

The Sociology Graduate Student Handbook*

Department of Sociology
The University of Memphis

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*This document contains key information for graduate students in the Department of Sociology at the University of Memphis. Some of the information is taken directly from the University's *Graduate Bulletin*. However, this document is not a substitute for the *Bulletin*. For complete details on campus-wide policies and procedures that affect graduate students, consult the *Graduate Bulletin* and the University of Memphis *Student Handbook*.

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The Sociology Graduate Student Handbook

The University of Memphis, Department of Sociology

I. Graduate Program in Sociology

A. Introduction to the Program

The Department offers graduate studies leading to the Master of Arts in Sociology. Training in theory, research methods, and statistics is required of all students. In addition, the program offers a wide selection of courses in many substantive areas such as race, class and gender studies; stratification; globalization and social change; family; deviance; organizations; religion, and medical sociology.

The program provides opportunities to develop skills and interests in specific specialty areas while obtaining a solid grounding in sociological theory and social research methods. It also offers a high level of student-faculty interaction and the opportunity to participate in supervised research. The exposure to a full range of sociological specialties allows our graduates to apply to and be accepted by a wide range of Ph.D. programs. It is also appropriate for students who want to apply to law schools or other professional programs or work in areas of applied research.

There are two degree options available to students pursuing the master's in sociology -- a thesis program (24 hours of graduate course work plus 6 hours of credit for writing a thesis) or a non-thesis program (33 hours of graduate course work with both written and oral comprehensive examinations that cover sociological theory, research methods and statistics).

B. Advising

Students are advised by the department's graduate coordinator who assists them in course planning and keeps them informed of departmental, college, and, university requirements and policies. Students should consult with the graduate coordinator often.

II. Program Requirements

Students may choose a thesis program or a non-thesis program. The requirements for each are listed below. All students, whether they select the thesis program or the non-thesis program, must take three core courses:

- SOCI 6312 (Intermediate Social Statistics),
- SOCI 7210 (Theory Seminar), and
- SOCI 7320 (Methods of Social Research).

Students must earn a minimum grade of “B” (3.0) in each core course. *Students who earn less than a “B” in a core course must retake the course.* Graduate school policy states “No course may be repeated more than once to improve the grade. Only the grade earned in the second attempt will be included in the computation of the cumulative grade point average.” No more than two courses may be repeated to improve a grade (see the “Academic Regulations” section of the *Graduate Bulletin*.)

A. The Thesis Program

- 30 semester hours of graduate level work, which includes 24-27 hours of course work and a minimum of 3 hours and a maximum of 6 hours of SOCI 7996 (Thesis).
- Only 6 hours of course work can be at the 6000 level.
- No more than 6 semester hours of Directed Individual Study (SOCI 7912) can be applied to degree requirements.
- Only 9 hours involving some combination of Directed Individual Study and courses outside of sociology may count toward degree requirements.
- The student must pass an oral thesis defense that counts as a thesis defense and a comprehensive exam.

B. The Non-Thesis Program

- 33 semester hours of graduate course work, only 6 hours of which can be at the 6000 level.
- At least 27 semester hours of graduate course work must be in sociology.
- No more than 6 semester hours of Directed Individual Study (SOCI 7912) can be applied to degree requirements.
- Only 9 hours involving some combination of Directed Individual Study and courses outside of sociology may count toward degree requirements.
- The student must pass a comprehensive examination that includes a written and an oral component. The exam covers 1) sociological theory, 2) sociological research methods and 3) statistics.

III. Graduate Curriculum

A. Course Cognates

Graduate level courses are listed at the 6000, 7000, and 8000 levels. Courses offered at the 6000 level are co-listed at the 4000 level and are open to graduate students and undergraduate students. Graduate students should enroll for these courses at the 6000 level. Requirements for graduate students in 4000/6000 level courses are more stringent than those for undergraduate students.

Many courses listed at the 7000 level are also co-listed at the 8000 level and are open only to graduate students. Masters level students should enroll for these courses at the 7000 level. PhD students enroll for them at the 8000 level.

B. Course Offerings

Students should consult the University's online *Graduate Bulletin* for current information on courses, course descriptions, credit hours, and prerequisites.

