outside the student’s discipline for researching a substantive problem within the student’s discipline. The dissertation committee must include at least one QMSS faculty member from outside the student’s home department.

For more information, please consult the QMSS website at www.qmss.ucsb.edu.