

Honours Thesis (HT) / Independent Study Course (ISC) Programme Requirements

A GENERAL

1. Honours Year Graduation Requirements for Sociology

Pass at least 60 units of SC courses or SC-recognised courses which include the following:

- a. SC1101E Making Sense of Society
- b. SC2101 Methods of Social Research
- c. SC3101 Social Thought and Social Theory
- d. SC4101 Practising Anthropology and Sociology
- e. A minimum of 36 units at level 3000 or higher (including courses SC3101 and SC4101):
 - minimum of 20 units at level 4000 or higher (including SC4101)
 - a maximum of any 2 level 4000 SC-recognised courses
 - a maximum of 2 level 5000 SC courses (subject to department's approval)

2. Honours Year Graduation Requirements for Anthropology

Pass at least 60 units of AN courses or AN-recognised courses which include the following:

- a. AN1101E Anthropology and the Human Condition
- b. AN2101 Research Methods in Anthropology
- c. AN3101 Anthropology and Theory
- d. SC4101 Practising Anthropology and Sociology
- e. A minimum of 36 units at level 3000 or higher (including courses AN3101 and SC4101):
 - a minimum of 20 units at level 4000 or higher (including SC4101)
 - a maximum of 8 units of AN-recognised courses at level 4000 (excluding SC4101)
 - a maximum of 8 units of AN-recognised courses at level 5000 (subject to department's approval)
- f. A maximum of 20 units of AN-recognised courses (including SC4101)

3. Eligibility for SC4401/AN4401 Honours Thesis (HT)

- a. Cohort 2021 onwards: Completed 110 units, including 40 units of SC major requirements, with a minimum SJGPA of 4.00 and GPA of 3.50. Students may seek a waiver of the SJGPA prerequisite from the department if they have a minimum GPA of 4.25 after completing 110 units.
- b. SC4401/AN4401 HT is worth 8 units in total (i.e., equivalent to 2 Honours level 4000 courses) and is done over two regular semesters without taking a Leave of Absence (LOA) in between.
- c. Honours Thesis will no longer be a requirement to attain Honours (Highest Distinction) for all cohorts. However, students will still need to achieve a GPA of 4.50 or above in order attain Honours (Highest Distinction).

4. Eligibility SC4660/AN4660 Independent Study Course

- a. Cohort 2021 onwards: Completed 100 units, including 40 units in SC, with a minimum GPA of 3.20.
- b. SC4660/AN4660 is worth 4 units (worth 1 course). The evaluation is based on 100% Continuous Assessment.
- c. Each ISC will be supervised by one faculty member of the department.
- d. For pre-CHS students taking SC4660HM, the course is worth 5 units. The evaluation is based on 100% Continuous Assessment.

5. Registration for SC4401/AN4401 Honours Thesis and SC4660/AN4660 Independent Study Course

- a. Students who are doing the year-long HT will be pre-allocated to the course at the beginning of the semester that they are starting on their HT. Even though the pre-allocation takes place one semester earlier, the HT will still only count for a total of 8 units.
- b. Students can be allowed to read both HT and ISC but should bear in mind that the HT and ISC topics are to be different and supervised by two different faculty members of the department

B SC4401/AN4401 HONOURS THESIS (HT)

1. About the course

HT is a scholarly exercise in which students formulate their own research problems and carry out the research projects themselves. Students can conduct library research, archival work, fieldwork or work with data sets. Students can write a conceptual paper, do ethnography, generate quantitative data for analysis, or conduct interviews with a sample of respondents/informants with regard to their research problem. Students should not employ research assistants for their projects.

2. Department Ethics Review Committee (DERC)

Please take note that all research projects involving human subjects (e.g. conduct of interviews, participant observation), **might be** subjected to clearance by the department's Ethics Review Committee, and if necessary, by the NUS Institutional Review Board (IRB) before commencement of any data-collection.

