

Guide to Progressing Through the MA Program in Applied Quantitative Research¹
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Note to Readers: You can help make this document more useful. If you see confusing passages or errors, please contact Amanda Geller (amanda.geller@nyu.edu). We will attempt to clarify and correct, and release subsequent versions with new dates at the top of this page and in the file name.

¹ This guide includes two kinds of requirements: a) those determined by the department, and b) those determined by NYU’s GSAS (Graduate School of Arts and Sciences). With respect to the latter, we have attempted to accurately summarize the most relevant requirements from the GSAS Bulletin and the [GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual](#) here, but they, rather than this Guide, are binding.

Guide to Progressing Through the MA Program in Applied Quantitative Research (AQR)

This Guide, prepared by the Program Director of the AQR Program, is intended to help doctoral students understand what they need to do to navigate the PhD program successfully. Our intent is to provide an informal, but thorough, explanation of requirements, procedures, and recommendations.

Sharice Burroughs (sharice.burroughs@nyu.edu), our Academic Administrator, can answer most questions about requirements that are not answered here. Other questions can be directed to the Program Director, Amanda Geller (amanda.geller@nyu.edu). For intellectual advice regarding classes, research, and theses, ask relevant faculty members.

I. Coursework

To graduate from the AQR program, student must complete a “core curriculum” of 20 credits, along with 10 elective credits, and four thesis credits. Students are strongly encouraged to complete their AQR core curriculum in their first two semesters, whether they are completing the program part-time or full-time. Exceptions must be approved by the Program Director.

Students are also advised to meet with the program director at least once per semester to ensure that they are progressing toward the MA degree.

A. Required “Core” Courses (20 points total):

Students must pass all required courses with a C- or better. Students must have a cumulative average of a B (3.0) or better in order to complete the program.

Core courses include:

Design of Social Research (SOC-GA 1301)

Fall Semester, 4 points

This course is a comprehensive introduction to foundational ideas of social science research, with a focus on quantitative methods. Students learn principles of asking and developing social science research questions, and research designs used to address these questions. This course also includes training on the responsible conduct of research, including human subjects research training. At the end of the course students produce a final paper that serves as the proposal for their thesis.

Applied Quantitative Analysis I & II (SOC-GA 1401/1402)

Fall & Spring Semesters, 4 points each

This two-semester course in data analysis covers numerous statistical tools used in social science research. The course emphasizes the use of statistical software packages in analysis. Students gain experience with linear regression, probability models, statistical graphics, polynomial models, and quasi-experimental techniques.

Data Analysis (SOC-GA 1903)

Spring Semester, 4 points

In this course, students work collaboratively on a data project using “real world” data from a large survey project. Students work to ask and answer a research question, and gain valuable experience in the process, critique and presentation of empirical research.

AQR Workshop (SOC-GA 1501/1502)

Fall & Spring Semesters, 2 points each

Students will attend a weekly workshop (also known as the “pro-seminar”) during fall and spring semesters. Each semester of pro-seminar will count for 2 points. Students are graded on a Pass/Fail basis, with attendance serving as the primary grading criteria. These workshops are designed to serve a variety of student needs, offering a mix of research skill-building and presentations from researchers in a variety of academic and professional settings.

B. Elective Requirement (10 points)

Students must take 10 points of elective coursework, which may be earned through graduate-level coursework in the Sociology department, including, if applicable, a for-credit internship (SOC GA-1997), or graduate-level courses in other departments within NYU. Enrollment in any course at NYU is at the discretion of the specific course instructor. The AQR program will grant elective credit for any credit-bearing graduate-level course within the university that a student enrolls in. Students may take up to 4 elective credits on a pass/fail basis.

C. MA Thesis (4 points)

Independent Study: MA Thesis (SOC-GA 1998)

The AQR program culminates with the MA thesis, an independent research project that students carry out under the direction of a faculty member in the Sociology department. The final project takes the form of a paper that could potentially be appropriate for submission to a scholarly journal in the social sciences. The MA thesis is graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

D. Additional Issues Related to Curriculum Requirements:

GPA: Students must complete coursework with a B (3.0) or better GPA to complete the MA. For students who have completed prior coursework at NYU, the 3.0 GPA must be achieved in the specific courses that count toward the AQR degree.