The Department offers Directed Individual Studies (DIS) courses that allow students to undertake advanced reading and/or research in special areas of interest. Before taking an independent studies course, students must receive the permission of a faculty member willing to supervise the DIS, the graduate coordinator, and the department chair. The faculty member will prepare a contract for the course of study, which the faculty member and student should date and sign. The contract should be filed with the graduate coordinator for placement in the student's permanent file. Students receive grades of A-F or IP (in progress). Students cannot receive an incomplete ("I") for an unfinished DIS. If a student does not complete a DIS within one semester, the faculty member supervising the DIS may give the student an "F" or an "IP". If the student is given an "IP," the student must enroll for additional DIS credit hours the following semester. "A grade of "IP," does not carry any quality points and is not included in computing the GPA (see the "Academic Regulations" section of the Graduate Bulletin).

C. Course Scheduling

Required courses (Theory Seminar—SOCI 7210, Intermediate Statistics—SOCI 6312, and Seminar in Methods of Social Research—SOCI 7320) should be taken as early in the student's program as possible. SOCI 7210 and SOCI 7320 are offered every fall semester and SOCI 6312 is offered every spring semester.

To ensure broad coverage of the discipline, the Department offers as many different courses as possible over four consecutive semesters (not counting summer sessions). Other than required courses we rarely offer the same course more than once in a two year period. Thus, students should enroll for desired electives as soon as they are offered, as these electives are unlikely to be offered again during their course of study.

IV. Policies and Procedures

A. Continuous Enrollment

Once accepted into the sociology graduate program, a student must enroll every semester thereafter (excluding summer sessions). If a student fails to do so, he/she must apply for readmission, which may or may not be granted. Readmitted students follow the rules and degree requirements listed in the most current *Graduate Bulletin* (see the *Graduate Bulletin* for additional information about readmissions).

Students writing a thesis must enroll for at least 1 hour of thesis credit every fall and spring semester until the thesis is complete. Failure to do so “will result in the student being charged tuition for each semester he or she did not enroll” (see *Graduate Bulletin*).

If a student completes a thesis during a summer term, he/she must be enrolled during that term (see the *Graduate Bulletin* for exceptions to this policy).

B. Non-Degree Students Who Matriculate to the Sociology Master’s Program

Students enrolled for graduate courses at The University of Memphis but who have not been accepted into a graduate program have graduate non-degree status. Non-degree students who decide to matriculate for a degree in sociology must apply to the Graduate School and meet all admissions requirements for the Graduate School and the Department of Sociology.

Non-degree students who are accepted into sociology’s graduate program may apply 12 graduate credit hours earned while a non-degree student to degree requirements in sociology. However, at least six of these hours must be in graduate level sociology courses (excluding Directed Individual Studies hours). In addition, grades of “C+” or lower earned while a non-degree student will not be applied toward degree requirements in sociology.

Graduate School policy requires that “before registering for a second semester of graduate level coursework, the non-degree student must sign a release agreeing that additional coursework will not apply to degree programs” (see the *Graduate Bulletin*).

Non-degree students cannot be awarded graduate assistantships.

C. Academic Probation and Departmental Review

A graduate student whose cumulative grade point average in sociology drops below 3.00 will be placed on departmental review. Being on departmental review at the conclusion of a subsequent semester may result in suspension. Conditions under which continuation in the program beyond two or more semesters on departmental review will be granted must be recommended by the department's graduate committee and the department chair. If, in the opinion of the graduate committee, the chair, the College of Arts and Sciences' Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and Research, and the Vice Provost for Graduate Programs, the student is not making satisfactory progress toward degree completion, the student will be dismissed from the degree program. Students are ineligible for graduate assistantships while on departmental review, but may apply/reapply for an assistantship once their departmental review status has been removed.

D. Incomplete Grades

According to Graduate School policy, students must complete the requirements to remove a grade of "I" (incomplete) within 90 days from the end of the semester or summer term in which it was received. An incomplete not removed within 90 days changes to an "F." If unusual circumstances prevent the student from removing the "I" within 90 days, a 45-day extension may be granted. It is the student's responsibility to request an extension.

Students who receive an "I" that changes to an "F" may submit a written request to the graduate committee for a grade change. The request must be made after the student has completed requirements for the course and must spell out the reasons why the student was unable to complete the requirements for the course prior to the "I" becoming an "F." In addition, the request must be made within one year of the beginning of the semester or term in which the student enrolled in the course. If the faculty member who gave the student the "I" and the Graduate Committee agree that extraordinary circumstances prevented the student from completing requirements for the course before the "I" changed to an "F," they will recommend to the department chair that the student's "F" be changed. If the chair agrees with the recommendation of the faculty member and the graduate committee, the chair will recommend to the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate Studies that the student's grade be changed.

