

2020-2021 Graduate Handbook

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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Statement of Purpose

This *Department Handbook* is intended to assist you throughout your graduate studies at The Ohio State University in the Department of Sociology by providing information about department policies and procedures. Please also consult the [Graduate School Handbook](#) for information about university rules and regulations for graduate students. Here we focus on additional and detailed department level rules and regulations. This handbook does not restate all of the Graduate School requirements and thus does not substitute for a careful reading of the Graduate School Handbook.

Please note that this handbook contains the policies and procedures in place as incoming students enter the program. During the course of study, minor changes may be made to the handbook by the department for purposes of clarification, or larger changes in the program may be made by approval of the department's graduate faculty. In the event that a change is made, such as a new program requirement, the change will apply only to the cohort entering the next academic year.

Current students will have the option of requesting that a specific change be applied to their program or they may continue to apply the rules in place at the time they officially entered the program. Exceptions to this rule include former requirements that can no longer be accommodated, or changes mandated by the graduate school.

If you have any questions that are not answered in any of these documents, please first talk with your faculty advisor, then the Graduate Program Coordinator (GPC), then me as the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). We encourage you to take the initiative to obtain the information you need and to plan a sound graduate program. I wish you the best of luck with your studies!

Sarah Hayford
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies

Quick Reference

I. Graduate School Deadlines: Graduation, Candidacy, Final Exams

Applications to Graduate: are due by the third Friday of each Semester via [GradForms](#). Please check the Graduate School website for the current semester deadlines. As of this writing, the deadlines were: Autumn: September 11, 2020; Spring: January 29, 2021; Summer: May 28, 2021

Applications for Candidacy Exam: must be *approved* by the advisor and the GPC at least two weeks before the oral date via [GradForms](#). See the section on candidacy for the department requirements.

Applications for Doctoral Final Exams: must be *approved* by the advisor, committee members, and GPC at least two weeks before the exam via [GradForms](#). You must submit a complete draft of the dissertation to your full committee well in advance of this date.

II. Departmental Dates & Deadlines

Presidential Fellowship: the GPC sends out an email the first week of autumn and spring semesters about the procedure for indicating interest in applying for the Presidential Fellowship (post-candidacy students only). The competition takes place twice a year with the following deadlines (subject to change with notification):

Autumn: Notification of interest should be made by September 6, 2019; Application materials due September 20, 2019

Spring: Notification of interest should be made by February 21, 2020; Application materials due March 6, 2020

Annual Review: The Annual Student Progress report will be made available to students in late February to be due a month later.

III. Minimum Registration Requirements

Level	AU and SP with 50%+ GA Funding	Summer with 50%+ GA Funding	AU and SP with Fellowship Funding	SU with Fellowship Funding
Pre-Candidacy	8 hours	4 hours	12 hours	6 hours
Post-Candidacy	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours

You must be registered any term you are on appointment and for every autumn and spring semester after passing candidacy until you defend (see the continuous enrollment policy of the Graduate School).

IV. GradForms vs GRADDOCS

[GradForms](#) is the Graduate School's online portal for registration and graduation forms. If you need to submit a form for the Graduate School, you will do so here.

GRADDOCS is the department's repository of useful documents and necessary forms on BuckeyeBox. The entire department has access to it. It includes department level forms, past candidacy exams, travel documentation, and more. Where possible, direct links to the appropriate forms will be provided as well as footnote as how to navigate to it in the event the link should break.

BuckeyeBox will be decommissioned by July 2021 and the content of GRADDOCS will be migrated to a new home on OneDrive before that time.

V. Graduate Program Contacts

Director of Graduate Studies:	Sarah Hayford	hayford.10@osu.edu
Graduate Program Coordinator:	Caitlin Naber	naber.10@osu.edu

Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct

The department is committed to building a safe, diverse, and equitable environment. In line with the University's policies on [Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity, & Non-Discrimination/Harassment](#) and [Sexual Misconduct](#), the department prohibits discrimination of any kind. If you or someone you know is aware of any acts of discrimination, harassment, or misconduct, please reach out to department HR if you are comfortable or follow the reporting guidelines as outlined in the reporting procedures in the above policies. Bear in mind that there are resources that can help you as a student to navigate such procedures, such as the [Student Advocacy Center](#). If the conduct you have experienced is sexual or relationship violence, including stalking, you are also encouraged to report the incident to local law enforcement. Visit the [Title IX website](#) to view options for reporting to the university and the [Student Wellness Center](#) for a list of resources.

The Advisor-Advisee Relationship

Choosing an Advisor

The advisor-advisee relationship is at the heart of graduate education. Building a productive and supportive advising relationship is thus a crucial task for both faculty and students and it is the responsibility of both parties to maintain good communication about this relationship.

Students in our department are assigned a **Faculty Contact** when first starting graduate school based on their preferences. This faculty member serves as a temporary advisor to help get students acclimated to both graduate school in general and our program specifically. It is a time for both the student and the faculty member to determine if this is a good fit and to use the time to get acquainted with other faculty who may be a better fit as an advisor.

By the end of the spring semester of the first year, students should have identified a regular advisor. This advisor will work with you as you develop your second-year research paper, prepare for your candidacy exams, and ultimately begin working on your dissertation.

