2021-2022 Graduate Handbook

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Contents

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 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. This handbook lays out the formal policies and required milestones in the program. To become a successful sociologist, you will also need to move beyond these formal milestones. Depending on your professional goals, you may need to attend professional conferences; submit your research for publication; seek out additional methods training; gain teaching experience; pursue internships; or work on other elements of scientific and professional development. The proseminars and the placement committee can help you identify careers that will be a good fit for you and prepare for those careers, but you will also need to take initiative as you decide how you would like to apply your sociological training.

We wish you the best of luck with your studies!

Sarah Hayford
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies (through December 2021)

Kammi Schmeer
Professor and Director of Graduate Studies (as of January 2022)

Quick Reference

I. Graduate School Deadlines:

<u>Applications to Graduate</u>: are due by the third Friday of each Semester via GradForms. Please check the Graduate School website for the current semester deadlines.

<u>Applications for Candidacy Exam</u>: 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.

<u>Applications for Doctoral Final Exams</u>: 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.

<u>Presidential Fellowship</u>: This annual competition is hosted in Autumn semester. Students will work with members of the Graduate Studies Committee on their materials and will be nominated by the department. We will solicit interest at the beginning of the semester with nominations are due around the third Friday of October. See here for deadlines and requirements.

<u>Alumni Grants for Graduate Research and Scholarship</u>: An annual funding opportunity through the Graduate School, applications for 2021-2022 are open now and close September 30, 2021. Requirements can be found here.

II. GradForms

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.

III. Graduate Program Resources

This is our repository of useful documents and necessary forms. All files are in the 'Graduate Program Resources' channel of the 'OSU Sociology' Team (via Microsoft Teams). This includes things like past candidacy exams and reading lists, job prep materials, department level forms (generally links to appropriate document), travel documentation and more.

This replaces the previous GRADDOCS folder on BuckeyeBox.

IV. Graduate Program Contacts

Director of Graduate Studies: Sarah Hayford (through December 2021)   hayford.10@osu.edu

Kammi Schmeer (as of January 2022) schmeer.1@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 this handbook (pp. 25). Bear in mind that there are resources that can help you as a student to navigate such procedures, such as the Student Advocacy Center. The Office of Institutional Equity is an umbrella office for reporting discrimination and harassment, including through confidential processes. 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

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. You should feel free to change advisors or to add a co-advisor at any point and for any reason. Be sure to discuss any changes with both your current advisor and your new advisor.

To declare an advisor: please send an email to Caitlin indicating the change and the agreement of the new advisor.

You should 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 can talk with the GPC or DGS for help with navigating the relationship or with identifying a different advisor.

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[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 degree; 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
1				
	6800 Proseminar	1	5608 Qualitative Methods in Sociology	3
	5649 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
		12		12
Milestone	By end of year, begin developing topic for second year paper and identify an advisor for second year paper.			
2				
	Electives or independent studies or advanced methods or theory classes	9-12	6710 Design and Analysis of Sociological research	3
			Electives or independent studies or advanced methods or theory classes	6-9
Milestone	Second year paper: to be defended in second year or by early fall of third year.			
3				
	Electives or independent studies or advanced methods or theory classes		8801 PhD Proseminar	
			Electives or independent studies or advanced methods or theory classes	
Milestone	Prepare second year paper for publication, begin to identify topics and committee for candidacy exams.			
4				
	Complete any remaining required classes			
	Prepare for candidacy exams			
	Take candidacy exams (by end of fourth year)			

5 & 6	Begin identifying dissertation topic, dissertation committee			
	Identify dissertation committee			
	Prepare and defend dissertation proposal			
	Dissertation research and writing			
	Prepare for job market			

Note: course registration requirements for the summer depend on appointment status (fellowship, graduate associate, or summer associate). The Sociology Department typically does not offer graduate courses in the summer; students required to enroll in classes may take courses in other departments or may enroll in independent study or research hours with sociology faculty.

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 should revise the paper (with the support and guidance of their committee) 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. Once the proposal is 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. Students entering with previous graduate coursework in sociology or a related discipline may transfer credits for required courses; see the section on transferring courses for details.

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.

