



THE
OPEN UNIVERSITY
OF SRI LANKA

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

PROSPECTUS

**Master of Philosophy /
Doctor of Philosophy
(MPhil / PhD)**

2024/2025

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, one of the largest faculties of the Open University, is serving over 10,000 students. It offers a wide range of study programs, from short courses to undergraduate and postgraduate programmes across various departments that include Language Studies, Legal Studies, Social Studies and English Language Teaching Department.

The Department of Social Studies (SSD)

The SSD of the OUSL is a multidisciplinary department in the Social Sciences committed to creating a society that cherishes harmonious relations in all sectors of life through the socio-cultural, political, and economic development of people by providing study programmes integrating different social science disciplines.

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General Information

The Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL) is the premier institution in the country recognized for its commitment to the philosophy of Open and Distance Learning. As a National University, OUSL caters to over 33,500 students, 70% of whom are employed professionals. Offering a wide range of academic programs, including Certificates, Diplomas, Degrees, and Postgraduate Degrees, OUSL is dedicated to enhancing the academic and professional potential of its students. Our MPhil and PhD programs provide advanced research opportunities, equipping students with the skills needed to make significant contributions to the scholarly advancement of their fields. OUSL promotes social equity and addresses national educational needs through its flexible and accessible learning environment.

MPhil/PhD Programme

The MPhil/PhD Programmes conducted by the Department of Social Studies are designed to explore advanced theoretical and thematic issues related to social sciences. Both programmes carry a thesis as the main component of the assessment.

Admission Requirement for the MPhil Programme

The candidate should have one of the following qualifications to obtain direct registration:

- Completion of Sri Lanka Qualification Framework (SLQF) Level 7 or above in the relevant field, or,
- Completion of a Bachelor's Honours Degree (SLQF Level 6) in the relevant field.
- An equivalent or higher qualification acceptable to the Senate.

Admission Requirement for the PhD Programme

- A Master of Philosophy Degree in the relevant field, or,
- A Master's Degree at SLQF Level 9 or above preferably in the related field with a significant research component, or,
- An equivalent or higher qualification acceptable to the Senate.

Click on the following link for more information on the admission requirements of the MPhil/PhD programme: <https://ou.ac.lk/guidelines-for-phd-and-mphil-thesis-submission/>

Applications

Interested candidates should send their research proposal (1500 to 2500 words), updated curriculum vitae (CV) along with their personal details, educational qualifications, and recent publications (if any) to ssdmphilphd@ousl.lk

Procedure of Registration

Applicants with the stipulated entry requirements can be registered for direct/provisional entry to the programme of study. After determining the eligibility, they will be expected to submit a research proposal (1500 to 2500 words) in consultation with the supervisor/s assigned by the Department of Social Studies. The candidates shall then be required to make a presentation of their research proposal to demonstrate their capacity to undertake the proposed research before proceeding with the formal registration, which will be facilitated by the Faculty Research Committee. Candidates registered for the degree of Master of Philosophy (MPhil) may be permitted to transfer their registration to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree at the end of the first year, based on their progress.

Fees

For local students:

MPhil: LKR 65,500 per academic year and an Examination fee of LKR 35,000 at the stage of thesis submission.

PhD: LKR 75,500 per academic year and an Examination Fee of LKR 40,000 at the stage of thesis submission.

Foreign students

Fees for foreign students will be three times higher than the local student fees.

Medium of Instruction

The MPhil/PhD programmes are offered in the English Medium.

Programme Duration

The duration of the MPhil/PhD program will be as follows.

MPhil	2 years
PhD	3 years

Any extension of this period may be granted as determined by the Senate.



Postgraduate research interests of the faculty / Postgraduate research prospects for students

The department has evolved with a distinct character and profile over the years, specializing in interdisciplinary studies while maintaining a strong foundation in the core social science areas. These include Economics and Development Studies, Politics and International Relations, Sociology, Social Anthropology and Mass Communication. The academic members are interested in the following distinct themes that could be considered for advanced research.