As your research and exam areas become more concentrated, you may find that you want to transition to a new advisor for candidacy or dissertation work. If you do wish to change advisors at any time, be sure to have a conversation with your current advisor and your new advisor before making any switch.

FORMS: To officially declare an advisor or change an advisor, please submit a Change of Advisor form. You can find it in the GRADDOCS folder on BuckeyeBox.

Department Expectations

The department expects you to meet with your advisor regularly throughout the academic year. During spring semester, advisor and advisee are expected to meet to complete the [Annual Review Process](#) and set goals for the coming year. For best practices in graduate advising, see the [Graduate School Handbook](#)¹.

Advisors and advisees who are on leave or away from campus for extended periods should plan to stay in regular contact through email, phone, video chat, or other mutually convenient medium.

The GPC and DGS are available to help students and advisors navigate the advising relationship. Students who have concerns about their advising relationship may wish to schedule a meeting with the GPC or DGS.

¹ Graduate School Handbook, Appendix H

The PhD Program Overview

The Ohio State Sociology graduate program is a PhD program. We do not offer a terminal Master's; however, interested students may earn a Master's degree en route to their doctorate. All students follow the same program of study regardless of degrees held upon entering the program.

Program Timeline and Overview

Year	Fall Semester	Credits	Spring Semester	Credits	May/Summer
1	COURSEWORK		COURSEWORK		
	6800 Proseminar	1	6608 Qualitative Methods in Sociology		3
	6649 Introduction to Quantitative Research and Multiple Regression	3	6650 Categorical Data Analysis		3
	6655 Sociological Research Methods	3	6582 Sociological Theory		3
	2 Electives	6	1 Elective		3
		13			12
Milestone			Identify Advisor, 2nd year paper proposal		
2	COURSEWORK		COURSEWORK		
	Electives		6710 Design and Analysis of Social Research Hours		3
	Research Hours		Electives		
			Research Hours		
Milestone	2nd year paper		2nd year paper		2nd year paper
3	COURSEWORK		COURSEWORK		
	8000 level theory or elective	3	8000 level theory or elective	3	
	Advanced methods or elective	3	Advanced methods or elective	3	
	Elective/Research Hours	3	Elective/Research Hours	3	
Milestone	Prepare for candidacy, Identify co-advisor		Prepare/Take Candidacy Exam		
4	COURSEWORK		COURSEWORK		
	Finish coursework	8	Finish coursework	8	
Milestone	Candidacy Exam		Candidacy Exam		Prepare Dissertation Proposal
5	Research/Dissertation Proposal	3	Research/Dissertation Proposal	3	
Milestone	Defend Dissertation Proposal				
6	Dissertation/Job Market	3	Dissertation/Job Market	3	

Above is a sample timeline for how students may move through the program. This timeline and the Program Requirements below are useful tools for setting goals with your advisor(s).

In the first two years of the program, all students are expected to complete and defend a Second Year Paper of publishable quality. The defense of the paper should take place no later than the first semester of the third year.²

Once the defense is passed, students are expected to put polishing touches on the paper and send it out for publication while continuing to more advanced coursework. At this point, you should be begin preparing for candidacy exams, identifying your exam areas and committee members. Candidacy exams should be taken in the third or fourth year and must be taken by the spring of your fourth year in order to maintain good progress.

Upon entering candidacy, students are essentially done with coursework and will focus on dissertation research. Students will prepare a dissertation proposal outlining the planned dissertation and have a formal defense of the proposal with their dissertation committee. The length, format, and timing of the dissertation proposal will vary depending on the project and the advisor; in general, the proposal should be defended two semesters after entering candidacy, or no later than the beginning of the fifth year. Once approved, students move fully into research and dissertation writing. An oral defense of the completed dissertation is required for receipt of the doctoral degree.

As they write their dissertations, students should research the appropriate timing for job applications and plan to apply for academic or non-academic jobs as they finish the degree.

Coursework

As seen in the sample [Program Timeline](#) and [Program Requirements](#) students take a series of required courses leading up to taking their candidacy exams.

For courses requiring approval from the DGS and/or your primary advisor, we encourage you to apply for approval before taking the course in order to make sure the course will meet departmental requirements.

Methods Courses

Students will take 4 methods courses in their first 2 years in the program each of which are 3 credit hours:

- SOCIOL 6608 Qualitative Methods in Sociology
- SOCIOL 6649 Introduction to Quantitative Research/Multiple Regression
- SOCIOL 6650 Categorical Data Analysis
- SOCIOL 6655 Sociological Research Analysis

Theory Courses

Students will also take a total of 2 theory courses. There are two 8000-level courses that fulfill the requirement for the second course.

- SOCIOL 6582 Sociological Theory
- SOCIOL 8547 Theories of Social Change

² For students who do not already have a Master's, they may follow the [Graduation Procedures](#) at this point.

- SOCIOL 8580 Issues in Contemporary Society

Second Year Paper

During the second semester of the second year, students will take a course to support the design, implementation, and writing of the second-year paper. This requirement may be waived for students who complete their paper prior to the course offering.

- SOCIOL 6710 Design and Analysis of Sociological Research

Advanced Methods

Leading up to candidacy exams, students will choose at least one advanced methods course. The following courses will fulfill this requirement. Other courses from outside the department may also fulfill this requirement with approval in advance from the Director of Graduate Studies.

