



THE UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA

GRADUATE COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

Dr. Craig St. John, Professor and Chair

Dr. Trina L. Hope, Associate Professor and Graduate Liaison

Departmental Office: (405) 325-1751 (Susan McPherson)

(405) 325-1752 (Leslie Gillies)

Overview of the Department

The Department of Sociology has two interrelated missions: 1) to provide the highest quality education at the baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral levels, and 2) to foster state-of-the-art research among faculty and graduate students. Teaching and research in the department help meet the needs of the state and nation by addressing important social issues.

Departmental programs focus primarily on four broad areas:

- Class, Gender, and Racial Stratification
- Criminology and Deviance
- Demography/Family
- International/Macro-comparative

At both the undergraduate and graduate levels, coursework offered by the Department of Sociology provides an analytic research emphasis for studying, understanding, and explaining major social issues. Research in these areas updates and refines knowledge, and helps formulate and evaluate social policy. The department offers a diverse curriculum covering a wide range of topics in sociology. During a typical year, the department will have almost 3,000 enrollees from throughout the university, with about 400 undergraduate majors. The graduate program has about 35 graduate students pursuing either a master's or doctoral degree. During a typical year, the department awards 100 baccalaureate degrees and 6 graduate degrees. Over the years, the department has been very successful in placing its graduates as teachers and researchers in colleges and universities, and as applied sociologists in a wide variety of public and private agencies.

All graduate students, regardless of their career orientations, receive a thorough grounding in basic theoretical and methodological aspects of sociology, as well as pursuing their chosen areas of specialization. Core seminars in research methods (5293) and statistics (5283, 6233, and 5483) emphasize the collection and analysis of survey data. In addition, the department offers several advanced statistics and methods courses in which students can develop their research skills. The department regularly offers substantive courses for graduate credit in criminology, deviance, the family, gender, stratification, global inequality, social psychology, race, demography, and migration/immigration.

The department offers a number of structured research opportunities for graduate students in conjunction with the required seminars in research methods and statistics. The department has full

access to the data archives maintained by the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research, and also houses many data sets collected by the National Opinion Research Center, the Bureau of the Census, and the faculty themselves. These are available to students for secondary analysis and a number of seminars have components that introduce students to the use of these data sets. Many graduate students use these data for writing theses and dissertations, to present papers at professional meetings, or to submit articles for journal publication. In addition, students also have the opportunity to work as research assistants on faculty grants and often co-author publications with faculty members.

The department awards 6-8 new Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) each year to incoming students. At present, the department supports over 90 percent of its full-time graduate students with GTA funding. The GTA represents a value of over \$21,000 and involves working with a professor 20 hours per week during the semester. In exchange for this work, MA students receive \$13,956 and PhD students receive \$15,029 over 10 months, a full tuition waiver, and the student health insurance policy.

The department recognizes the importance of graduate students' participation in professional meetings and offers travel awards to students who will present their research. The Sociology Department provides Graduate Student Travel Awards of up to \$500 for presentations at national, international, and regional meetings. To be eligible for such an award students must also apply for travel funding from the College of Arts and Sciences, the Graduate Student Senate, and the Graduate College.

The department is equipped with a computer lab, so students have full and free access to personal computers with the latest statistical and word processing software.

Degrees Offered

- *Master of Arts*
- *Doctor of Philosophy*

Graduate Courses in Sociology

Tools 5283 Fundamentals of Sociological Statistics 5293 Advanced Methods of Social Research 5313 Qualitative Research Methods 5483 Advanced Regression Analysis 6233 Advanced Sociological Statistics	Demography / Family 5723 Sociology of the Family 5823 Seminar in Social Demography 6833 Seminar in Mortality 6843 Seminar in Fertility 6853 Migration & Immigration 6353 Special Topics in Demography 6373 Special Topics in Family
Theory / Core Substantive Courses 5833 Seminar in Social Psychology 5933 Seminar in Sociological Theory 6313 Seminar in Social Change 6753 Historical & Comparative Sociology 6903 Issues in Sociological Theory	Social Differentiation 5383 Seminar in Social Stratification 5623 Minority & Ethnic Groups 5733 Sociology of Gender 5943 Inequality in a Global Perspective 6363 Special Topics in Social Differentiation
Criminology 5333 Seminar in the Criminal Justice System 5523 Seminar in Criminology 5543 Seminar in Deviance and Social Control 5863 Seminar in the Sociology of the Law 6343 Special Topics in Criminology	Other 5790 Special Sociological Issues 5831 Teaching Seminar 5832 Professionalization Seminar 5980 Research for Master's Thesis 6980 Research for Doctoral Dissertation 6990 Special Studies in Sociology

Master of Arts in Sociology
Degree Requirements, Rules, and Regulations
Adopted September 2002, Revised January 2015

The M.A. degree in sociology is a 35-hour program requiring a thesis.