E. Course Load Restrictions

Graduate students generally are not permitted to take more than 15 semester hours during regular sessions or more than 12 semester hours during summer sessions.

University-funded graduate assistants must register for at least 9 hours of credit per semester. Requests to take more than 15 semester hours require the approval of the graduate coordinator. Courses graded "U" or "S," (e.g., SOCI 7914—Workshop in

Professional Development for Graduate Assistants) do not count toward degree requirements.

F. Time Limitations

According to Graduate School policy, “All requirements for the degree must be completed in six years. Courses older than these limits will not be allowed as credit toward the master's degree, although the grades will be calculated in the cumulative GPA.”

“There are no exceptions to program time limits. However, students may request the option of validating old courses” as described in the Academic Regulations section of the *Graduate Bulletin*. The course validation form can be accessed at:

http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/form/cbecv_form.php.

“Grades earned in courses that are older than program time limits will be shown on the transcript and will be calculated in the cumulative GPA, but will not be accepted for graduation purposes.”

G. Classroom Conduct

The University of Memphis’ “Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities” document states that students have a responsibility to “behave in a professional and appropriate manner in class.” The Department of Sociology expects all students to take this responsibility seriously. Students should familiarize themselves with the entire document, which can be accessed at:

http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/student_rights_responsibilities.php

They should also review examples of unacceptable (disruptive) classroom behavior by going to:

<http://umdrive.memphis.edu/cgmccrth/public/Soccer/Examples%20of%20Disruptive%20Classroom%20Behaviors.docx>

The Department expects students to attend all class meetings and encourages students to attend departmental activities/events (e.g., research presentations, social gatherings, etc.)

H. Academic Dishonesty

The Department of Sociology does not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty (cheating, plagiarizing, forgery, and falsification). Students should familiarize themselves with the University’s definition of academic dishonesty, which can be found in:

<http://www.memphis.edu/studentconduct/pdfs/csrr.pdf>

They should also familiarize themselves with:

- the Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities:
<http://www.memphis.edu/studentconduct/pdfs/csrr.pdf> ,
- procedures for academic discipline:
http://www.memphis.edu/studentconduct/misconduct_process.htm, and
- Earl Babbie’s article on plagiarism, which can be found at
<http://www.csub.edu/ssric-trd/howto/plagiarism.htm>

To ensure the academic integrity of students’ written work, sociology professors may require students to submit their written work to [TurnItIn.com](http://www.turnitin.com), which uses an online database to determine the “originality” of written work.

V. Graduate Student Resources

A. Financial Aid

The University Financial Aid Office (103 Wilder Tower, 901-678-4824) provides information on a variety of forms of financial support (loans, scholarships, etc.). See their website <http://www.memphis.edu/financialaid> for additional information.

B. Graduate Assistantships/Work Study/GA-Work Study Contracts

Graduate Assistantships. The Department of Sociology awards full-time and part-time graduate assistantships to its most qualified applicants. Full-time assistantships require 20 hours of work per week in the department, pay a monthly stipend for eight months, and include a full tuition and fee waiver (including out-of-state tuition, if applicable). Part-time assistantships require 10 hours of work per week, pay a monthly stipend for eight months, and include a waiver of half the student's tuition and fees. Students who receive full-time or part-time assistantships must enroll for 12 graduate credit hours per semester, maintain satisfactory work performance, and maintain a GPA of "3.0" or higher.

Students awarded an assistantship when they first enter our program typically remain on the assistantship for four consecutive semesters (excluding summer terms). Students awarded an assistantship after completing one, two, or three semesters of coursework in our program typically remain on the assistantship for three, two, or one semesters, respectively.

Graduate assistant (GA) duties include assisting faculty members with scholarly activities and research. At the end of each fall and spring semester, the faculty member will be responsible for submitting, in a timely manner, standardized performance evaluations for each GA assigned. The evaluation form appears in Appendix B.

Faculty and students will be guided by the American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics for issues in professional work. The guidelines appear on the ASA website at: <http://www2.asanet.org/members/ecoderev.html> .

