Handbook for the
Master of Science in Statistics (MS)
School of Mathematical and Statistical
Sciences (SoMSS)

Revised October 19, 2018

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1 Introduction to SoMSS

The School of Mathematical and Statistical Sciences (SoMSS) in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) at Arizona State University (ASU) offers an advanced academic program leading to the Master of Science in Statistics (MS) degree. Our MS in statistics degree prepares students for either a research-oriented or a practice-oriented career, and balances both the theoretical and applied aspects of the discipline. Graduates understand the theory that is fundamental to the proper use of statistics, are knowledgeable about the tools of applied statistics and are familiar with computer software packages available for doing statistical computations. In addition, students interested in research in statistics can obtain the background needed to begin a doctoral program.
The 30-hour program of study includes coursework, exams, and a publicly-defended thesis or applied project. The MS degree is offered to students who have completed a Bachelor’s in mathematics, statistics or a closely related area from a regionally accredited institution.

1.1 Who does what at SoMSS

Parts of the administrative structure of SoMSS that are most relevant to Graduate students:

<table>
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2 Objective of the handbook

The purpose of this handbook is to provide guidance and information related to admission, degree requirements, and general policies and procedures. Please note that in some cases you will find differences between the Graduate College Policies and Procedures and the SoMSS program requirements. In these cases, SoMSS has established higher standards. Students must satisfy both sets of requirements. Please note that policies and procedures are occasionally amended to improve the program. Changes will be communicated to students through email, which is our primary form of communication. We will also post any updates to this handbook on our website [http://math.asu.edu](http://math.asu.edu).
3 Student responsibility

All students are expected to become familiar with university and program policies and procedures and abide by the terms set forth. Information is available online. Most importantly you should visit the following websites:

- The Graduate College - [http://graduate.asu.edu](http://graduate.asu.edu)
- Graduate College Policies and Procedures - [https://graduate.asu.edu/policies-procedures](https://graduate.asu.edu/policies-procedures)
- The SoMSS Graduate Degree Programs - [https://math.asu.edu/degrees/grad](https://math.asu.edu/degrees/grad)

4 Admission and eligibility

Admission to the SoMSS MS program requires a Bachelor’s in mathematics, statistics or a closely related area from a regionally accredited institution. Students are encouraged to contact SoMSS Graduate Student Support [grad.math@asu.edu](mailto:grad.math@asu.edu) for more information.

4.1 Eligibility

Applicants should have completed the following courses (equivalents at ASU are given in parentheses), and applicants who lack any of these prerequisite courses must normally complete the prerequisites before being considered for admission:

- An upper-level proof-oriented calculus course (MAT 371)
- Calculus (MAT 270, MAT 271 and MAT 272)
- Computer programming (CSE 100)
- Introductory statistics (STP 420)
- Linear algebra (MAT 342)
4.2 Application

All students are required to submit an application and all required supporting materials with the Office of Graduate Admission and pay the required fee in order to have their application properly processed.

4.3 GRE scores

All students are required to submit official general Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores directly to the Office of Graduate Admission. We do not require specific subject GRE scores. The ASU Institution code is 4007. If a department code is required use 000 for GRE.

4.4 English proficiency

The University requires all international applicants whose native language is not English to provide proof of English proficiency. The English language requirement cannot be waived. Acceptable proof is as follows (tests must not be older than two years):

- Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) score of at least 550 (PBT) or 80 (iBT). ASU’s institutional code is 4007. ASU only accepts electronic copies of the TOEFL score report.

- International English Language Testing System (IELTS) overall band score of at least 6.5. No institutional code is needed.

- Pearson Test of English (PTE) score of at least 60.

Exemption

You could qualify for an exemption from this requirement by one of the following two options:

1. You successfully complete the highest level at the Global Launch Intensive English Program with grades of B or better

   OR

2. You have attended in person a regionally accredited college or university in the United States and meet one of the following conditions:
• earned a Bachelor’s degree or higher in residence from a regionally accredited college/university in the US (Official Transcripts Required), OR

• completed at least 12 credit hours of graduate course work with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale or higher from a regionally accredited college/university in the US (Official Transcripts required)

OR

• completed at least 90 credit hours of undergraduate course work with a cumulative GPA of 3.00 on a 4.00 scale or higher from a regionally accredited college/university in the US (Official Transcripts required)

OR

• completed the American English and Culture Program (ACEP) Advanced Level II with grades of ‘B’ or better along with the recommendation of the Director of AECP.

4.5 Personal statement

The application must include a personal statement of no more than two pages. The statement should: 1) explain professional goals and reasons for desiring to enroll in the MS program; 2) describe any research experiences; 3) indicate personal interest in statistics or data science; and 4) if possible, identify one or more ASU SoMSS faculty with matching interests.