Name of the Academic	Research Interests
Dr. Sanmugeswaran Pathmanesan Head of the Department Senior Lecturer Email: spath@ou.ac.lk	South Asian caste system, identity, Hindu temple disputes, Temple ideology, Hinduism/Saivism, Sacred landscape, Anthropology of consciousness, Moral landscape, phenomenological anthropology/cultural phenomenology, Memory, Place, Space, Migration, Diaspora, Globalization, Religion, Rituals, Contemporary new religious movements, Ethnomusicology, Tamil music drama, Pluriversal anthropologies, Sri Lanka, Tamil Nadu (South India), South Asia
Prof. Anton Piyarathne Professor Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Email: apiya@ou.ac.lk	Identity construction and negotiations, Ethnicity, Nationalism and citizenship, Youth, Conflict and social justice, Citizenship and democracy, Social change and everyday social lifeworld, Religion, Pilgrimage, Rituals and religious movements, Subjectivity, Inter-subjectivity and objectivity, Existential social realities, Plantation Tamil community in Sri Lanka

<p>Dr. N. S. Abeysinghe Senior Lecturer Email: nsabe@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>Youth development with a special interest in civic engagement, Youth policy formulation, Community development, Youth empowerment, Human-centric approach to youth development and professional development of youth workers</p>
<p>Dr. B. M. P. Mendis Senior Lecturer Email: mahimmendis@gmail.com</p>	<p>Sociology of organizations with special interests in Totalitarian institutions like prisons, Organizational politics and culture, Professionalization and professionalism, Democratic institutional building, Freedom of expression and the media, Good governance and transparency, Structural reforms as in education</p>
<p>Dr. Neavis Morais Senior Lecturer Email: nsmor@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>International trade, Trade policy analysis, Regional economic integration, Microenterprise development/MSME, Entrepreneurship, Livelihoods and rural economic development</p>
<p>Dr. Kanchana Sujananie Bulumulle Director, Center for Gender Equity/Equality Senior Lecturer Email: kbulu@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>Gender equality in higher education, Spirituality and peace, Love and love labouring, Happiness studies</p>
<p>Dr. Sepalika Welikala Senior Lecturer Email: sweli@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>Law and society, Socio-legal processes focusing on mediation, Disputing and compliance, Legal pluralism, Human rights, Neo-liberal legality, Law reforms</p>

<p>Dr. Thiwankee Abeywardena Wickramasinghe Senior Lecturer Email: tawic@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>Democracy, Local governance, Media ethics and self-regulation, Comparative studies on media regulatory frameworks in the Asian Region and in the Commonwealth, Evolutionary process of development and history of mass media, Humanitarian diplomacy, Media management, Organizational communication culture, Open Distance Learning (ODL), Student support mechanisms</p>
<p>Prof. Galagedarage Thushari Madhubhashini Hewage Professor in Communication Email: gtmad@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>Development communication, New media including social media, ICT & digital divide, Disaster communication, Communication research and audience research, Traditional folk media communications, Women and media, Children and media, Animal communication, Television and education, Creative communication, Media education, Freedom of expression, Media ethics and Regulations, Right to information, Open and Distance Learning (ODL), E-Learning,</p>
<p>Dr. S. M. A. K. Samarakoon Senior Lecturer Email: smasa@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>Politics and IR theory, Foreign policy, Cyberpolitics, Sino-Sri Lanka Relations, Governance and public policy, South Asia and regionalism, Diplomacy, Democracy and good governance, Identity politics, Conflict and peace, Politics and major powers and small states, Geo-politics of the Indo-Pacific region, Political parties and electoral politics</p>

<p>Dr. Achintha Koswatta Senior Lecturer Email: hmkos@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>Trade liberalization, Global value chains, Export diversification, Poverty alleviation, Sustainable development, Economic growth in developing countries, Climate adaptation, Renewable energy, Resource management, Governance, Property rights, Regulatory frameworks on economic performance, Patent systems, Innovation and technology transfer</p>
<p>Dr. Sandunika Hasangani Senior Lecturer Email: kahas@ou.ac.lk</p>	<p>International relations, Digital ethnography, Political anthropology, Political communication, Visual and multisensory international relations/politics, China, Digital peacebuilding, Ethnic studies, Religion, Identity, South Asian studies, Diplomacy, Silk Roads, Digital protest cultures, Political cartoons, Visual research methods, Computational social sciences</p>

Assessment of Progress

The candidates are required to submit progress reports to the higher degrees committee every six months duly recommended by the supervisory committee, the Head of the academic department and the Dean of the Faculty. The faculty research committee will be involved in facilitating progress reporting of the candidate at the faculty level. A satisfactory progress is necessary to continue their research project and renewal of registration every academic year.

The final evaluation will be based on the written thesis and an oral presentation by the candidate before a committee as stipulated in the regulation. There may be other requirements such as publication of journal articles based on their research, before awarding the degree.



Contact Information

Dr. S. Pathmanesan & Ms. Thushari Gamage
MPhil/PhD Programme Coordinators
Department of Social Studies
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
The Open University of Sri Lanka
Nawala, Nugegoda

Email: ssdmphilphd@ou.ac.lk

Phone: 0112881402

Website: www.ou.ac.lk

For further information on the MPhil/PhD programme click on the following link:

<https://ou.ac.lk/guidelines-for-phd-and-mphil-thesis-submission/>