Assistantships are designed to enhance the student's scholarly and professional development. All activities of graduate assistants are to be carried out under the supervision and direction of faculty. Specific tasks vary. Scholarly activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- Library research (e.g., conducting literature searches, obtaining copies of published articles, reports, books, or government documents; information gathering from the Internet)
- Data collection and management
- Data analysis
- Preparation of papers and presentations for professional meetings
- Using and/or developing technology to assist classroom instruction

- Proctoring
- Opportunities to guest lecture

Graduate assistants are expected to:

- Complete assignments thoroughly and in a timely manner
- Maintain communication with the department office, the graduate coordinator, and the assigned faculty member

Department funded graduate assistantships do not receive tuition and fee waivers during summer sessions. However, students who are graduate assistants or teaching assistants in the spring semester pay in-state tuition rates for the summer sessions. For additional information about graduate assistantships, see

<http://www.memphis.edu/gradcatalog/assistantship.php>

Work Study. Students who apply for a graduate assistantship should also apply for work study support through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Graduate assistants who apply and qualify for this support *earn more* as graduate assistants than students who do not apply.

To receive priority consideration for work study support, students should apply by March 1 for the fall semester and by October 1 for the spring semester. The University's Financial Aid website (<http://www.memphis.edu/financialaid/>) explains how to begin the process. You can access the electronic form at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.

GA and Work Study Contracts. GA and work study contracts should reach the Graduate School by early August and MUST reach the Graduate School by the 4th day of classes. *It is the student's responsibility to sign her/his contract in a timely manner.* Students who do not sign their contracts in time to be turned in to the Graduate School by the 4th day of classes *will not receive tuition and fees waivers.*

C. Teaching Assistantships/Work Study/TA-Work Study Contracts

Teaching Assistantships. Students who have taken the required graduate theory, methods, and statistics courses, who have a total of at least 18 hours of graduate coursework in sociology, and who have a 3.3 or higher graduate level GPA may apply for a teaching assistantship (TA). Students apply by having a faculty member write a letter to the Graduate Committee that spells out why the student is qualified to teach. Students who are awarded a TA teach one section of Introductory Sociology per semester. Prior to teaching the course for the first time, students must:

- attend a department-sponsored teaching workshop,
- attend a university-sponsored teaching workshop,
- draft a course syllabus and other materials (The syllabus will be reviewed by one or more faculty members and returned to the student for changes.),
- attend several meetings of an Introductory Sociology class taught by an experienced teacher. (At least one meeting should be a lab session.),

- become familiar with the Department of Sociology's *Handbook for Adjunct Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants*, which can be obtained from the Department's secretary, and with teaching policies and procedures as described in the *Faculty Handbook*,
- agree to have a faculty member attend several of the student's class meetings and give the student feedback on his/her teaching,
- students may be reassigned subject to a review of their teaching evaluations.

Students who teach their own courses should rank their teaching responsibilities among their highest priorities. Such practices as cancelling class without finding a substitute, arriving to class late, letting class out early, being unprepared for class, and failing to grade student tests and assignments in a timely manner are unacceptable. A more complete list of TA responsibilities can be found in the Department's *Handbook for Adjunct Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants* and the *Faculty Handbook*. Students who are unable to give teaching responsibilities high priority should not apply for teaching assistantships.

Work Study. Students who want to be considered for a teaching assistantship should also apply for work study support through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Since limited departmental funds are available for TAs, it is important that their wages are supplemented by work study money. If a student does not apply for and receive work study money, it is possible the Department will not be able to fund the student's TA. All other things being equal, preference will be given to students who have had the most coursework, as we believe they are the most qualified.

To receive priority consideration for work study support, students should apply by March 1 for the fall semester and by October 1 for the spring semester. The University's Financial Aid website (<http://www.memphis.edu/financialaid/>) explains how to begin the process. You can access the electronic form at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>.

TA and work study contracts should reach the Graduate School by early August and **MUST** reach the Graduate School by the 4th day of classes. *It is the student's responsibility to sign her/his contract in a timely manner.* Students who do not sign their contracts in time to be turned in to the Graduate School by the 4th day of classes *will not receive tuition and fees waivers.*

Department funded teaching assistantships do not receive tuition and fee waivers during summer sessions. However, students who are teaching assistants in the Spring semester pay in-state tuition rates for summer sessions. For additional information about teaching assistantships, see: <http://www.memphis.edu/gradcatalog/assistantship.php>

D. Travel to Professional Meetings

We strongly encourage our graduate students to present their research in professional settings. In 2003, we “institutionalized” the practice of having graduate students present their research as part of our Research Colloquium Series and/or at professional meetings. Our students often present their research first at our Research Colloquium Series (as a “dress rehearsal”) and then at a professional meeting.