DERC clearance is required if the intention is to publish the findings subsequently.

Students intending to publish their HT research are required to apply to DERC, via its [DREAM](#) app, for clearance. This application should be done after consultation with the HT supervisor.

Please refer to Annex 1 - Guidelines on Research Ethics for more information.

For enquiries, please write to the DERC Secretary at socbox3@nus.edu.sg.

3. Supervision & HT topic

- a. Students are strongly encouraged to propose their own topics and prepare a one-page proposal for discussion with their potential supervisors.
Please refer to Annex 2 – List of faculty and information about their research interest and areas of expertise.

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- b. Supervisors may require that students have taken, or be taking, a particular course to be eligible to elect a certain HT topic.
- c. Students are not permitted to work on a joint project.

4. Word limit

Maximum of 8,000 words (excluding the title page and acknowledgements as well as endnotes, appendices, and bibliography).

5. Penalties

- a. Three marks shall be deducted from the final mark of the HT for every additional 1,000 words (or part thereof) exceeding the word limit. Students are required to indicate the word count (excluding the title page and acknowledgements as well as endnotes, appendices, and bibliography) at the bottom of the last page of the main text.
- b. One mark shall be deducted from the final marks of the HT for each additional day (or part thereof) beyond the deadline.

6. Grading timelines

- a. The HT course accounts for 8 units in total for the entire academic year (not 8 units for each semester). Students must forecast their study plan accordingly to ensure that they obtain sufficient units for graduation. Students can write to the Dean's office to overload for the semester (if necessary).
- b. Students are to note the following grading timelines:

Events	Timeline	Grade
Pre-allocate Honours Thesis (HT)	By end of Instructional Week 3 of 1st semester	Nil
Drop Honours Thesis (HT) without grade penalty	By last day of Reading Week (Week 14) of 1st semester	Honours Thesis (HT) will not be reflected on record
Continuation of Honours Thesis (HT)	By end of 1st semester	IP grade
Drop Honours Thesis (HT) with 'Withdrawn' Grade	Drop between first day of Week 15 of 1st semester and last day of Week 2 of 2nd semester	W grade
Drop Honours Thesis (HT) with 'Fail' Grade	Drop after Week 2 of 2nd semester	F grade
Submission of Honours Thesis (HT)	By end of 2nd semester	Final grade

7. Submissions

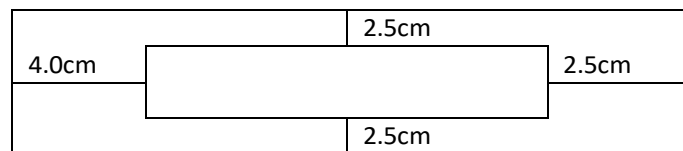
- a. Submit to the Department of Sociology and Anthropology by the final HT submission deadline:

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- i. Check the department website for the submission deadlines (supervisor's name and working title, final title, final thesis).
- ii. Submit soft copy through Canvas. The folder will be shared with students after the deadline of the submission of final HT title.
- iii. Extension of the thesis deadline may be granted only under very special circumstances. The appeal for extension must be accompanied by a written support from the supervisor and sent to the HT coordinator at socbox3@nus.edu.sg.

8. Format of HT (in PDF)

- a. **Page size:** Copy of the thesis is to be converted to PDF copy on A4-sized pages (8.27" x 11.69") with white background and black font for the text.
- b. **Margins:** The left margin should be 4.0 cm wide. The top, bottom and right margins should be 2.5 cm wide. Printed on single-sided.