Core AQR Coursework: Due to the importance of the AQR Core Curriculum for successful program completion, any student earning a grade below B- (2.7) in either of the AQR Core courses in each semester must meet with the Program Director to develop a remediation plan, even if the student’s cumulative GPA is above the required 3.0. In most cases, the remediation plan for students earning below a B- in Design of Social Research will involve work with the Writing Center, and the remediation plan for students earning below a B- in AQA will involve additional work with the AQA Teaching and Course Assistants. Students earning below a B- in either core course in the Fall semester should meet with the Program Director prior to the start of the Spring semester to ensure that students begin their new coursework with a clear path to remediation.

Transfer credit: Any transfer of credit must be done in your first year, in consultation with the Program Director. Students may be able to transfer up to 10 credits of graduate-level coursework from a previously attended institution. The form to apply for transfer credits, and GSAS policies on transfer credit approval, can be found at http://gsas.nyu.edu/docs/CP/755/transfer_credit_request.pdf.

Academic Probation: Students may be put on academic probation if their GPA is less than 3.0, if they have several incompletes, or if the department deems their progress inadequate. If the terms of probation are not met, students may be dropped from the program.

Incompletes: If a student receives an incomplete, it turns to an F if it is not made up by the beginning of the second semester following the semester in which it was given. For example, an incomplete received at the end of fall semester must have the grade submitted before the beginning of the fall semester of the following year; an incomplete received at the end of spring semester must have the grade submitted before the beginning of the next spring semester. This deadline can be extended for up to a year if the professor of the course agrees and the student submits a request for extension to GSAS.

Student Completion of More Than the Required 34 Credits: In students' last term at NYU, if they have not yet completed 34 credits, students may be permitted to register for classes that may lead to a total of more than 34 credits, with departmental permission. (If for example, a student has completed 29 credits of coursework, and wants to take a 3-credit elective as well as their 4-credit thesis course).

II. The MA Thesis

A. Overview

The AQR program culminates with the MA thesis, an independent research project that students carry out under the direction of a faculty member in the Sociology Department. Students enter the AQR program with a sense of their topical interests and refine an independent research question in the first months of their Design of Social Research class in the fall. The final project takes the form of a paper that could potentially be appropriate for submission to a scholarly journal in the social sciences.

Each thesis must be read and approved by two faculty members, one of whom is the student's faculty advisor. With permission of the Program Director, one thesis reader may be from outside the Sociology Department, but must be within another department of the University. The MA thesis is graded Pass/Fail.

B. Thesis Advising Guidelines

Students will be matched with faculty advisors who share some common substantive or methodological interests. Although the extent of advisor involvement in student thesis development will be dependent on the individuals involved, advisors will be asked to read and provide feedback on three products:

- The research proposal (in December)
- The penultimate thesis draft (in May-June)
- The final thesis draft (in August)

Advisors may be unavailable to provide comment on all three documents; in this case the final thesis draft may be read and approved by the AQR Program Director and Senior Advisor.

- Over the course of the year, advisors may also provide students with one or more of the following: Key readings that may help students identify gaps in the literature and formulate their research questions.
- Data sources (or ideas for data) that can help students address their research questions. (Faculty members need not provide their own data for student projects, but occasionally there is enough of a match in interests that students are well-suited to use data collected as part of a faculty research project.)
- Ideas for analytical approaches.

Students who take longer than 12 months to complete the AQR program must meet at least monthly with their thesis advisors, beginning in their second fall semester. These meetings may take place in-person or remotely, but are intended for students to maintain progress toward thesis completion and receive feedback on their ongoing work.

Students who uphold the monthly meeting schedule but are unable to produce a satisfactory thesis by the end of the semester may receive an “Incomplete” course grade and continue their work. Barring extenuating circumstances (which must be approved by the Program Director), students who fail to uphold the monthly meeting schedule will receive a grade of F for SOC-GA 1998, and need to re-register for the course (and incur the corresponding tuition burden) in order to complete their degree.