Subject to availability of funds, students may request up to \$300 in travel funds if they present a research paper at an appropriate professional association conference. Students can apply for additional travel funds through the Graduate Student Association (http://www.memphis.edu/gsa/travel_funding.php) and they can apply for a Dunavant Travel Grant awarded by The University of Memphis.

E. Support for Thesis and Other Student Research

To carry out thesis projects, students may need financial assistance to cover the costs of such things as supplies and data sets. The Department makes every attempt to provide financial support for these projects.

The University of Memphis is a member of the Inter-University Consortium on Political and Social Research (<http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/>). This membership gives students ready access to a wide range of data sets that can be used for thesis and independent research projects. Students also have access to a large number online data sets not included in ICPSR (see Appendix C).

Two large computer labs with a wide array of current software programs are located in Clement Hall and available for student use.

F. Student Paper Award

Every year we have a graduate student paper award. The papers are judged by the Graduate Committee on their originality, organization, substantive content, and written competence. The winner receives \$300.

If only one paper is submitted, it may still receive the award if the Graduate Committee deems it to be outstanding.

VI. Procedures for Writing a Thesis

A. Thesis Committee Composition

Students who plan to write a thesis must first select a committee chair. Together the student and chair will select at least two faculty members to compose a thesis committee. Each committee member must have associate graduate faculty status, full graduate faculty status, adjunct research co-mentor status, or affiliate graduate faculty status. Full or associate graduate faculty may chair committees and adjunct research co-mentor members may serve as a co-chair. Only one adjunct or affiliate graduate faculty member may serve as a voting member.

One member of the committee may be from a department other than sociology. However, the student should have a good reason for including a non-sociologist on his/her committee (e.g., the non-sociologist has specialty area expertise or methodological/statistical skills relevant to the student's thesis project). If a non-sociologist can contribute to the student's thesis research, including him/her on the committee *is not discouraged*.

As soon as the student has selected a thesis committee, he/she should submit a **Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee** form to the College Director of Graduate Studies. A copy should also be given to the Department of Sociology's graduate coordinator for placement in the student's permanent file. Ideally, full-time students should file this form before their third semester of coursework. The form can be accessed by going to:

<http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/forms.php>.

B. Thesis Proposal Defense and Selecting the Thesis/Non-Thesis Option.

Full-time students who select the thesis option should defend their thesis proposal *early in their third semester of coursework*. (See Appendix D for resources that will assist students in writing a proposal.) **Any student who has not defended a proposal after accumulating 36 credit hours will automatically be assigned to the non-thesis option and will be expected to take the written and oral comprehensive exam as soon as possible.** Courses graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory ("S/U") do not count in the 36 hours, but thesis hours do.

After students successfully defend their proposal, they must file the **Thesis/ Dissertation Proposal Defense** form with the College Director of Graduate Studies. A copy of the form should also be submitted to the departmental graduate coordinator. **Upon submission of a copy to the graduate coordinator, the student has formally selected the "thesis option."** Students are assumed to be on the non-thesis track until they submit this form. The form can be accessed by going to:

<http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/forms.php>.

If a student decides to change from the thesis option back to the non-thesis option, she/he must inform the graduate coordinator in writing of the change and submit the necessary Graduate School form. Any thesis hours the student has accumulated will not count toward the 33 hours of coursework needed for the non-thesis option.

C. Thesis Preparation and Defense

Students should familiarize themselves with the **Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Guide** (http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/tdinfo_paper.php) as soon as they start work on their thesis. This Guide contains information on thesis formatting (e.g., requirements for the Table of Contents, margins, type of paper, table formats, etc.) that must be followed to meet Graduate School requirements. The “Resources for Graduate Students” section of Appendix D includes resources that will assist students in writing their thesis.

When the student has completed his/her thesis to the satisfaction of his/her Thesis Committee Chair, his/her Committee Chair should schedule a thesis defense meeting *with all Graduate School thesis deadlines in mind*. The graduate coordinator will keep students and faculty informed of these deadlines, but ultimately *it is the student's responsibility and his/her Committee Chair's responsibility to be aware of all Graduate School deadlines*. These deadlines are posted at <http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/deadlines.php>.

The oral Thesis Defense counts as *both a thesis defense and a comprehensive exam*. During the defense, students are asked broad questions covering the breadth of coursework as well as the thesis content.