- c. **Font & spacing:** The text should be typed in letter quality using font size 12 and double-spacing. Long quotations should be indented and single-spaced.
- d. **Sequence of content:** The content of the thesis should be in the following order:
 - Title page
 - Acknowledgements
 - Abstract (up to 250 words in double spacing)
 - Table of Contents
 - List of Tables
 - List of Figures
 - List of Illustrations
 - Main body of thesis
 - Bibliography
 - Appendices
- e. **Page numbering:**
 - i. Page numbers should be in Arabic numerals and run consecutively throughout the HT. For the preliminaries --- preface, acknowledgements, table of contents, etc. --page numbering should be in Roman lower-case numerals beginning with "ii" for the page after the title page, which should not be numbered.
 - ii. Page numbers of the first page of each chapter and the preliminaries (preface, acknowledgements, etc.) should be in the middle of the bottom margin.
 - iii. Page numbers in the rest of the pages should be positioned at the right-hand corner of the top margin.
 - iv. Endnotes should be numbered consecutively throughout all chapters and should appear on separate pages at the end of the entire text.
- f. **Reference and bibliography listing:**
 - i. The bibliography and appendices (in single spacing) should be placed

after the endnotes.

- ii. Tables, figures and maps should have appropriate titles at the top, be numbered consecutively and appear immediately following the text at the first point of reference.

Please refer to recent issues of the American Sociological Review (ASR) and American Journal of Sociology (AJS) for guidance.

9. Plagiarism and AI Use Policy

- a. Plagiarism will be severely penalized as per NUS guidelines. Please refer to the NUS Acceptance Record (NUS Student Code of Conduct) at <https://studentconduct.nus.edu.sg/wp-content/uploads/NUS-Code-of-Student-Conduct.pdf>.
- b. Do not use AI tools to plagiarize (<https://libguides.nus.edu.sg/new2nus/acadintegrity>). The following are always improper uses of AI tools:
- c.
 - i. Generating an output and presenting it as your own work or idea.
 - ii. Generating an output, paraphrasing it, and then presenting the output as your own work or idea.
 - iii. Processing an original source not created by yourself to plagiarize it (e.g., using an AI paraphrasing tool to disguise someone else's original work, or even the output of another AI tool, and then presenting the final output as your own work or idea).

All of the above violate NUS policies on academic honesty, and anyone found to have done any of them will be dealt with accordingly. Nonetheless, the department allows the use of search engines, grammar and spelling checkers, and citation generators. If you are doing a media-based thesis, consult your supervisor to ensure that you are using tools appropriately. Since we target learning outcomes that hone higher-level capabilities, and we want our students to demonstrate originality, intellectual rigor, voice, and contribution to discourse, we strictly require you to produce unaided work.

C SC4401/AN4401 MEDIA-BASED HONOURS THESIS (MHT)

1. About the course

The MHT comprises of two parts:

- i. A media output (e.g., a video ethnography, photographic essay, graphic novel, or short film)*
- ii. An accompanying written text**of approximately 3000 words.

The media output and the accompanying text will constitute 70% and 30% of the effort respectively, and the grading of MHTs will be in accordance with the weightage assigned to these two components.

*The length/ scope of the media output will be decided with the supervisor/ committee.

**The content of the text will be decided through consultation with the supervisor.

2. Eligibility Requirements and Prerequisites

- i. Students are strongly encouraged to have done at least one or two of the following courses: HS2913 Representing Live(s): Research, Performance and Stories; AN2204 Media and Culture; AN2207 The Social Life of Art;

SC3213 Visual Ethnography: Theory and Practice; AN3206 Visual Culture I: Seeing and Representing; AN4211 Reading Ethnographies; SC4205: Language and Communication; and AN4201 Cultural Production: Power, Voice, Policy.

- ii. Students who have not completed the relevant NUS courses but have completed courses focused on the arts, film, and photography offered elsewhere in NUS or in other institutions of higher learning can be considered, subject to the endorsement from the Approving Committee.

3. Process of Application

- i. Students proposing to do an MHT must clearly indicate in the proposal how media will feature in the thesis.
- ii. An Approving Committee will determine the student's capacity (in terms of academic and technical skill) to undertake an MHT by evaluating the proposal and interviewing the student.