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

All courses must be completed with a grade of B- or better to be counted as fulfilling course 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 5608 Qualitative Methods in Sociology
- SOCIOL 5649 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 and SOCIOL 8580 are taught on a regular basis; SOCIOL 8547 is taught less frequently.

- SOCIOL 6582 Sociological Theory
- SOCIOL 8547 Theories of Social Change
- 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 professional development seminar in their first semester of the program. The course introduces department expectations and professionalization to the field.

- SOCIOL 6800 Proseminar in Sociology

In the spring of the third year, students take a second professional development course as they complete coursework and move to the less structured portion of the program.

- 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 fulfills this requirement. Students may take up to two graduate level courses outside the department to count towards their elective requirement. All 6000-level courses at OSU are graduate level courses. 5000-level courses can be taught as undergraduate courses, graduate courses, or combined courses; please consult with the DGS and the course instructor to determine whether 5000-level classes are considered graduate courses. In order for courses outside the department to count toward the elective requirement, 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] A list of courses that have been approved in past years is available in the Graduate Program Resources channel on Teams. Elective requirements cannot be met through Independent Study or Research Hours.

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.

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[3] The Outside Course Approval Form can also be found in the Graduate Program Resources Teams channel.

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:

Semester   *Grade*   *Course*

1 – 6000 level Theory Course

_____   _____   6582 Sociological Theory

4 – Required Methods and Statistics Courses

_____   _____   5608 Qualitative Methods in Sociology

_____   _____   5649 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

_____   _____   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, as described in the earlier section

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Semester   *Course*

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

_____   _____

Program Components

The Second Year Paper

All students are required to complete a second-year paper, that is, an original research project of publishable quality, developed under the supervision of an advisor who is a member of the Department and with the support of a committee of two other faculty members. 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. For students who wish to earn a master's degree in sociology from OSU, the second-year paper serves as a master's thesis. Students wishing to earn a master's degree from OSU will need to follow the graduation requirements for the term in which they intend to defend their paper and will need to follow all procedures for master's theses as outlined in the Graduate School Handbook.

It is not required to earn a master's degree as part of the program. Students who enter the program with a master's degree from another institution or another program may choose not to submit the second year paper as a master's thesis. All substantive requirements for the project and the defense are the same regardless of whether the student wishes to submit the second year paper as a thesis. If graduating, students should have completed the required coursework for years 1 and 2 (see program outline) and have completed 30 credit hours per the Graduate School requirements. See the Graduate School handbook for full requirements.

The Paper

The second year paper is an original research project of publishable quality. The Graduate Studies Committee has developed the following guidelines for the paper:

- In general, the length should not exceed 50 pages including title page, text, figures, tables, footnotes, and references. This is a guideline for maximum length; papers 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 School formatting requirements, which can be found on the Graduate School website.

The Committee

The second-year paper committee will consist of three faculty members. The advisor who chairs the committee must be a graduate faculty member in the Department of Sociology. Other members of the committee may be faculty in the department, OSU faculty not in sociology, or faculty from outside the university.

- Any committee members who are not members of the OSU Department of Sociology must be approved by your advisor and the DGS, regardless of whether you plan to submit the paper as a master's thesis.
- Students who plan to submit the second-year paper to the Graduate School as a master's thesis must follow the Graduate School guidelines regarding the composition of the committee.
  - o Specifically, the committee must include at least two members of the graduate faculty in sociology. These members could include people whose primary appointment is not in sociology, but who have been approved by the Graduate School as graduate faculty. The advisor counts as one of the OSU graduate faculty members.
  - o You may have someone outside of OSU as your third committee member. Committee members outside of OSU must be formally approved by the Graduate School via GradForms.
- Students who do not plan to submit the second-year paper to the Graduate School do not need to have external members approved by the Graduate School.

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 committee 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 who plan to submit the second-year paper to the Graduate School as a master's thesis must follow the Graduate School guidelines for defenses, including filing all forms and scheduling the defense in advance. If you do not plan to submit the paper as a thesis, you must schedule the defense at least two weeks in advance and notify the Graduate Program Coordinator of your plan for the defense. The GPC will circulate documents to the committee for signature.