C. Thesis Completion

When a student completes their thesis to the satisfaction of their two readers, they must deposit the following paperwork with the department Academic Administrator:

- The Title page of their thesis, with original signatures from each of their two readers. (Two copies of the title page, one with each reader’s signature, may be submitted.)
- A copy of the Masters Thesis Reader Form, which may be downloaded from <http://gsas.nyu.edu/object/grad.pdf.mastersreadersheet>, signed by each of the two thesis readers.

An electronic copy of the approved thesis must also be emailed to the AQR Program Director, with both readers visibly cc’ed to confirm approval, before a student’s grade is changed to “Pass”.

All thesis paperwork (paper or electronic) must be filed with the Department Academic Administrator and Program Director at least 10 days prior to the Requirements Deadlines

specified at <https://www.nyu.edu/life/resources-and-services/nyu-studentlink/registration-records-and-graduation/graduation-and-diplomas/graduation-information.html>.

D. Thesis Guidelines on Human Subjects Research

As part of their thesis proposals, students are required to document whether their proposed research is considered Human Subjects Research by the standards laid out at <https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/research/documents/IRB/IRBDecisionTree.pdf>. If a proposed study does not meet the criteria for human subjects research, students are asked to complete the Checklist for Determining Whether a Project Involves Human Subjects Research, available at <https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/research/documents/IRB/NotHSResearch.doc>, and file this form with their thesis proposal.

Students whose research meets the criteria for human subjects research must file a protocol with the University Committee on Activities Involving Human Subjects. Because students are not permitted to submit human subjects protocols to the UCAIHS, advisors will be asked to serve as Principal Investigators on student UCAIHS submissions. However, students will be expected to complete the submission as “primary contact” and provide the submission to advisors to review and submit on their behalf. Guidelines for completing an UCAIHS protocol are available online at <https://www.nyu.edu/content/dam/nyu/research/documents/IRB/welcometocayuseirb.pdf>.

E. Guidelines on the Use of Sensitive Data

Some students work with data that although not human subjects research (due to anonymity of subjects), must be protected according to a data use agreement. The AQR Program owns a non-networked, password-protected computer housed in Room 4154 of the Puck building that students may use for analyses of sensitive data. Students whose data use agreement requires a secure computer are strongly encouraged to do all analyses on this non-networked computer. If students wish to work on sensitive data on their own computers, they must document a data protection plan and provide assurance that the plan will be followed. Sample policies related to the protection of research data may be found online at <http://www.lboro.ac.uk/admin/ar/policy/dpact/ludpp/>.

All students are asked to password protect their laptop and desktop computers for the duration of their time in the AQR Program.

III. Procedures for Registration, Maintenance of Matriculation, and Graduation

A. Electives and Approval for Out of Department Electives

Students who would like to take electives both within and outside the Sociology department must secure approval in advance. Generally, students wishing to take electives in GSAS only need to contact the professor for permission; once obtained the Academic Administrator will

provide an access code for registration.

Students who wish to take electives in Stern must complete a Cross-Registration form and have it signed by the Program Director. To do this, students must complete the form available online at http://web-docs.stern.nyu.edu/registrar/reg_crossregform.pdf, and send the completed form to the Program Director for approval. Students should also confirm that the requested course has no pre-requisites or co-requisites, or that any requirements have been met, and how. Prerequisites may be satisfied in one of four ways:

- Coursework: Passed Stern requisite coursework or an approved equivalent
- Degree: Earned an undergraduate major or Master's degree in the requisite subject
- License: Obtained a USA CPA license, passing USA CPA exam grade, or Chartered Accountant certification. The CFA designation and other professional experience do not satisfy any requisites.
- Exam: Passed requisite Stern Proficiency Exam. Please ask the program director to schedule an exam date by emailing academicaffairs@stern.nyu.edu.

The Program Director will then submit all relevant information to the Academic Administrator, who will then forward the form and any evidence of prerequisite completion to Stern for registration approval.