After the student's thesis defense, both a **Comprehensive Exam Results** form (<http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/form/comps2.php>) and a **Thesis Defense Results** form (<http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/pdfs/forms/tdddefense7.pdf>) must be submitted to the College Director of Graduate Studies. *It is the responsibility of the student's Thesis Committee Chair to submit these forms*. Copies of these forms should also be submitted to the Department of Sociology's Graduate Coordinator for placement in the student's permanent file.

The **Thesis/Dissertation Checklist** must be submitted to the Graduate School with the defended and corrected copy of the thesis. Both the student and the major professor must check all applicable items and sign at the bottom. The Checklist can be accessed at http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/pdfs/non-apa_checklist.pdf.

D. Time-Line for Thesis Option Students

Full-time students who select the thesis option should meet the following deadlines to ensure timely completion of the thesis. The graduate coordinator will make adjustments to these deadlines for part-time students.

1. Select a Thesis Committee and turn in the Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee form before the beginning of the third semester of study (before enrolling for more than 18 hours of coursework that count toward degree requirements).
2. Gain Institutional Review Board (human rights) approval for the thesis after submitting the Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee form and before defending the thesis proposal. Before applying for IRB approval, students should review the learning modules at the Education in Responsible Conduct in Research website. Applicants for IRB approval need to provide documentation that they have reviewed these modules. Go to the IRB website (<http://irb.memphis.edu/>) for more information.
3. Defend the Thesis Proposal early in the third semester of coursework and by the end of the third semester at the latest (before completing 27 hours of coursework that count toward degree requirements). Any student who has not defended a thesis proposal after 36 credit hours will automatically be assigned to the non-thesis option. Courses graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory (“S/U”) do not count in the 36 hours, but thesis hours do.
4. Defend the thesis during the fourth or fifth semester of coursework.

VII. Protocol for the Administration and Evaluation of Comprehensive Examinations

A. Administration of Comprehensive Examinations

As mentioned above, the oral thesis defense counts as both a thesis defense and as a comprehensive exam for students who select the thesis option. During the defense, students are asked general questions covering the breadth of coursework as well as specific questions regarding the thesis content.

Students who select the non-thesis option are required to take a comprehensive examination that includes a take-home, open-book, written component and an oral component. The exam covers sociological theory, research methods, and statistics. The student will not be expected to answer all the questions on the examination, but will be given options to select or omit certain questions. A bank of questions previously asked on the exams, along with some other potential questions, will be made available. However, there is no guarantee that all, or even any of the questions on a particular examination will be drawn from the bank. The examination will be distributed on a Friday and will be due by noon, a week from the following Monday. Examinations are to be turned in electronically in MSWord format. Supplementary materials, such as output from statistical or graphing programs may be turned in as appendices either in their native format or as PDF files. Such materials should be carefully cross-referenced in the MSWord document. Students are required to work independently. The Comprehensive Examination will be administered and evaluated by the Sociology Graduate Faculty (See Section IX). During the oral, committee members may ask any question. However, questions typically focus on apparent deficiencies in the student's written answers. Thus, students are strongly encouraged to prepare for the oral by studying material they believe could help them strengthen their written answers.

Upon completion of the oral, a **Comprehensive Exam Results** form (<http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/form/comps2.php>) must be submitted to the College Director of Graduate Studies. A copy of the form should also be submitted to the Department of Sociology's Graduate Coordinator for placement in the student's permanent file. *It is the responsibility of the Comprehensive Exam Committee to submit this form to both the College Director of Graduate Studies and to the Department's Graduate Coordinator.*

Comprehensive exams are scheduled by the graduate coordinator and are typically offered twice a year (late October and early April). Students usually take the exam in their last semester of coursework. Typically, the oral is held on a Friday approximately two weeks after the written component has been turned in. The date for the administration of the written component, the date the written component is due, and the date orals will be held will be announced early each semester. Students planning to take the Comprehensive Exam in a particular semester must inform the Graduate Coordinator in writing no later than the Friday of the first full week of classes.

B. Evaluation of Comprehensive Examinations

A departmental Comprehensive Examination Committee writes and evaluates the comprehensive examination. The departmental Comprehensive Examination Committee will be comprised of members of the graduate faculty. The chair of the Committee will rotate among the members of the graduate faculty.