- SOCIOL 6708 Design and Analysis of Qualitative Research
- SOCIOL 7712 Seminar in Social Networks
- SOCIOL 7753 Introduction to Demographic Analysis
- SOCIOL 7884.09 Seminar: Research Methodology
- SOCIOL 8607 Causal Modeling
- SOCIOL 8632 Analysis of Longitudinal Data
- SOCIOL 8651 Hierarchical Linear Models

ProSeminar

First-year students take the 1 credit hour ProSem in their first semester with the DGS. The course introduces department expectations and professionalization to the field.

- SOCIOL 6800 Proseminar in Sociology

In the spring of the third year, students take the advanced ProSem course as they begin to prepare for candidacy exams.

- SOCIOL 8801 PhD ProSeminar

Electives

In addition to these required courses, students are expected to complete a total of 8 electives. Any graduate level course in Sociology (6000-level+) fulfills this requirement. Students may take up to two graduate level courses outside the department to count towards their elective requirement during their time in the program. In order for these outside courses to count, you must seek pre-approval from your advisor via the [Outside Course Approval](#) form and sending a syllabus to the GPC prior to taking the course.³ Elective requirements cannot be met through Independent Study or Research Hours.

³ The Outside Course Approval Form can also be found on BuckeyeBox in the GRADDOCS ->Forms folder.

Transfer of Credit

Students may request to transfer credits from previous graduate studies to the program. In all cases, the approval for any credits is at the discretion of the department and is evaluated on a case by case basis. Only courses that the DGS, in consultation with knowledgeable faculty, deems to be comparable to courses required by the department are eligible for consideration. Students are not permitted to transfer in any credits from undergraduate work. In general, a maximum of four courses can be transferred. Under special circumstances the program will consider accepting additional transfer credit.

If you are concerned about the number of required credits, please consult with the GPC.

FORMS: To request transfer credit, submit a [Transfer of Graduate Credit form via GradForms](#).

Program Requirements

Students are required to complete the following departmental requirements. All courses must be completed with a grad of B- or better to be counted as fulfilling course requirements.

Core Courses:

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Course</i>
-----------------	--------------	---------------

1 – 6000 level Theory Course

_____	_____	6582 Sociological Theory
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4 – 6000 level Methods and Statistics Courses

_____	_____	6608 Qualitative Methods in Sociology
-------	-------	---------------------------------------

_____	_____	6649 Introduction to Quantitative Research/Multiple Regression
-------	-------	--

_____	_____	6650 Categorical Data Analysis
-------	-------	--------------------------------

_____	_____	6655 Sociological Research Methods
-------	-------	------------------------------------

1 – Second Year Paper Course

_____	_____	6710 Design and Analysis of Sociological Research
-------	-------	---

1 – 8000 level Theory Course

_____	_____	8547 Theories of Social Change
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_____	_____	8580 Issues in Contemporary Theory
-------	-------	------------------------------------

1 – Advanced Methods Requirement – Courses from outside the department may be considered with approval from the DGS

_____	_____	6708 Design and Analysis of Qualitative Research
-------	-------	--

_____	_____	7712 Seminar in Social Networks
-------	-------	---------------------------------

_____	_____	7753 Introduction to Demographic Analysis
-------	-------	---

_____	_____	7884.09 Seminar: Research Methodology
-------	-------	---------------------------------------

_____	_____	8607 Causal Modeling
-------	-------	----------------------

_____	_____	8632 Analysis of Longitudinal Data
_____	_____	8651 Hierarchical Linear Models

Electives

In addition to the core courses laid out on the previous page, students must also complete a total of 8 elective courses.

- Any graduate level sociology course (those 6000-level and above) fulfills the requirement.
- Two courses outside the department (6000-level and above) may be counted toward the requirement with approval from the DGS. A list of courses that have been approved in past years is available on the website. Under special circumstances, additional courses outside the department may be counted as electives with approval from the DGS and from your advisor.
- Course requirements cannot be met through Independent Studies (6193) or Research Hours (6999/8999).
- All courses must be completed with a grade of B- or better to be counted as fulfilling course requirements.

<i>Semester</i>	<i>Grade</i>	<i>Course</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Program Components

The Second Year Paper

Graduating PhD students in sociology face a competitive job market in which demonstrated potential for research productivity is highly emphasized, both in and outside of academia. The best evidence of such potential is an established record of paper presentations at regional and national meetings and, more importantly, articles published in nationally recognized sociological journals.

The second-year paper is also the time at which students who entered the program without a Master's degree are able to earn one. While all students follow the procedure below, students wishing to earn a Master's will need to follow the [graduation requirements](#) for the term in which they intend to defend their paper as well.

The Paper

Our students' first opportunity to establish such a record comes with the writing of the second-year paper, an original research project of publishable quality. The Graduate Studies Committee has developed the following guidelines for the paper:

- Length should not exceed 50 pages including title page, text, figures, tables, footnotes, and references. This is a maximum length and papers of quality may be shorter.
- There are no restrictions on the content or methods used other than meeting ordinary standards of the discipline as interpreted by the student's committee.
- In most cases, extensive literature reviews are not advised. One exception to this might be theoretical papers in which such reviews are integral to the nature of the work. Faculty are encouraged to use the oral exam as a forum for probing theoretical and analytical details that are not explicitly contained in the text of the document.
- We stress that one criterion for evaluation is that it demonstrates publishable quality, or the potential for publishable quality. We recognize that some papers may require polishing before they are ready for submission, but the committee should use as its standard the potential for publication if recommended revisions are undertaken.