4. Evaluation of MHTs

- i. The grading of the MHT shall be undertaken by a Committee of two (which is consistent with the grading of text-based thesis), which may comprise either two domain experts from the fields of visual anthropology/visual sociology, or one domain expert and one content expert. The supervisor shall not be involved in the grading process to avoid potential conflict of interest.
- ii. Two sets of criteria will apply for evaluating the MHT: one for the written component and the other for the media work.

5. Grading Criteria for Written Component

The written portion of the MHT should be approximately 3000 words. It should serve to complement the media work by:

- i. Revealing the anthropologically and/or sociologically informed thinking behind the work (i.e., the intellectual, political, aesthetic and practical labour embodied in the work);
- ii. Constructing for the reader / viewer a broader context against which the student likes us to understand the media work; and
- iii. Articulating an analytical and reflexive account of the process and its accomplishments. Therefore, the key focus should be on documenting the intellectual work central to taking this production from conception to conclusion and a critical analysis of the issues involved. The text should include details of the original conception of the project and any subsequent changes in direction, the developmental process, the methods employed, the research, selection of sources, the nature of the problems encountered, and the solutions devised to meet them, and a rationale for the suitability of the chosen medium.

SC4660/AN4660 INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE (ISC)**1. About the course**

The ISC offers an opportunity for students to do something they are personally interested in and is meaningful to them. The ISC paper is not an honours thesis. It is best conceptualised as an extended term paper. Still, students have to propose their own topics to the supervisors of their choice and engage in some research work.

2. Word limit

The length of the paper does not exceed 5000 words, and the supervisor is solely responsible for assessing the written work.

3. Department Ethics Review Committee (DERC)

Students intending to publish their ISC project are required to apply to DERC, via its [DREAM](#) app, for clearance. This application should be done after consultation with your supervisor.

Annex 1 - GUIDELINES ON RESEARCH ETHICS

1. It is imperative that students discuss with their supervisors the ethical issues relating to their intended projects early in the semester.
2. As a rule, there should be no covert research or deception about aims of research.
3. Respondents/informants should know that they are the subjects of research, and participation should be voluntary. Participants must not be hurt, physically or psychologically, by the study.
4. In participant observation studies, observation may be conducted without the observer's knowledge if the activities observed are public for all to see, including the researcher.
5. Once verbal contact with the observed is initiated and personalised knowledge is sought, the observed should be informed of the research project and his/her permission to continue the study sought.
6. The researcher should ensure and preserve confidentiality of information collected if the respondent / informant requires it (this may not be relevant to all studies, e.g. in some oral history studies, people may even wish to be identified.)
7. If you are unsure/unclear about the ethical considerations of your research project, please consult your supervisor, Honours Year Advisor or the department's Ethics Review Committee.

ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS OF A SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY HONOURS STUDENT

1. **Develop research skills in Sociology and Anthropology**
An Honours graduate in these disciplines should have a working knowledge of various research tools, conceptual, quantitative, or qualitative, and be able to determine the most suitable methods for a given research question or field study. This includes familiarity with survey research, statistical analysis, participant observation and ethnographic methods.
2. **Demonstrate Critical Thinking Abilities**
Employ sociological and anthropological theories and concepts to demonstrate how historical, economic, and cultural forces shape human behaviour and social organization. Students should use their thesis to enhance their critical thinking capabilities through a more sustained and committed analysis of a specific social issue.
3. **Overcome Ethnocentrism, Biases and Prejudices**
Students should strive to identify and overcome various forms of bias – based on race, ethnicity, nationality, class, gender, religion and age or cultural background. By challenging their own assumptions, Honours students learn to appreciate diverse cultures and perspectives fostering tolerance and mutual understanding.
4. **Recognise the Relevance and Value of Sociology and Anthropology**
Both disciplines contribute to our understanding of social and cultural phenomena.