The student's overall performance on the written and oral components of the exam must be acceptable to the examination Committee. A favorable vote by a majority of the committee members is needed for the student to pass the examination. However, the student's Committee may decide that the student needs to re-write parts of the written exam it deems to be deficient. The Committee decides how much time to give the student to complete the re-write and whether or not a second oral is needed.

VIII. Procedures and Criteria for Graduation

A. Admission to Candidacy

The following University requirements must be met during the semester the student graduates:

- The [Master's Degree Candidacy](#) - click [here](#) for instructions - form and an [Intent to Graduate Form](#) *must be filed by the deadline* indicated at the University of Memphis website. These deadlines typically occur during second week of the fall and spring semesters. Graduate school policy states, "No exceptions will be made if both the intent card and candidacy forms are not submitted by the stated deadlines" (See the *Graduate Bulletin*). The graduate coordinator will keep students informed of all deadlines related to graduation. Ultimately, however, *it is the student's responsibility to know and meet these deadlines*. They can be found at: <http://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/deadlines.php>.
- Graduate School policy requires that the student's graduate-level GPA is 3.0 or higher at the time the Intent to Graduate Card is filed (see the *Graduate Bulletin*). Grades of "D" or "F" do not count toward graduate degree requirements, but are computed in the GPA. No more than seven hours of "C+," "C," or "C-" count toward degree requirements. Courses which are graded "U" or "S" do not count toward degree requirements.
- All grades of "I" (incomplete) from previous semesters must be removed when the Intent to Graduate Card is filed.

B. Enrollment Requirements

Students must be enrolled during the semester they defend the thesis. In addition, they must be enrolled during the semester they intend to graduate, regardless of when the comprehensive exam was taken. However, if students defend their thesis after the spring deadline and before the first summer school session starts, they may graduate in August without enrolling for summer school.

IX. Sociology Graduate Faculty

FULL MEMBERS

MARTIN L. LEVIN, *Professor*, PhD (1967), The Johns Hopkins University

JENI LOFTUS, *Associate Professor*, PhD (2004), Indiana University

LARRY R. PETERSEN, *Professor*, PhD (1977), Washington State University

CAROL RAMBO, *Associate Professor*, PhD (1993), The University of Florida

WANDA RUSHING, *Associate Professor*, PhD (1998), The University of Tennessee

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

SETH ABRUTYN, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2009), University of California - Riverside

WESLEY JAMES, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2009), Mississippi State University,

ANNA MUELLER, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2011), University of Texas at Austin

ZANDRIA ROBINSON, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2010), Northwestern University

JUNMIN WANG, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2007), New York University

X How to be Successful in Graduate School: Some Suggestions

The University of Washington has developed some exceptionally insightful suggestions and guidelines to assist students to be successful in their graduate careers and for faculty to assist students in this objective. Graduate students and faculty in Sociology are strongly encouraged to familiarize themselves with the following materials:

- [Mentoring: How to Obtain the Mentoring You Need - A Student Guide](#)
- [Mentoring: How to Mentor Graduate Students - A Faculty Guide](#)
- [Mentor Memos: A Collection of Links Ranging from How To Present at a Conference to Career Planning to How to Remain Motivated in Graduate School](#)
- [Guidelines for Good Practice in Graduate Education](#)
 - [Professionalism and Ethics: Student and Faculty Responsibilities](#)
 - [Teaching: The Student's Role and The Faculty Member's Role](#)
 - [Mentoring: The Student's Role and the Faculty Members Role](#)

XI. Appendix

A. Graduate Student Forms and Links

Graduation Deadlines and Forms:

- [Graduation Deadlines](#)
- [Intent to Graduate Card](#)
- [Master's Degree Candidacy](#)
- [Cap & Gown Order Form](#)
- [Comprehensive Exam Results Form Web](#)

Thesis Information and Forms

- [Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee form](#)
- [Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Guide](#)[Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Defense Form](#)[Thesis/Dissertation Defense Results Form](#)[Thesis/Dissertation Checklist \(APA Style\)](#)
- [U of M Institutional Review Board](#)[Comprehensive list of online forms of the Graduate School](#)

Application Forms

- Graduate School application [Online Applications](#)
- [Application](#) for Graduate Admission/Assistantship in Sociology
- [Federal Government FAFSA website](#) (Click to apply for federal student aid)
- How to Apply for [Travel Fund](#) through the Graduate Student Association

Other Links

- [2013-2014 Graduate School Catalog](#)

B. Graduate Assistant Evaluation Guide

G.A. Evaluation Guide

This form should be completed by all faculty members with whom the graduate assistant is working. For items marked “no” or “sometimes,” specific suggestions for change should be identified. Ideally, the process of completing the form will be an occasion for discussion between the faculty member and GA about the work of the past semester. Any discrepancies between the faculty member’s assessment of the GA’s work and his/her own assessment should be noted. A copy of the completed form should be sent to the graduate coordinator.