There are no departmental formatting requirements for the second-year paper. Students who wish to submit the paper as a master's thesis in order to receive a master's degree will need to follow the graduate college formatting requirements.

The Committee

The second-year paper committee will consist of three graduate faculty in the Department of Sociology, a) your advisor who chairs your committee, and b) two members selected by the student in consultation with the advisor. In the event you wish to have a committee member whose primary appointment is not in the Department of Sociology, their addition to your committee must be approved by the DGS. During the research and writing of the second-year paper, students should consult regularly with all members of the committee, under the supervision of the chair. Students work with committees to schedule the time of the defense.

The Defense

Upon completing the paper, students will need to successfully pass a one-hour oral examination that evaluates the quality of the paper and the student's competence in the discipline. While each defense at each stage of the program has different components, there are some [generic rules for all defenses](#) in the department.

The committee may decide one of the three following outcomes:

- Unanimous pass of satisfactory performance.
- To impose conditions to be met before the student can pass. Most commonly, conditions include revisions of the document.
- Fail a student whose performance is unsatisfactory. In such an instance, the committee must determine whether the student will be allowed to retake their defense.

Students typically complete and defend their paper during their second year, hence the name. However, the department recognizes that some projects are larger in scope and may require more time. In order to maintain reasonable progress, as defined by the department, the paper must be defended by the beginning of the third year.

Candidacy

In the third or fourth year of the program, students will sit for the candidacy examination. The candidacy exam is a single exam that consists of a written and oral component. The purpose of the exam is to test a student's comprehension of the field, familiarity with specified areas of study, and capacity to undertake independent research. A student is generally deemed ready to take the exam at the end of coursework and when they are ready to undertake their own research that will eventually culminate in the dissertation. Students are required to be registered for a minimum of 3 credit hours during the semester candidacy is taken.⁴ Students who are on appointment should follow the usual [registration requirements](#).

Timing

Sociology graduate students are eligible to take the candidacy exam once they have successfully completed their required coursework. Students may take it as early in their program as possible but are required to take it by the spring of their 4th year in order to maintain good progress.

According to Graduate School rules, the candidacy exam must be completed at least one semester before a student can defend and graduate.⁵

Preparation

Students use a variety of strategies to prepare for candidacy. There is a Candidacy folder in GRADDOCS with past reading lists as well as past exam questions. Other graduate students have also put together a list of preparation tips.

Reading Lists: At least three months before the exam, students should submit and prepare reading lists for their committee to approve. Approved reading lists provide the basis for exam questions. The

⁴ Graduate School Handbook, 7.3.4

⁵ Graduate School Handbook, 7.3.4

reading list can and should be based on past reading lists (see the Candidacy folder in GRADDOCS) with updates to reflect the student's interests and the current state of the field.

Committee

The candidacy committee consists of four members: the advisor, two faculty members selected by the student in consultation with the advisor, and one faculty member outside the student's area to be assigned by the DGS.

Exam Format

The intention of candidacy exams is to familiarize students with the literature in two broadly defined subfields in sociology. For this reason, the exam will cover the literature in two of the following areas broadly construed. Students select their areas of specialization in consultation with their advisor.

- Community & Urban
- Comparative & Historical
- Crime, Deviance & Social Control
- Education
- Family
- Gender, Race & Class
- Health & Medical
- Methodology
- Political
- Population
- Social Movements
- Theory
- Work, Economy & Organizations
- Individual Specialization: This content is to be determined by the student in consultation with the advisor. This area cannot be chosen twice.

Written Exam: The written exam is taken across two consecutive days (4 hours 45 minutes per day). Each day tests on one area. The time is loosely allocated to include 4 hours for writing, 30 minutes for editing and proofreading, and 15 minutes for breaks. Take-home exams are not permitted. There is a Candidacy folder in GRADDOCS that includes past candidacy questions and preparation suggestions.

Oral Defense: The oral exam follows many of the general [rules of defenses](#) in the department with some additions. Committees can ask questions about any part of the written exam, including questions the student chose not to answer. The oral exam must occur within 4 weeks of the written exam.

Procedure

Candidacy exams are held during Autumn and Spring semesters. The GPC sends an email opening sign-up during the first week of class. All students intending to sit for exams during the course of the semester should sign up. Students indicate a set of two consecutive business days, during normal university business hours, that they will take their exams.

- After signing up, students will complete a course check to ensure that they have completed all required coursework.
- The DGS assigns an outside area department rep to the committee. Once the outside rep has been assigned, the student should start working with all members of the committee to schedule the oral defense.
- There are two required forms, one for the department and one for the Graduate School.
 - Departmental: The GPC initiates this form via DocuSign once the outside rep is assigned. This form will route to all members of the committee and will include all the details of the written and oral exams. This form ensures that all members of the committee, including the outside rep agree to the proposed dates of the exam.
 - Graduate School: The Application for Candidacy should be submitted via [GradForms](#) and must be approved by the program and your advisor at least two weeks before the oral exam date. Thus, you should be sure to submit it well in advance of this deadline. This form triggers the Graduate School processes that will eventually confer your post-candidacy status.
 - These forms perform different functions, and both need to be completed well ahead of your exam.
- On the days of the written exam, the student has 4 hours and 45 minutes each day. The GPC will collect the answers at the end of time each day. At the end of the second day, the GPC sends copies of all questions and answers to the student and committee.
- The oral defense must take place 1-4 weeks after the written exam. Committee members then determine whether the student's performance across both portions of the exam was satisfactory or not.