4.6 Letters of recommendation

SoMSS requires three (3) letters of recommendation, at least one of which must come from a former professor of the applicant. There is no standard form for letters of recommendation. Our current application process allows students to submit the letters of recommendation electronically by indicating the names and the emails of the recommender. In turn, the Office of Graduate Admission sends an email to the recommender alerting him or her to go online and submit a recommendation. Students are encouraged to get letters from people who know them well, such as teachers, professional associates and supervisors, and should ask the recommenders to comment on the student’s academic, emotional, intellectual and professional development.
4.7 GPA requirement

Students applying directly from an undergraduate program must have a minimum GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) overall and in Mathematics courses.

4.8 Transcripts

Official transcripts of all prior University and College coursework are required.

4.9 Application evaluation

Several factors are taken into consideration when evaluating an application: cumulative GPA, major, institution, personal statement, letters of recommendation, standardized test scores, official transcripts, and performance in advanced math courses.

4.10 Notice of admission

SoMSS submits its recommendation of admission to the Office of Graduate Admission and the final decision is delivered in writing by the Office of Graduate Admission. Students may check their application status on MyASU (https://webapp4.asu.edu/myasu/).

4.11 Pre-admission credits and transfer credit

Credit for course work taken from an accredited institution can be awarded in the following situations:

1. 0-12 credit hours of graduate-level courses can be transferred. Those courses must come from a program that did not lead to a completed degree. I.e. they cannot come from a completed Master program nor from an Undergraduate degree. Such pre-admission credits must have been taken within three years of admission to the ASU degree program to be accepted.

2. ASU (only) Undergraduate students can transfer up to 12 hours of graduate classes, if they have been reserved for graduate studies and have not been counted for the Undergraduate degree.
3. The equivalent of a grade of B (at ASU) or higher should have been earned on every transferred course. A course with a grade of ‘Pass’, ‘Credit’, or ‘Satisfactory’ is not acceptable for transfer.

A student who wishes to transfer credits from another institution should contact the SoMSS graduate coordinator to initiate the transfer credit process.

4.12 Transfer between programs

Students who want to change programs within SoMSS, from a Masters to a Ph.D., from a Ph.D. to a Masters or from one Ph.D. program specialization to another should talk to a Graduate Program coordinator. They must submit a new application with the Graduate College. Admission to the new program can be denied. Such transfers should be requested early in the program since in general a student is allowed to use only twelve credits from the original program in the new program.

Transfer between Masters programs within SoMSS are possible and subject to the approval of the Graduate Director. Transfer of coursework and exams will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
5  MS degree requirements

The Handbook for the MS in Statistics is under construction. Please check back in a few weeks. In the meantime if you have questions regarding details of the MS program please contact the Graduate Program coordinators Joelle Park jrpark4@asu.edu and Melissa Delgado melissa.l.delgado@asu.edu
6 General information, policies and procedures

6.1 Costs (tuition & fees)

The costs of enrollment can be obtained from ASU Financial Aid and Scholarship Services. Tuition and fees are subject to annual approval by the Arizona Board of Regents. Use the Tuition Estimator to calculate estimated total cost of attendance. For questions about tuition and fees, please contact the Student Accounts Office. For questions about financial aid and cost of attendance, please contact Student Financial Assistance.

6.2 Grievances and appeals

Students who are enrolled in a College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) course and believe they have been unfairly or improperly graded are assured of just treatment and fair consideration. Any such grievance must be started within the regular semester immediately following the course at issue, whether the student is enrolled in the university or not.

There are two stages to the grade grievance process, the informal process and the formal process. Each contains a series of steps. The steps must be followed by any student seeking to appeal a grade. This process does not address academic integrity allegations, faculty misconduct or discrimination.

Refer to the CLAS Academic Grievance Policy for more information and specific processes.

6.3 Continuous enrollment

Once admitted to a Graduate program, students must be registered for a minimum of one credit hour during all phases of their graduate education, including the term in which they graduate. This includes periods when students are engaged in ASU-funded research, working on or defending theses, taking examinations, or in any other way utilizing university resources, facilities, or faculty time. Exceptions are discussed in section 6.4.

Registration for every fall semester and spring semester is required. Summer registration is required for students taking examinations, defending theses, or graduating from the degree program during a summer term.

To maintain continuous enrollment the credit hour(s) must:

- Appear on the student’s Plan of Study, OR
• Be for research (592), thesis (599), or continuing registration (795), OR
• Be for a graduate-level course.