B. Add/Drop Periods and procedure

Students should familiarize themselves with pertinent dates and deadlines for the add/drop period in a given semester, which can be found here: <https://goo.gl/INYvjo>. Courses may be dropped after the drop/add period (with a grade of W) by utilizing the Class Withdrawal Request Feature in Albert.

C. Maintenance of Matriculation

Students must maintain continuous enrollment in their programs from the time of matriculation to graduation. To maintain enrollment in a degree program a student must enroll in that program each fall and spring semester until that degree is granted. (As per the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual, section 5.1). If a student is not registered for coursework in a given semester, they must register for Maintenance of Matriculation (hereafter referred to as MM). Students who remain enrolled in the program for longer than 12 months are responsible for paying 100% of the associated MM, registration and services, and health insurance fees. Non-registration of MM for two consecutive semesters will result in the student being dropped from the MA program for non-payment at the beginning of the next MM period.

D. Internships

Students may receive either 1 or 2 elective credits for paid or unpaid out-of-class internships. Students may work up to 20 hours per week at credit-bearing during the academic year. Students are encouraged to evaluate internships carefully, and consult the resources prepared by the Wasserman Center as they consider whether to pursue a particular internship

experience. <http://www.nyu.edu/life/resources-and-services/careerdevelopment/find-a-job-or-internship/important-considerationsbefore-accepting-a-job-or-internship.html>

To qualify for academic credit, the internship must comply with the following guidelines:

- It must be closely related to the student's academic work in the AQR program.
- There must be clearly defined learning objectives and goals.
- There must be onsite supervision by a person with education and training in an analytical field, who will provide the department with a written evaluation of the student's effort.

Students will receive academic credit for an internship by registering for SOC GA-1997, for either one or two credits. The class will be graded on a pass/fail basis. Further details on the academic requirements for credit-bearing internships are provided in the SOC GA-1997 syllabus.

Foreign students with questions about whether an internship qualifies as Curricular Practical Training (CPT) or otherwise confirms to their visa's work authorization standards are advised to consult the Office of Global Services.

E. Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)

International students who choose to take less than 12 credits per semester will require full-time equivalency (FTE) in order to remain in compliance with the Department of Homeland Security. Students who have loans may also require this status for their loan providers. Should this status be needed, please contact the Academic Administrator to request it once registration has been completed for the semester. Full-Time Equivalency will be granted in students' final semesters. Requests for FTE prior to students' final semesters may be approved or denied on a case-by-case basis.

F. Applying for Graduation

When students are in their final semester of the program, they must apply for graduation in the Student Center in Albert. The application procedure, along with a list of graduation deadlines, can be found here: <https://goo.gl/NnVUvf>. In addition, students are responsible for reviewing the transcript prior to graduation and ensuring they have enough credits to graduate, as well as that any incomplete grades have been resolved.

IV. Other University Requirements, Resources and Guidelines

A. Academic Integrity

In the AQR Program, and at NYU more broadly, students are expected and required to adhere to the highest standards of scholarship, research, and academic conduct. Students who engage in academic dishonesty will be subject to review and the possible imposition of penalties in accordance with the standards, practices, and procedures of NYU and its college and schools. Violations may result in a failure on a particular assignment, a lower course grade, failure in a course, suspension or expulsion from the University, or other penalties.

Students are often encouraged to seek outside assistance from tutors, writing coaches, and online resources. Such behavior is permitted when the intellectual contribution of completed work is that of the student, and when outside assistance is appropriately acknowledged. However, outside assistance must never contribute to intellectual content. Assignments, research papers, and other materials submitted for evaluation or review must be the student's own in its entirety if the work is attributed to one student. Group assignments must be the work of all students in the group.