The committee may decide on the following outcomes:

- Pass the student whose performance is satisfactory on both written and oral portions
- Fail a student whose performance is unsatisfactory on written or oral portions, or both. It is possible for a student to pass in one subject area, but fail in another area, or pass the written but fail the oral.
- The committee may also decide to pass the student under specified conditions, which may include revisions of the document, taking one or more additional written exams, successful completion of a specific course or courses, or writing a paper on a specified topic.
- In the case the committee determines a student fails one or more portions of the exam, the committee must also decide whether or not the student is to be permitted to take a second candidacy exam. It is possible for the committee to require the student to retake only one subject area or only the oral portion. The student must pass the second candidacy exam in order to continue in the program.

Post-Candidacy Status and Continuous Enrollment

After passing the candidacy exams, students are considered to be post-candidacy in OSU systems the term following when they took the exam (i.e. exam passed in April 2019, student is post-candidacy beginning Summer 2019).

Once post-candidacy, students are held to the Continuous Enrollment policy, which requires students to be enrolled in every autumn and spring semester until graduation. Summer is excluded.⁶

The Dissertation

The dissertation is the culmination of your graduate training. It is an extensive, original research project in which students contribute to the body of knowledge in the discipline. While students are researching and writing their dissertation, they are post-candidacy and should generally be registering for 3 credit hours of SOCIOL 8999. The dissertation defense should occur by the spring semester of the sixth year.

Dissertation Committee

After passing candidacy, a student may choose to change advisors for the dissertation. As with the second-year paper, your dissertation advisor should be in the department. In consultation with their dissertation advisor, the student then selects two other faculty members to serve on the dissertation committee. The committee should be formed as soon as possible, and not later than one semester after entering candidacy. The selection of advisors and committees is subject to approval by the Graduate Studies Committee. Upon scheduling the dissertation defense, a Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) will be assigned to the committee from outside the department.

Dissertation Proposal

Students are required to submit a written proposal for their dissertation research to their dissertation committee so that the committee can review and offer valuable feedback. The length and format of the written proposal is to be determined in consultation with the advisor. Some proposals follow a format of a research plan with little analysis while others occur at a more advanced stage and include preliminary findings. Valuable models include the [National Science Foundation Dissertation Research Improvement Grant](#) and [National Institutes of Health F31 Predoctoral Fellowship](#).

Once the advisor deems the proposal ready, the student should seek feedback from the committee. After committee members have had the opportunity to review the proposal, the full committee should meet with the student in a one-hour [defense](#). Before the defense, the student should fill out the [Dissertation Proposal form](#) (found here or in the GRADDOCS folder); after the defense the committee will either approve the proposal or require revisions. The dissertation proposal should be defended by the beginning of the 5th year in the program in order to maintain good progress.

Dissertation Defense

To defend your dissertation in a given semester, there are a number of procedures you need to follow. In order to make it easiest to keep track of, consider printing the following out and using it as a checklist. You should also bookmark the Graduate School's [Graduation Calendar](#) to keep track of deadlines, and the [Final Semester Checklist](#).

- In the semester you intend to defend, ensure you are registered for at least 3 credit hours.
- Submit your Application to Graduate via [GradForms](#).

⁶ Graduate School Handbook, 3.1.3

- DEADLINE: The application must be approved by your advisor and the GPC by the third Friday of the semester, so be sure to submit it well ahead of the deadline.
- Check the status of your application to make sure it is approved by the deadline.
- Schedule your exam date with your committee and reserve a room
- 3-4 weeks ahead of your exam date, send a full draft of your dissertation to your committee and submit your Application for Final Exam via [GradForms](#).
 - DEADLINE: The application must be approved by all members of your committee and received by the Graduate School at least 2 weeks ahead of your exam date. This is a firm deadline, which Graduate School staff will enforce. It is important to get a full draft to the committee well ahead of this deadline so they can properly evaluate whether a student is ready to defend. While sometimes faculty agree to a faster process, committee members can and do decline to approve when approached too close to deadlines or other scheduled defenses. In these cases, students have to delay defenses to the subsequent term with implications for tuition and graduate appointments.
- Undergo format check by taking a complete hard copy to the Graduate School during regular business hours. Check the [Format Review and Submission guidelines](#) and [Document Preparation](#) before taking your copy over.
- Students receive a notification from the Graduate School notifying them of the Graduate Faculty Representative (GFR) to their defense. The GFR is a Graduate Faculty member outside the department intended to ensure the integrity of doctoral examinations around the university. GFRs are full voting members of each exam committee.
- Upon notification of your GFR, deliver a copy of the dissertation to the GFR in their preferred format.
- The exam is a two-hour defense following the general [guidelines for defenses](#) in the department.
- Immediately upon completing the exam, verify that your committee has submitted the Report on Final Examination via [GradForms](#).
- The committee may require some changes to the dissertation document. These changes must be made and approved by the committee via the Report on Final Document form ([GradForms](#)) with the final approved document submitted to the Graduate School by the date listed in the [Graduation Calendar](#).
- Students then need to convert their final document to the appropriate format for submission to OhioLink. You can also request to delay electronic access to your document. Read more about [Access to Ohio State Dissertations](#).

