

**M.S. Sociology Program**  
**Department of Sociology**  
**Southern Connecticut State University**  
Application for Special Project

**SPECIAL PROJECT OVERVIEW**

Students plan, develop, and implement a research-based project in sociology under the supervision of a Sociology Department faculty member. Examples of projects include, but are not limited to the following: a program grant, program evaluation, website development, community partnership, or curriculum design (e.g. undergraduate Sociology course).

**SPECIAL PROJECT REQUIREMENTS**

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1. You must have completed all core courses (SOC 500, SOC 570, SOC 580).
2. Your special project must be completed in one semester.
3. You must identify a faculty supervisor and faculty reader, **the semester prior to enrolling in Special Project.**
4. Your special project must demonstrate that it makes a contribution to the study of sociology and broader society.

**RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN PARTICIPANTS**

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While not every special project will involve research with human participants, some projects may involve data collection involving people (e.g. interviews, observation, surveys, etc.). These projects must adhere to all university and federal guidelines for research involving human participants as identified below.

By federal law, all research involving human or animal subjects requires prior ethical review and approval by an independent review committee. At Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU), the relevant committee for research involving human subjects is the Institutional Review Board (IRB). **No data collection or recruitment of subjects may take place without IRB approval.** This requirement includes use of all surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, recruitment of study participants, and any form of primary and/or secondary data collection involving human participants.

Before beginning a research study, the student should consult with the faculty supervisor to determine whether the project requires IRB approval. If so, the supervisor will assist the student with initiating the IRB proposal process. Copies of the necessary forms and instructions for submission can be obtained from the School of Graduate Studies office or online at <http://southernct.edu/academics/graduate/research/rpp/index.html>.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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Students are required to comply with the following School of Graduate Studies requirements about honesty and integrity in research, as in all scholarly activity. Students are reminded that areas of misconduct in scholarship include the following (<https://inside.southernct.edu/rpp/ori>):

- 1) Fabrication is making up data or results and recording or reporting them.

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- 2) Falsification is manipulating research materials, equipment, or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the research is not accurately represented in the research record.
- 3) Plagiarism is the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, or words without giving appropriate credit.
- 4) Research misconduct does not include honest error or differences of opinion.

Violations of the requirements for integrity of scholarship shall result in a failing grade for the Special Project and dismissal from the Graduate School.

**THE FINER MODEL**

Special projects should be designed according to the F-I-N-E-R model:

F	FEASIBLE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doable</li> <li>• Affordable in time and money</li> <li>• Manageable in scope</li> </ul>
I	INTERESTING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting the answer is intriguing to peers</li> <li>• Getting the answer is intriguing to scientific community</li> <li>• Getting the answer is intriguing to YOU</li> </ul>
N	NOVEL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant to the literature</li> </ul>
E	ETHICAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does it take into consideration the wellbeing of individuals involved in the project?</li> <li>• Will IRB approve the proposed project?</li> </ul>
R	RELEVANT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why is it important to society?</li> </ul>







## Example Project Timeline Template

Month	Project Goal	Tasks
August	Draft project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Discuss with faculty supervisor detailed plan of action</li><li>• Identify relevant people to talk to regarding project</li></ul>
September	Review literature, make connection with community organization, identify relevant information needed to complete the proposed project, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Find relevant literature</li><li>• Submit to advisor for feedback</li></ul>
October	Work on project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Submit progress report</li></ul>
November	Work on project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Submit progress report</li></ul>
December	Finalize project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Draft report due to supervisor</li><li>• Finalize details</li></ul>