Grades of ‘W’ and/or ‘X’ are not considered valid registration for continuous enrollment purposes. ‘W’ grades are received when students officially withdraw from a course after the drop/add period. ‘X’ grades are received for audit courses. Additionally, students completing work for a course in which they received a grade of ‘I’ must maintain continuous enrollment as defined previously. Graduate students have one year to complete work for an incomplete grade; if the work is not completed and the grade changed within one year, the ‘I’ grade becomes permanent. Additional information regarding incomplete grades can be found at http://asu.edu/aad/manuals/ssm/ssm203-09.html.

6.4 Voluntary withdrawal from ASU

If a student wishes to withdraw from his/her graduate degree program and the university, they must complete the Voluntary Withdrawal form. Students must separately complete the appropriate forms with the University Registrar to withdraw from their courses. International students should contact the International Student and Scholars Center (ISSC) before submitting a Voluntary Withdrawal form, as it most likely will affect their visa status.

Voluntary withdrawal from a graduate degree program

If a student wishes to transition from one graduate degree program to another graduate degree program, the student should complete the Voluntary Withdrawal form. The student should not take this action until they have been admitted to the other graduate degree program.

Other types of withdrawal

There are appropriate circumstances when students may need to withdraw from the university (i.e. medical withdrawal, compassionate leave). The policies for such withdrawals are the same for both undergraduate and graduate students. Types of withdrawals and procedures can be found at: https://students.asu.edu/drop-add. For course withdrawals contact the University Registrars Office.
6.5 Leave of absence policies

Graduate students planning to discontinue registration for a semester or more must submit a Request to Maintain Continuous Enrollment form. This request must be submitted and approved before the anticipated semester of non-registration. Students may request to maintain continuous enrollment without course registration for a maximum of two semesters during their entire program.

Having an approved Request to Maintain Continuous Enrollment by the Graduate College will enable students to re-enter their program without re-applying to the university. Students who do not register for a fall or spring semester without an approved Request are considered withdrawn from the university under the assumption that they have decided to discontinue their program. Students removed for this reason may reapply for admission to resume their degree program; the application will be considered along with all other new applications to the degree program.

A student with a Graduate College approved Request to Maintain Continuous Enrollment is not required to pay tuition and/or fees, but in turn is not permitted to place any demands on university faculty or use any university resources. These resources include university libraries, laboratories, recreation facilities or faculty time.

6.6 Maximum time limit

All work toward a masters degree must be completed within six consecutive years. The six years begins with the semester and year of admission to the program. Graduate courses taken prior to admission that are included on the Plan of Study must have been completed within three years of the semester and year of admission to the program.

Any exception must be approved by the dissertation committee and the Graduate College. The Graduate College may withdraw students who are unable to complete all degree requirements and graduate within the allowed maximum time limits.
6.7 Registration requirements for research assistants (RA) and teaching assistants (TA)

Students awarded an assistantship within SoMMS are required to be registered for at least 6 credit hours each semester. Audit credit hours do not count towards the 6 credit hours.

A regular Teaching Assistantship or Research Assistantship is considered to have a workload of a 50 percent Full Time Equivalency (FTE). Regular TAs/RAs do not pay tuition during the semester or summer session of their employment. In addition, the university pays the individual health insurance premium for those TAs and RAs.

TAs/RAs working 25–49 percent FTE receive a 50 percent remission of tuition for the semester or summer session of their employment.

Any TA/RA offer does not cover additional fees beyond tuition.

More details on regulations pertaining specifically to TAs and RAs can be found in the [Graduate College TA/RA Handbook](#).

6.8 Policy for maintaining academic satisfactory progress

Each semester, the SoMSS MS program reviews students’ files for satisfactory progress towards completion of the degree. All students who do not meet one of the four categories are placed on probation or dismissed from the program:

1. Satisfactory progress;
2. Academic Probation;
3. Progress probation;
4. Dismissal from the MS program.

1. **Satisfactory progress** means that a student does not have any academic or progress probationary issues. In addition to the probationary rules, satisfactory progress includes discussion with the advisor each semester.

2. **Academic probation**
SoMSS MS students must maintain a minimum of 3.00 GPA on both the iPOS and Graduate GPAs. If either GPA falls below 3.00, the student must develop, with their advisor, an academic performance improvement plan that includes the conditions and timeframes for making satisfactory academic progress in their degree program. The student is considered to be on academic probation until the conditions specified in the academic performance improvement plan are met and both GPAs are above 3.00.

3. **Progress probation** pertains to any of the following issues:

   - Failure to pass the Masters exam(s).
   - Failure to attempt the Masters exam(s) by the end of third year.
   - Failure to remain continuously enrolled.

4. **Dismissal from a SoMSS MS program:**

   An MS student may be dismissed from program for any of the reasons listed below:

   (a) Cumulative or semester GPA is less than 3.0 for two consecutive semesters. (A student with such a GPA will be put on probation after the first semester.)

   (b) Failure to meet a requirement specified for the MS degree, including not making satisfactory progress toward the completion of the degree.