In evaluating the dissertation defense, the committee may make one of the following determinations:

- Pass a student whose performance is satisfactory.
- Impose conditions to be met before the student can earn the PhD. Conditions may include revisions of the dissertation.
- Fail a student whose performance is unsatisfactory. If the committee decides the defense is unsatisfactory, they must decide whether or not the student is permitted to take a second

defense. If a student fails a second attempt, the student is not permitted to be a doctoral candidate in the same or in any other graduate program at this university⁷.

⁷ Graduate School Handbook, 7.10.6

Need to Know

Credit Hours and Registration

Minimum Credit Hour Requirements for Completion

The Graduate School requires a minimum of 80 graduate credit hours beyond the baccalaureate degree to earn a PhD. If a master's degree has been earned and transferred, as decided by the department, then a minimum of 50 graduate credit hours beyond the master's is required.⁸

Graduate credit hours are courses that are listed at 6000-level or above and occasionally below.⁹ If you have questions about whether a course outside the department that is listed below 6000-level would count as graduate credit, please consult the GPC.

Registration Requirements

Level	AU and SP with 50%+ GA Funding	Summer with 50%+ GA Funding	AU and SP with Fellowship Funding	SU with Fellowship Funding
Pre-Candidacy	8 hours	4 hours	12 hours	6 hours
Post-Candidacy	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours	3 hours

The department typically funds through graduate students through the academic year and funded appointments have registration requirements attached to them. If you have questions about funded appointments, see the [Funding section](#).

Pre-Candidacy: The Department of Sociology requires all pre-candidacy students on appointment as Fellows to be registered for 12 credit hours for each Autumn and Spring semester prior to entering candidacy. GAs of any type should be registered for a minimum of 8 credit hours for each Autumn and Spring semester prior to entering candidacy, but may register for more. During summer, students appointed as a GA of any type will register for a minimum of 4 hours, while Fellows will need to register for 6 credit hours.

Post-Candidacy: Starting the first semester after passing [candidacy](#), students switch to taking a maximum of 3 credit hours, typically of SOCIOL 8999 (Dissertation Research Hours). After passing candidacy, students are subject to the Graduate School's [Continuous Enrollment Policy](#).

Summer Fee Waiver with no summer appointment: Students who held a 50% GA appointment for the previous autumn and spring semesters but are not on appointment for summer, are entitled to a full fee authorization for the immediately following summer semester. Contact the GPC if you are interested in utilizing this fee waiver so we can be sure it is properly applied.

⁸ Graduate School Handbook, 7.1.4-5

⁹ Graduate School Handbook, 4.0.1

Registration for Defenses: If you are sitting for an exam or will be defending, you must be registered for the minimum number of required hours based on your appointment. If you have any questions, please ask the GPC before the initial fee deadline.

Funding

The department provides financial support for all admitted students for 6 academic years, as outlined in their signed offer letters, contingent upon [reasonable progress](#) through the program. The department is sometimes able to continue funding beyond the original funding offer, depending on departmental needs, the availability of financial resources, and the student's performance in the program.

The primary forms of funding in the department are Graduate Teaching and Research Associateships (GTA and GRA). GTAs are assigned each semester and GRAs are filled by individual faculty members as they have positions available on grants.

Another form of funding are Fellowships. Some students come into the program funded on a fellowship position, which involves a focus on coursework. There are also other fellowship opportunities mid-program and this will be announced by the GPC.

Presidential Fellowships

The Presidential Fellowship is the most prestigious award given by the Graduate School. Recipients of this award embody the highest standards of scholarship in the full range of Ohio State's graduate programs. Awarded competitively, the Presidential Fellowship gives fellows one year (12 month) of full-time financial support so they can complete their dissertations unimpeded by other duties. Competitions are held autumn and spring semesters.

The GPC sends an email well ahead of each competition to ask for students interested in being nominated for the fellowship. If chosen to be nominated, members of the GSC will work with you to prepare your materials for the competition.

For the dates and deadlines for this year's competition, check the [Quick Reference](#) at the front of this document.

Overload Policy

Some students on a regular GTA or GRA appointment may find that they would like to add an additional appointment, usually a GRA appointment. This is referred to as an overload. A regular GA position is 20 hours/week and is a 50% appointment. An overload position adds another 10 hour/week, 25% appointment for a total of 30 hours/week and a 75% appointment.

Once you are aware that a faculty member would like to hire you on an overload, immediately contact the GPC with the faculty member's name, the semester the faculty member would like to hire you for, and the project they are going to hire you on. Overloads are subject to approval by both the department and the Graduate School.

Employment Outside of the Department

By Graduate School rule, fellowship students must hold no other appointment or have outside employment during the tenure of their fellowship. Students appointed as GAs are strongly discouraged from seeking outside employment. Any student appointed as a GA who is considering outside

employment must be approved by their graduate advisor, and reported to the DGS. Outside employment can become an issue for future funding if a student does not maintain their normal academic progress in the program.

Travel Funds

The department allocates annual travel funds (contingent upon the department budget) to each graduate student to present papers at professional meetings. In order to be eligible to receive funds, students must have a paper accepted or be on the conference program in another meaningful way. In addition, each student must attend a travel workshop presented by the GPC and/or Fiscal Associate before travelling for the first time. Travel workshops are generally held each semester, but if there are scheduling conflicts, please contact the GPC to arrange a make-up.