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Students should appreciate how sociological and anthropological insights can inform public policy, community initiatives and everyday social interactions. Beyond academic theory, research in these fields often involves collaboration and community engagement, highlighting the importance of strong interpersonal skills, empathy, self-discipline and the willingness to co-learn with others.

5. In terms of pedagogy, the Honours program emphasizes active, project-based learning and continuous assessment over exam-based evaluations. Throughout the three to four years of undergraduate study journey, students are expected to:
 - a) learn to do research well.
 - b) develop a fondness for reading Sociological and Anthropological literature.
 - c) learn to articulate one's thoughts informally in a small group, and to make formal presentations in front of a critical audience-always as members of a team.
 - d) learn to write clearly and effectively, while enjoying it.
 - e) develop a certain confidence and pride about one's identity as a student of both Sociology and Anthropology.

Although the Honours Thesis requirements have been moderated in view of the revised four- year degree honours structure, students are strongly encouraged to consult honours theses done in previous years to get a sense of what goes into the honours thesis. Previous years' theses which are available in the department and at the Theses Collection section of the Central Library at ScholarBank@NUS Previous years' theses which are available in the department and at the Theses Collection section of the Central Library at ScholarBank@NUS:

<https://scholarbank.nus.edu.sg/search?f.type=Thesis,equals>

Annex 2 - LIST OF STAFF, THEIR RESEARCH INTERESTS AND AREAS OF EXPERTISE**Noorman ABDULLAH****Senior Lecturer**

PhD (Sociology), Bielefeld, 2011

Religion and Society, Deviance and Social Control, Sensory Studies, Everyday Life

socnooa@nus.edu.sg**Lou ANTOLIAO****Senior Lecturer**

PhD (Sociology), NUS, 2010

Sociology of Leisure, Postcolonialism, Regionalism

socloua@nus.edu.sg**BUSSARAWAN (PUK) Teerawichitchainan****Associate Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), Washington, 2005

Social Demography, Sociology of Family, the Life Course and Aging, Population Health, Social Stratification, Southeast Asia

puk@nus.edu.sg**CHUA Hui Ching Emily****Associate Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), UC Berkeley, 2013

Media and Information; Technology and Politics; Nature and Capitalism; Ethics and Textuality; Post-socialist conditions and the Anthropology of Value

socchce@nus.edu.sg**Vincent CHUA****Associate Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Toronto, 2010

Personal Communities, Social capital and Inequality, Education

socckhv@nus.edu.sg**DANZENG (Tenzin) Jinba****Associate Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), Boston, 2011

Memory and History, Border Studies, Gender Politics, Nature and Culture, State-society Relations, China, Tibet, the Himalayas

socdj@nus.edu.sg**Jennifer ESTES****Senior Lecturer**

PhD, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2019

Youth studies; intergenerational relations; financialization of everyday life; social & economic precarity; agrarian transformations; Cambodia

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Honours Thesis (HT) Programme Requirements

FENG Qiushi**Professor, Deputy Head**

PhD (Sociology), Duke, 2009

Aging and Health; Population Study; Economic Sociology

socfq@nus.edu.sg**Sahana GHOSH****Assistant Professor**

PhD (Sociocultural Anthropology), Yale, 2018

Borders and borderlands; mobility; gender and sexuality; critical security studies; ethnography of the state; transnational and postcolonial feminism; South Asia; space and value; labor studies; feminist and decolonial pedagogy.

sahana.ghosh@nus.edu.sg**Daniel P.S. GOH****Associate Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Michigan, 2005

State Formation, Cultural Studies, Urban Studies, Religion, Environmental Sociology

socgohd@nus.edu.sg**HO Swee Lin****Associate Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), Oxford, 2009