Following are examples of behaviors that compromise the academic and intellectual community of NYU. This list is not exhaustive. Students requiring clarification on acceptable and forbidden behavior should consult relevant faculty members and University resources (including, but not limited to, the academic integrity statement online at <https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/academic-integrity-for-students-at-nyu.html>):

- Plagiarism: presenting others' work without adequate acknowledgement of its source, as though it were one's own.
- Cheating: deceiving a faculty member or other individual who assesses student performance into believing that one's mastery of a subject or discipline is greater than it is by a range of dishonest methods.
- Any behavior that violates the academic policies set forth by the Department of Sociology and the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

B. Tuition and Fees

The NYU Office of the Bursar is the central billing and collection point for New York University. Students are advised to contact the Bursar's office for assistance with matters related to tuition and fees. Information is available online at <http://www.nyu.edu/life/resources-and-services/nyu-studentlink/bills-payments-and-refunds/contact-us.html>.

C. Immunization

Before the first semester that students are enrolled, they must submit documentation to the Student Health Center verifying that they have been immunized for measles, mumps, rubella and meningitis. Failure to provide this information can result in de-enrollment from classes and being prohibited from entering University facilities. More information is available [here](#).

D. Time Limit

Masters degree students must complete all requirements for the degree within 5 calendar years of first enrollment in that masters program (as per the GSAS Policies and Procedures Manual, section 5.6.1).

E. Resources for International Students

The resource at NYU for immigration and visa questions is the Office of Global Services (OGS). Questions related to visas, work eligibility, and Curricular Practical Training (CPT) and Optional Practical Training (OPT) should be directed to OGS. OGS may be reached through their website: <http://www.nyu.edu/global/visa-and-immigration.html>

F. Guidelines on Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students may have a disability that requires some accommodation such as extra time on exams. Any NYU student needing an accommodation for a disability is required to register with the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities. This must be done in advance of requesting and being granted an accommodation. The Moses Center will explain the required process. The Moses Center may be reached through their website: <https://www.nyu.edu/life/safety-health-wellness/students-with-disabilities.html>

G. Guidelines on Accommodation for Religious Holidays

NYU policy on student observance of religious holidays is provided at <https://www.nyu.edu/about/policies-guidelines-compliance/policies-and-guidelines/university-calendar-policy-on-religious-holidays.html>.

H. Resources Available to AQR Students for Conference Participation Funding

Overview: The Department of Sociology provides funds to AQR students to help offset the cost of participation at conferences that are not student-run. The Department will fund a maximum of **\$200** for attendance at a conference and **\$250** for presentation at a conference. Expenses reimbursable by the Department include conference registration, transportation, lodging, and meals (excluding alcohol, up to \$50 per day). Note that the conference must take place while enrolled as a student.

Policies and Procedures: In order to be eligible for funding, students must follow the policies and procedures as outlined below.

Before applying to the Department for funding, students **must** first apply for a GSAS travel grant: gsas.nyu.edu/page/grad.travelgrant. Make certain to review the information on the GSAS website carefully to be aware of upcoming application deadlines. **Please note:** You may apply for a GSAS travel grant while awaiting confirmation of acceptance from conference organizers. Therefore, even if you have not received confirmation of your paper or poster being accepted into the conference, you should still apply for a GSAS travel grant during the appropriate application period.

Once students have received a decision regarding their GSAS travel grant application (either an award or a denial of funding), they can then apply to the Department for funding (or additional funding in the case where a GSAS award was received but more funding is needed for the conference in question). Applications for conference participation funding from the Department must be submitted exactly as follows:

1. Email your funding request to the Department Manager with a copy to the Administrative

Aide.

2. The subject of your email should be: “[YOUR LAST NAME] – MA Request for Conference Participation Funding.”
3. The body of your email should include the name of the conference, the date(s) of the conference, the location where the conference is being held, and a link to the conference’s website. You should explicitly state how much funding you are requesting from the Department, keeping in mind the maximum amounts listed above. If you have received funding from a GSAS travel grant, you must also explain why you need additional funding from the Department above the travel grant award.
4. Your email must include the email you received from GSAS either awarding or denying your travel grant application.

Once received, requests will be reviewed by the Department Manager. Students will be notified of their funding award or denial within one week of the receipt of all materials. A list of conferences preapproved by the Directors of Graduate Studies can be found below. Other conferences may be approved by the AQR Program Director or Directors of Graduate Studies on a case-by- case basis.