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. The PhD proseminar will provide some suggestions and guidelines for determining a topic, choosing a committee, putting together a reading list, and preparing for the exam. The Graduate Program Resources folder includes preparatory materials as well, including past exams and reading lists arranged by area. 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 reading list can and should be based on past reading lists (see the Candidacy folder in the Graduate Program Resources Teams channel) 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. All committee members must be graduate faculty at OSU; faculty outside of sociology may be members with the approval of the DGS. The outside member typically does not provide feedback on reading lists and only participates in the oral component of the exam.

Exam Format

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[4] Graduate School Handbook, 7.3.4
[5] Graduate School Handbook, 7.3.4

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. The exam can be taken in a location of the student's choosing.

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. Students may choose to take the exam in department offices or at home.

- 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 is one required form for the 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.

- 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 (e.g., 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 that contributes 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

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[6] Graduate School Handbook, 3.1.3

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 Graduate Program Resources Teams channel); 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.
  - 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.
  - The draft sent to the committee at this point should be a close to final draft that reflects previous rounds of comments and revision from all committee members.

- 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 university[7].

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[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.

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[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.

All registration and enrollment deadlines (including drop deadlines) can be found on the Registrar's website. Just select the appropriate semester from the "Important Dates" header.

Funding

The department guarantees financial support for all admitted students for 6 academic years, as outlined in their signed offer letters, contingent upon reasonable progress through the program. This support may come from the department, from external grants, or from other university sources. 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. Students are also encouraged to apply for external fellowships; the GPC will circulate information about fellowships commonly won by sociology PhD students, and you may also want to research additional fellowship opportunities.

Presidential Fellowships

The Presidential Fellowship is a one-year dissertation completion fellowship awarded by the OSU Graduate School. Students cannot apply directly for the Presidential Fellowship; instead, the Department nominates eligible students. Students are eligible for the Presidential Fellowship if they are post-candidacy and if they do not already have a dissertation-year fellowship awarded by the Graduate School (e.g., University Fellowship, Enrichment Fellowship, Osmer Fellowship.) Competition for the Presidential Fellowship takes place in the fall semester. The GPC will send an email at the beginning of the semester 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.

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.

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. You can find out about all these opportunities and others available at the university on the website here.

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. The standards for what qualifies as "reasonable progress" are defined by each department.[10]

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[10] See Graduate School Handbook, 5.1 for more details.

In the Sociology Department, reasonable progress means that you are meeting 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 help you 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 spring of your first 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 formal milestones required for completion of the program. You should also be working beyond these formal milestones toward professional development appropriate for your career goals. These activities may include attending and presenting at academic conferences, submitting your research for publication, preparing to teach, seeking out additional methods training, applying for internships, or other interactions with professional peers in your desired field of employment. The department will work to provide guidance and support for these professional development activities; you should also plan to take initiative in exploring different career paths and learning about necessary career preparation.

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.

GPAs 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:

- 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 are 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 Graduate School suggests that all leave include a completed GA request for leave form attached to an email to the department. You can view their full policies in the handbook here.

The department supports the Parental Leave Policy as laid out in the Graduate School Handbook[11].

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

Grievance Procedures

The university offers two pathways to reporting potential policy violations, as described below. In determining which pathway to pursue, consider the following:
Reporting Path 1 is not required. All members of the department are encouraged to proceed directly to Reporting Path 2 as it is the most direct route to filing a formal complaint.

Those who report potential policy violations through Reporting Path 2 are not obligated to proceed with a formal complaint unless they are mandatory reporters of sexual assault or misconduct. Supportive information and resources will be provided to complainants regardless of whether a formal complaint is pursued.

Investigations and sanctions for violations of university policy do not occur at the department level. Though the department can provide advice and support to students in this process through Reporting Path 1, no investigation or imposition of sanctions can occur for complaints that do not proceed to Reporting Path 2.