Does the student...	Yes	Some times	No	NA
<i>Complete assignments in a timely manner?</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<i>Maintain communication and respond promptly to efforts to reach him?</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<i>Raise questions if s/he doesn't understand the assignment?</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<i>Pay attention to detail and check the accuracy of her/his work?</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<i>Carry out assignments thoroughly?</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<i>Take initiative in solving problems as they arise?</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____
<i>Abide by any relevant ethical principles (e.g., confidentiality) regarding the research?</i>	_____	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

Faculty Member

Student

Date: _____

C. Data Sets Students Can Use for Thesis or Other Research

Interuniversity Consortium of Social and Political Research (ICPSR)

[ICPSR](#)

Bureau of the Census

[Decennial Census](#)

[IPUMScps \(Minnesota Population Center\)](#)

[Current Population Survey \(Bureau of Labor Statistics\)](#)

[American Community Survey](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

[CDC Wonder](#)

[Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#)

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)

[Vital Statistics](#)

[National Health and Nutrition Survey \(NHANES\)](#)

[National Health Interview Survey \(NHIS\)](#)

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)

[Early Childhood Longitudinal Survey \(Kindergarten Cohort\) ECLS](#)

[Early Childhood Longitudinal Survey \(Birth Cohort\) ECLS](#)

[Education Longitudinal Study of 2002--ELS](#)

[High School and Beyond \(HS&B\)](#)

[National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 \(NELS\)](#)

[Association of Religion Data Archives \(ARDA\)](#)

[Historical Census Browser \(UVA Library\)](#)

[Scholar.s Lab \(UVA Library, formerly GEOSTAT CENTER\)](#)

[FedStats](#)

[Socioeconomic Data and Application Center \(SEDAC, Global and Environmental Plus\)](#)

[EconData.Net \(Links to multiple data sets\)](#)

[Panel Study of Income Dynamics](#)

[The National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health \(AddHealth\)](#)

[The General Social Survey, National and International \(GSS\)](#)

D. Resources for Graduate Students

Professional Associations

[American Sociological Association \(ASA\)](#)
[Southern Sociological Society \(SSS\)](#)
[Mid-South Sociological Association \(MSSA\)](#)
[Eastern Sociological Society \(ESS\)](#)
[Southwestern Sociological Association \(SSA\)](#)
[Midwest Sociological Society \(MSS\)](#)
[North Central Sociological Association \(NCSA\)](#)
[Pacific Sociological Association \(PSA\)](#)
[Sociologists for Women in Society \(SWS\)](#)
[Association of Black Sociologists \(ABS\)](#)
[Association for Applied and Clinical Sociology \(AACCS\)](#)
[Population Association of America \(PAA\)](#)
[International Sociological Association \(ISA\)](#)
[Society for the Study of Social Problems \(SSSP\)](#)
[Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction \(SSSI\)](#)
[Association for the Sociology of Religion \(ASR\)](#)

Developing and Completing a Thesis

ALLAN SCHNAIBERG. Mentoring Graduate Students: Going beyond the Formal Role Structure. *The American Sociologist*, Summer 2005, Vol. 36, #2, pp. 28-42.

MICHAEL BURAWOY. Combat in the Dissertation Zone. *The American Sociologist*, Summer 2005, Vol. 36, #2, pp. 43-56.

Harvard University. A Guide to the Thesis in Sociology: 2008-2009.

S. Joseph Levine. Writing and Presenting Your Thesis or Dissertation,.
<http://www.learnerassociates.net/dissthes/>

Writing an Academic Proposal
<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/752/01/>

A Sociological Tour Through Cyberspace
[\(http://www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/index.html\)](http://www.trinity.edu/~mkearl/index.html). See especially Guide to writing a research paper.

Searching the Literature and Writing a Literature Review

The University of Memphis Online Library

<http://www.memphis.edu/libraries/>

Databases A-Z

<http://bibliotech.memphis.edu/search~S4/y>

Journal Titles

<http://bibliotech.memphis.edu/search~S4/s>