See the [website](#) for travel policies and the travel worksheets.

Other Funding Opportunities

The department has various funds set up as endowments to help support graduate students through fellowship or to provide awards through a yearly paper competition. As of this writing, these opportunities includes the following:

Funding Opportunity	Description	History
The Mildred and Simon Dinitz Graduate Fellowship Fund in Criminology in the Department of Sociology	Provides fellowship support for graduate students specializing in criminology. This is awarded by the department to first-year incoming students as part of the admissions process.	Established April 6, 1999, by family, friends and colleagues through The Foundation. Income provides fellowship support for graduates specializing in criminology.
The William Form and Joan Huber Graduate Fellowship Fund in The Department of Sociology	Provides fellowships for graduate students in the Sociology Department. This is awarded by the department to first-year incoming students as part of the admissions process.	Established October 6, 1995, through The Foundation by William Form, professor emeritus, sociology, and Joan Huber, senior vice president, provost and professor emeritus. Income provides fellowships for students in the Department.
James Edward Hagerty Graduate Scholarship in Criminology	Income to be used for a Graduate Scholarship in Criminology. This is awarded by the department to first-year incoming students as part of the admissions process.	Established November 9, 1947, with Dr. Hagerty's bequest. Income provides a graduate scholarship in criminology.
The Randy Hodson Memorial Fund	Awards one or more sociology graduate students with an outstanding paper or research project in Professor Randy Hodson's areas of research in work, power or inequality. This	The Randy Hodson Memorial Endowment Fund, established in 2016, supports graduate students through fellowships and research grants, and recognize the important intellectual contributions of young scholars.

	is one of our yearly paper competitions and is awarded during the departmental spring awards banquet.	
Elizabeth Menaghan Award	Income to be used to award sociology graduate student(s) for recognition of their outstanding paper in the field of marriage and family. This is one of our yearly paper competitions and is awarded during the departmental spring awards banquet.	
The Frank L. Mott Award	Awards a student in recognition of their outstanding paper in field of population and health. This is one of our yearly paper competitions and is awarded during the departmental spring awards banquet.	Awards a student in recognition of their outstanding paper in field of population and health
Department of Sociology Small Grants for Graduate Research	Intended for small, one-time expenses related to grad research and productivity not covered by other available sources of funding. Ex: journal submission fees, publication page fees, software, or data purchasing fees.	

Annual Review

Each spring, the department faculty review the records of all graduate students. The purpose of this review is to evaluate students' progress and provide the basis for recommendations to the Department Chair regarding departmental funding for the subsequent year. The evaluation meeting is intended to be a consultative and interactive process to assist in shaping each year's program of study to best meet the student's needs and ensure timely progress through the program.

Procedure

Each spring, students are required to complete the Annual Student Progress Report. Students then meet with their advisor with a copy of their report and an up-to-date CV to discuss their progress. At this meeting, the student and advisor together fill out the Advisor Evaluation. All materials are then submitted to the GPC.

Regardless of your level in the program, failure to submit annual review materials may be detrimental to your academic standing in the department and result in a registration lock and/or probation.

“Good Standing” and “Reasonable Progress”

As a graduate student at Ohio State you will hear the phrases “good standing” and “reasonable progress” many times during your program. The two are similar and related, but different.

Good standing is a Graduate School phrase that is used to indicate that you are meeting the minimum GPA requirements of the Graduate School and are maintaining reasonable progress through program milestones, but each department sets what qualifies as reasonable progress.¹⁰

Reasonable progress means that you are making timely progress through the department milestones as outlined below. The department evaluates this through the [Annual Review](#) process each year. There may be times that you are not making reasonable progress due to unforeseen circumstances, such as a health event or family emergency. We are committed to working with you through this time and will work with you to develop a plan to return to reasonable progress. It is important to maintain open communication with the department during these times.

- The completion of at least 6 of the required courses during the first year
- Completion of the second-year paper by the beginning of the third year
- Selection of a permanent advisor by the end of autumn semester of the second year
- Completion of all required coursework
- Progress towards the candidacy examination as demonstrated by:
 - Developing and submitting a plan of study by the end of the spring semester following the defense of the second-year paper
 - Completing the candidacy examination by the spring semester of the 4th year
- Forming a dissertation committee by the end of the first semester after admission to candidacy
- Developing a dissertation proposal and defending it by the beginning of the first semester of the fifth year
- Completing the dissertation by the end of the 6th year

The above are the standard academic milestones you must complete for the program, but you should also be completing professional development during the course of the program. This includes activities include attending and presenting at conferences, submitting papers for publication, or other interactions with professional peers in your desired field of employment.

GPA Requirements

Graduate students in the Department of Sociology must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.2 and receive grades of B- or better in graduate coursework in order to remain in good standing.

GPA's and grades are reviewed every spring during the [Annual Review Process](#). If the GPA falls below the required threshold, there is more than one C+ on a student's record, or the student receives a U in research hours, the department will follow the procedures below:

¹⁰ See Graduate School Handbook, 5.1 for more details.