1. **Reporting Path 1: Direct report to supervisor**

    a. Sociology graduate students may choose from the following options in reporting to a supervisor: (1) Department Chair, (2) Department Manager, (3) Director of Graduate Studies, or (4) Faculty advisor or other Sociology faculty member.
    b. If the student wishes to proceed with a formal complaint after reporting to (3) or (4), the department chair and department manager should be notified, with one exception: Only the department manager and/or Dean of Social and Behavioral Sciences are notified of complaints of policy violations by the department chair.
    c. After deciding to proceed with a formal complaint, the department chair and/or department manager will provide information and any needed assistance in proceeding to Reporting Path 2.
    d. If the student does not wish to proceed with a formal complaint, the department chair, department manager, and/or director of graduate studies will file written documentation of the

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

student's decision to the department chair, direct the student to appropriate supportive resources, and the case will be closed. The department chair and department manager may consult with Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations, and/or other administrative units to determine if those involved in the complaint would benefit from non-punitive professional development resources or consultations.

2. **Reporting Path 2: Direct report to an appropriate university office as described below:**

   a. Report potential sexual misconduct, discrimination, and harassment based on a protected class to the Office of Institutional Equity (OIE) https://equity.osu.edu. Click on "Report Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct" to access the online reporting portal. Though the complainant need not know whether or which specific policy may have been violated, it can be useful to first review the policies that OIE oversees listed below:

      i. Sexual Assault and Sexual Misconduct:*see mandatory reporting info below
      ii. Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity, & Non-Discrimination/ Harassment.
      iii. Access for Individuals with Disabilities
      iv. Activities and Programs with Minor Participants
      v. Other policies overseen by the Office of Institutional Equity

   b. Report suspected policy violations of the Code of Student Conduct (excluding those in 2a and Academic Misconduct, described below) to Student Conduct. Click on File A Complaint. The Code of Student Conduct applies to both undergraduate and graduate students.

   c. Instructors who suspect academic misconduct in their course, should report to: Committee on Academic Misconduct. See Five Easy Steps for Submitting Allegations of Academic Misconduct, which includes a link for online reporting.

   d. Other policy violations not described in 2a, 2b, or 2c should be reported to either:
      i. The appropriate university office as described in Procedure Section III.A. of the University Whistleblower Policy or
      ii. By filing an anonymous report online at Office of University Compliance and Integrity. Click on Make an Anonymous Report

What happens after a complaint is received by the appropriate university office? The process of adjudicating complaints against a university student or employee is not conducted at the department level. The involvement of appropriate university administrative units (e.g., Human Resources, Employee and Labor Relations, Office of Institutional Equity, Office of Compliance, Legal Affairs) in assessing, investigating, and resolving workplace complaints and in applying sanctions for policy violations ensures compliance with state and federal rules, regulations, and laws. University policies specify clear procedures for investigating and resolving complaints of potential violations. For more information on these procedures, consult the relevant policy at the Office of University Compliance and Integrity.

Mandatory reporters of sexual assault and sexual misconduct:

Any employee (including graduate students) who receive a disclosure of a sexual assault or becomes aware of information that would lead a reasonable person to believe that a sexual assault may have occurred involving anyone covered under the policy, must report all known information immediately. See the Sexual Misconduct policy (Policy Details, Section III)

The following members of the university community have an additional obligation to report all other incidents of sexual misconduct, when they receive a disclosure of sexual misconduct or become aware of information that would lead a reasonable person to believe that sexual misconduct may have occurred involving anyone covered under this policy. These individuals must report the incident within five workdays of becoming aware of such information: 1. Any human resource professional (HRP); 2. Anyone who supervises faculty, staff, students, or volunteers; 3. Chair/director; and 4. Faculty member

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.

Other Questions

How do I choose an advisor?

All new students are assigned a faculty contact before arriving on campus for their first semester. Some students stay with their first-year advisor; others change advisors during their first year, as they write their second year paper, for candidacy, or for the dissertation (or all of the above!). You may change advisors at any point as your research interests and working style evolves.

To officially declare an advisor or change an advisor, email the GPC with your new advisor's approval. You should also talk to your previous advisor so that they know your plans.

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 university[12], 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?

You can get a minor if you'd like, but it's not required. If you're interested in a minor, you should consult with your advisor and/or the DGS about the possible benefits.

The Graduate School maintains 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 in this document.

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[12] Graduate School Handbook, 7.1.5