   A student will be recommended for dismissal from a SoMSS MS program for failure to meet the probationary conditions imposed in the semester mentioned in the probationary letter.

   - The student will receive a letter from the SoMSS Graduate program explaining the reasons for the dismissal. The student will have 5 calendar days from the date of the letter to appeal the decision. If the student decides to appeal, the SoMSS graduate committee will review the case and will make the necessary recommendation. The Graduate Associate Director, on behalf of the graduate committee, will provide a written explanation of the outcome.
• If the outcome is favorable, the student will have to meet all the outlined requirements at the end of the specified period. The student will be required to sign an agreement acknowledging the recommendations and the consequences if the agreements are not met.

• If the graduate committee recommends that the appeal is not granted in favor of the student, the Graduate Associate Director, on behalf of the graduate committee, will recommend to the Dean of Academic Affairs that the student be dismissed from the SoMSS Graduate program.

• The student will then have the opportunity to appeal to the CLAS Standards Committee, which reviews the student’s case and makes the final ruling to the Associate Dean and the SoMSS Graduate Associate Director.

• If the appeal is not granted in favor of the student, the Dean of Academic and Student Affairs will recommend to the Graduate College that the student be dismissed from the SoMSS Graduate program.

6.9 Filing for graduation

During the final semester, a student must file an application for graduation with the Graduation Office of the Registrar on My ASU. The student’s approved final plan of study (iPOS) must be on file with the Graduate College before the student can apply for graduation.

6.10 Academic integrity

The highest standards of academic integrity are expected of all graduate students, both in the academic coursework and in their related research activities. The failure of any graduate student to meet these standards may result in serious consequences including suspension or expulsion from the university and/or other sanctions as specified in the academic integrity policies of individual schools as well as the university.

Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to: cheating, fabrication, tampering, plagiarism, or aiding and/or facilitating such activities. At the graduate level, it is expected that students are familiar with
these issues and each student must take personal responsibility in their work. In addition, graduate students are expected to follow university guidelines related to the Student Code of Conduct. University policies related to academic integrity and code of conduct are available in the Office of Student Life, or at https://graduate.asu.edu/academic-integrity.

6.11 Student chapters of professional societies

Our graduate students are involved in many professional societies. Most branches of math have professional societies associated with them. Participation in professional societies is an excellent road to career and interest group connections. Student membership typically costs less than $30 and includes many benefits—for example, discounts at meetings and including a monthly magazine. The American Mathematical Society (AMS), the Association for Women in Mathematics (AWM), the Mathematical Association of America (MAA), and the Society for Applied Mathematics (SIAM) are particularly important.

6.12 Student Support Services

6.12.1 Healthcare & Insurance

All students, whether they have health insurance or not, are eligible to use ASU Health Services. Graduate students must be enrolled in a graduate degree or certificate program and registered for at least three credit hours or one dissertation/thesis hour. Visit ASU Health Services for additional information and instructions regarding Student Health Coverage Options, Eligibility & Enrollment. International students will automatically be enrolled in the student health plan upon registration for class. For students with an RA/TA appointment, refer to the Benefits section of the TA/RA Handbook for additional health insurance information.

All students are required to meet the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) immunization requirement before class registration. You will see a MMR Immunization hold in the Priority Tasks module in My ASU until your MMR information is received and verified. Read additional information about MMR and other immunization information at ASU Health Services.
6.12.2 Disability Resources

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides services to qualified students with disabilities on all ASU campuses. Services include testing accommodations, note taking services, on-campus transportation, and more. Students new to ASU must log into DRC Connect to get started with registering with the DRC office. Contact DRC to determine eligibility and submit required documentation.

6.12.3 Veterans Resources

ASU has a robust veteran student services center. The Tillman Center offers advising, assistance with GI benefits, military transfer credit and other services. The Tillman Center is staffed almost entirely by veterans who relate to the challenges that new students experience and provide support in navigating complex governmental systems.

6.12.4 Counseling Services

Students are eligible for personal counseling services at ASU. ASU Counseling Services offers confidential, time-limited, counseling and crisis services for students experiencing emotional concerns, problems in adjusting, and other factors that affect their ability to achieve their academic and personal goals. They will talk with you, help you identify solutions or support, and connect you with those services at ASU or in the community.

6.12.5 Title IX

ASU is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination based on sex and provides a number of resources and services to assist students, faculty and staff in addressing issues involving sex discrimination, including sexual violence. The university's full statement and policies related to Title IX are available online.

6.12.6 International Students Support

The International Students and Scholars Center (ISSC) at ASU helps international students understand the legalities and requirements of academic and employment-based programs. It deals with all questions regarding visa and
lawful status as an international student in the US as well as many other questions pertaining to life at ASU as an international student.