- GPA: The student will be notified that their GPA is close to falling below the GPA requirement (if there is adequate lead time). If the GPA falls below 3.2 they will be placed on departmental probation and they will then be given one semester to raise the GPA to the minimum or better. Failure to meet this requirement will result in dismissal from the program.
- Grades: The student will be notified that there is 1 or more C+ on their record (if there is adequate lead time). If there are 2 C+, they will be placed on departmental probation and notified that a third C+ or lower will result in dismissal from the program.
- Research Hours: The student will be notified that they have an Unsatisfactory grade in SOCIOL 6193, 6999, or 8999 and will be placed on departmental probation. To get off probation, the student must satisfy the terms of a contractual agreement between the student and their advisor for a specified amount of work. The DGS must approve the contract. If a student receives a second Unsatisfactory grade in one of these courses, the student may be dismissed from the program.

Defenses (General Rules)

There are multiple points in the program at which students are required to defend. While each defense is a bit different, all defenses in the department have the following characteristics:

- Second year paper and dissertation defenses are open to the public with the exception of committee discussions on protocol and evaluation, which are confidential
- Advisors should announce public (see above) student defenses to the department via email at least one day prior
 - Should include student name, time and place of defense, chair and committee members, title and abstract of thesis
- Students schedule the date, time, and location for all defenses with their committee and book a room in department
- Satisfactory decisions must be unanimous. If one faculty member determines the performance is unsatisfactory, the student cannot pass the exam.

While the exact format of the defense is determined by the advisor and committee, most defenses in the Department of Sociology proceed in the following manner:

After a brief welcome, the advisor asks the student (and public if applicable) to step out of the room for a few minutes. During this time, the committee briefly discusses their overall evaluation of the document and decides on the order in which faculty ask questions, including how to allocate time. After the committee discussion, the advisor invites the student and audience back into the room and typically asks the student to give a brief introduction on the intellectual path to the exam. Faculty then ask questions for the majority of the defense time. After the period of questioning, the advisor again asks the student and audience to leave the room. The committee discusses the student's written and oral performance and determines the overall outcome of the exam. The student and audience is invited back into the room and informed of the committee evaluation.

For more about the different types of defenses:

- [Second year paper \(one-hour defense\)](#)

- [Candidacy \(two-hour defense\)](#)
- [Dissertation proposal \(one-hour defense\)](#)
- [Dissertation \(two-hour defense\)](#)

Graduation Procedures

All students should consult the [Final Semester Procedures and Timelines](#) for a semester in which they intend to graduate. This checklist includes deadlines and all requirements for the graduate school.

For students who enter the program without a Master's degree and wish to earn one en route to the PhD, you may do so by simply following graduation procedures as you defend your second year paper.

Leaves of Absence

We understand that life does not stop because you are in graduate school. In some cases, students may need to request a leave of absence. Generally, there are short-term leaves (up to two weeks) and longer, more formalized leaves (longer than two weeks). Regardless of the duration, it is important to have clear and open communication with your advisor and the department. We are dedicated to helping students succeed and will work with you to develop a plan and reach out to any additional units as needed.

The department supports the [Parental Leave Policy](#) as laid out in the Graduate School Handbook¹¹.

All leaves of absence are overseen by the department on a case-by-case basis.

Grievance Procedures

Students who have any concerns or issues regarding responsibilities, assignments, procedures, or evaluations, should first speak with their faculty advisor or the GTA coordinator. If it is not possible to reach a mutually satisfactory arrangement, students should consult with the GPC or DGS as the situation demands. If the grievance is still unresolved, students should follow the [procedures](#) established by the Graduate School.

Preparing Future Faculty (PFF)

The [Preparing Future Faculty program](#) is a mentorship and career development program offered through the Graduate School and partner colleges and universities in Ohio. Its aim is to help graduate students discern whether they are interested in pursuing faculty careers in liberal arts colleges or small universities by pairing students with a faculty mentor at one of the partner schools.

Students must apply and be accepted to the program. Students must be post-candidacy to be eligible and it is recommended that they be one to two years from the job market.

If you are accepted to PFF, you will have some slightly different registration requirements for the duration of the program. Work with the GPC to make sure you are registered for the correct number of hours.

¹¹ For relevant parental leave sections, see Graduate School Handbook 11.2 and Section F.7.

Other Questions

How do I choose an advisor?

All new students are assigned a faculty contact before arriving on campus for their first semester. To officially declare an advisor or change an advisor, students fill out a [Change of Advisor](#) form found in GRADDOCS.

Should I keep copies of my letters and contracts?

Absolutely. While many things get sent via email or DocuSign at Ohio State, it is wise to keep a copy of your initial offer letter, each semester's GA contract, your annual review letters, as well as any other correspondence to/from the Graduate School all in one place in case any discrepancy arises in the files.

Do I have to be an Ohio resident?

You are not required to be an Ohio resident. The Graduate School rules require at least 24 graduate hours must be taken at this university¹², but this is generally in reference to students who transfer to OSU. Please consult the GPC if you have further questions.

Can I get a minor in graduate school?

The department does not require a minor, though the Graduate School does maintain a list of approved [minors and Graduate Interdisciplinary Specializations](#). It is also possible for students to gain competence in a foreign language, statistics, computer science, philosophy of science, or another related field without seeking a minor/specialization by taking appropriate courses in other departments. These courses may be used for elective departmental requirements only as specified below.

TL;DR: You can get a minor if you'd like, but it's not required.

¹² Graduate School Handbook, 7.1.5