[Regional] Sociological Associations – e.g., Eastern Sociological Association
 American Anthropological Association
 American Association of Geographers
 American Education Finance and Policy Association
 American Education Research Association
 American Society of Criminology
 American Sociological Association
 Association for the Study of Public Policy and Management (APPAM) British
 Sociological Association
 Conference on Empirical Legal Studies
 European Society of Criminology
 International Network of Analytical Sociologists
 International Sociological Association (ISA)
 International Union for the Scientific Study of Population
 Joint Statistical Meetings Law and Society Association Modern Modeling Conference
 Population Association of America Research Committees of the ISA Social Science
 History Association
 Society for the Study of Social Problems
 Sociologists for Women in Society
 Sociology of Education Association

If approved, students will need to submit the following documentation to the Administrative Aide for reimbursement after the conference has occurred:

All original itemized receipts showing the item(s) purchased and the method of purchase

(e.g., credit card);

If being reimbursed for travel (e.g., airfare, rail), original boarding passes to and from the location of the conference;

A copy of the conference program that lists participation in the conference (if applicable); and

A cover sheet with an itemized list of the items you are to be reimbursed for, as well as the total amount of your reimbursement request.

All documents may be submitted electronically (preferred) or in hard copy. Reimbursements typically take 2-4 weeks to be processed once the Administrative Aide has received all necessary documentation.

CONTACT PERSON: Tara Hoey, Department Manager

EMAIL: tara.hoey@nyu.edu

I. Supplemental Thesis Research Funding Available to AQR Students

Overview: The Department of Sociology makes funds available to AQR students to help offset the cost of research expenses related to their thesis work. Possible expenses could include the purchase of access to contract data, specialized computer software (beyond that available from NYU or used in core AQR coursework), or participation in courses or programs outside of the AQR curriculum to build skills used in thesis research. These funds cannot be used to cover living expenses. The maximum award per student is **\$250**. Students must be enrolled in the AQR program in order to make use of these departmental funds.

A note on transcription: Please note that transcription services are not reimbursable. Please do not pay transcription services out of pocket. If you need to apply this funding towards a transcription service, the Department can pay the service directly, up to \$250. They will need to provide an invoice that provides a name (individual or organization), address, email, phone number, and amount. If using an international transcription service, please provide currency conversion using oanda.com.

Policies and procedures: In order to be eligible for funding, students must have successfully completed SOC-GA 1301 (*Design of Social Research*) with a grade of B or better. Students must follow the policies and procedures as outlined below.

Applications for supplemental thesis research funding from the Department must be submitted exactly as follows:

- 1, Email your funding request to the Department Manager.
2. The subject of your email should be: “[YOUR LAST NAME] – Request for Supplemental Thesis Research Funding.”
3. The body of your email should include what specifically you need to purchase and how much each item will cost, why you need the item, and how it relates to your thesis research, your faculty advisor’s name, and when you plan to complete your thesis.
4. Your email must include one attachment, which should be a letter or email from the AQR Program Director stating her support of your purchase of the requested item(s).

Once received, requests will be reviewed by the Department Manager and the AQR Program Director. Students will be notified of their funding award or denial within one week of the receipt of all materials. If approved, students will need to submit the following items to the Administrative Aide for reimbursement for the purchase of the approved item(s):

1. All original itemized receipts showing the item(s) purchased and the method of purchase (e.g., credit card);
2. If being reimbursed for travel (e.g., airfare, rail), original boarding passes to and from the travel destination;
3. A cover sheet with an itemized list of the items you are to be reimbursed for, as well as the total amount of your reimbursement request.

All documents may be submitted electronically (preferred) or in hard copy. Reimbursements typically take 2-4 weeks to be processed once the Administrative Aide has received all necessary documentation.

CONTACT PERSON: Tara Hoey, Department Manager

EMAIL: tara.hoey@nyu.edu

J. Other Student Resources

The Graduate School of Arts and Sciences provides a comprehensive array of services to GSAS students, ranging from admissions and financial aid counseling to wellness services. A complete list of resources available through the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is available online at <http://gsas.nyu.edu/page/nyu.grad.resources>