Classical Music; Cultural Globalisation; Urban Transformations; Global Finance; Economy of Work

sochsl@nus.edu.sg**Ali KASSEM****Lecturer**

PhD of Philosophy, University of Sussex, 2020

Colonialism and coloniality, imperialism, Third-Worldism, non-western sexualities, climate catastrophe, indigenous cosmologies, Islam and Shiism, education and knowledge-making, black thought, critical theory, visual research, participatory research, West Asia North Africa, Lebanon and eastern Mediterranean

ali.kass@nus.edu.sg**Ivan KWEK****Senior Lecturer**

PhD (Anthropology), SOAS, 2010

Media-Related Practices; Ethnicity & the Everyday; Politics of Difference (especially in the Malay worlds); Anthropology of "the Future"

sociket@nus.edu.sg**LAU Ting Hui****Assistant Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), Cornell University, 2020

Indigeneity, Mental health, Anthropology of the body, Borderlands and China, Southeast Asia

lau.th@nus.edu.sg**Adelyn LIM, Deputy Head****Senior Lecturer**

PhD (Anthropology), ANU, 2010

Transnationalism, Social Movements, Gender and Sexuality, Contemporary Chinese Societies

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Honours Thesis (HT) Programme Requirements

**Kelvin LOW, Head of Department
Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Bielefeld, 2010

Sociology of the Senses, Social Memory and Historiography, Everyday Life, Migration and Transnationalism

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**MU Zheng, Assistant Head
Associate Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Michigan, 2013

Marriage and Family; Fertility; Ethnicity; Migration

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Ganapathy NARAYANAN**Associate Professor**

PhD (Sociology), NUS, 2002

Deviance, Criminology, Criminal Justice, Sociology of Policing, Social Control and Punishment

socng@nus.edu.sg

Canay ÖZDEN-SCHILLING**Assistant Professor**

PhD (History, Anthropology & Science, Technology and Society), MIT, 2016

Markets and capitalism, electricity and energy, science and technology studies, infrastructures of modernity, North America, the Middle East

socco@nus.edu.sg

Tom ÖZDEN-SCHILLING**Assistant Professor**

Mobility, aging, Indigeneity, science and technology studies, North America, Southeast Asia, history and philosophy of science, bureaucracy, decarbonization, energy transitions, visual media

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Elliot PRASSE-FREEMAN**Associate Professor**

PhD (Socio-Cultural Anthropology), Yale University, 2018

Political Mobilization; Subaltern Political Thought; Post-sovereign Politics; Human Rights Regimes; Biopolitics; Political Economic Dislocation; Migration; Law and Society.

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George RADICS**Senior Lecturer**

PhD (Sociology), NUS, 2008

Sociology of Law, Law and Society, Sociology of Emotions, Post-Colonial Studies, Southeast Asian Studies

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Anne RAFFIN**Associate Professor**

PhD (Sociology), New School, 2000

Modern Colonialism and its legacies, State Society Relations and Globalization

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Honours Thesis (HT) Programme Requirements

Volker H. SCHMIDT**Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Bremen, 1995

Social Justice and Inequality, Social policy, Social theory, Globalization

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Vineeta SINHA**Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), Johns Hopkins, 1995

Social Theory, Religion, Reading and Writing Ethnography, Political Economy of Health Care

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Joonmo SON**Associate Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Duke, 2008

Social capital, Volunteering, Health, Economic sociology, Stratification

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Stuart STRANGE**Associate Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), Michigan, 2016

Anthropology of religion, semiotics, and multispecies ethnography in the Caribbean, Southeast Asia, and Scandinavia

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SUEN Johan bin Mohd Zain**Lecturer**

PhD (Sociology), Cambridge, 2019

Ageing, health, employment, and the life course

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Eric C. THOMPSON**Associate Professor**

PhD (Anthropology), Washington, 2000

Gender Studies, Agrarian Transitions, Urbanism, Transnationalism

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Kriti VIKRAM**Associate Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Maryland, 2015

Demography, Life Course and Social Determinants of Health

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WANG Senhu**Assistant Professor**

PhD (Sociology), Cambridge, 2019

Sociology of Work, Health and Wellbeing, Demography

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