The following core coursework is required:

Advanced Methods of Social Research (5293)
Fundamentals of Sociological Statistics (5283)
Advanced Regression Analysis (5483)
Sociological Theory (5933)
Advanced Sociological Statistics (6233)
Professionalization Seminar (5832)
Three hours of Thesis Credit (5980)

In addition to the core courses, completion of the program entails 15 hours of elective coursework. Twelve of the 15 hours of electives must be courses housed in the Department of Sociology at the 5000-level or above. The remaining three hours of electives may be Directed Readings (5960) or coursework outside the department.

Important Deadlines for Master's Level Students

Below is a list of important deadlines. These deadlines are the responsibility of the student. The dates for any specific year can be found on the Graduate College website:

<http://www.ou.edu/content/gradweb/aud/current/deadlines.html>.

- 1) File as a Candidate for a Master's degree by October 1 during second year in program
- 2) File for graduation with the Office of Records by March 1 during second year in program
- 3) Defend the Thesis at least one week prior to the last day of class in the graduating semester.
Note that this is a Department of Sociology deadline.
- 4) Deposit the Thesis in the library by last day of finals in the graduating semester.

Candidacy for Master's Degree

To file as a candidate for a Master's degree the student must submit two forms to the Graduate College: 1) the "Candidacy" form, and 2) the "Application for Approval of the Thesis Topic and Committee Membership."

On the "Candidacy" form, the student should list all the courses that will count toward the degree (including current and future classes planned but not completed yet). This form must be signed by the Graduate Liaison.

On the "Application for Approval of the Thesis Topic and Committee Membership" form, the student must list a tentative thesis topic, the three members of the thesis committee, and indicate whether human subjects' approval will be required. This form must be signed by the members of the thesis committee and the Graduate Liaison. If the student does not complete the thesis or requisite coursework in time to graduate at the end of the designated semester, the application for candidacy remains in effect for an additional semester.

Thesis Proposal

As part of the Sociology master's program, the student must write a master's thesis. A master's thesis is an original research project that is conducted under the supervision of a faculty committee. In most cases a master's thesis is the equivalent of an article published in a scholarly journal. Before a master's student can begin thesis research (i.e., collecting and/or analyzing data) s/he must have a research proposal approved by his/her thesis committee. A research proposal is a detailed description of the rationale for conducting the proposed research and the research design (i.e., methods/analysis) that will be used. The thesis committee consists of three sociology faculty members, of whom one is chosen as chair.

The research proposal must be approved at least one semester before the semester in which the thesis will be defended (e.g., approval in fall for defense in spring). The research proposal must be approved before an application is submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval of research using human subjects. The student must have approval from the IRB before engaging in any data collection or data analysis involving human subjects. There are very few exceptions for any kind of sociological research (e.g., use of archival census data on aggregates like countries). Any project involving contact with humans (such as interviews or questionnaires), even if the data have been collected by someone else (existing surveys), requires IRB approval. The student should be mindful of the fact that getting IRB approval can be arduous and time-consuming, so procrastination is not a sound idea. Committee members must receive a copy of the research proposal at least one week prior to the proposal meeting.

Thesis Defense

The student must demonstrate at the thesis defense that s/he has executed the research project that was approved at the proposal stage to the satisfaction of the thesis committee. Because committee members have seen and had the opportunity to comment on drafts of the thesis, by the time a thesis defense is held it should be *pro forma*.

Students must submit a reading copy of the thesis in hardcopy form to each committee member 21 calendar days prior to a Master's thesis defense meeting.

The committee members will have 14 calendar days to respond to the thesis with comments and the formal authorization to proceed to the defense by signing the “Authorization to Proceed with the Thesis/Dissertation Defense,” which is available on the Sociology Graduate Program webpage.

A student should tentatively reserve the conference room for a thesis oral defense meeting when submitting the reading copy of the thesis to the committee. Therefore, to adhere to the Graduate College guideline of holding the defense by the last day of class of the graduating semester, the student should defend the thesis at least one week prior to the last day of class in the graduating semester.

The student must submit the “Authorization to Proceed with the Thesis/Dissertation Defense” form to the Graduate Liaison no less than 7 calendar days prior to the thesis oral defense date. The student may not take a reading copy to the Graduate College or hold a defense until this authorization is submitted to the Graduate Liaison.

A reading copy of the thesis must be approved by the Graduate College two days before a thesis defense is held. The student must have a letter indicating IRB approval for use of human subjects, if necessary, before the Graduate College will approve the reading copy. Once the Graduate College has approved the reading copy it will issue authorization for holding the defense (i.e., a form indicating defense success or failure).

At the defense, the student may be asked to make revisions to the thesis. Normally, these revisions are minor.

The student is responsible for providing every member of the committee with a draft of the thesis. If there are revisions, the student is responsible for providing every member of the committee with a final copy of the thesis.

If there is an extenuating or emergency circumstance, the department chair and Graduate Committee may allow an altered timeframe. To be considered, the student must submit a formal petition to the Graduate Committee through his/her advisory committee members with their support, and therefore, signatures.

M.A. Graduate Student of the Year Award

In consultation with the faculty, the Graduate Awards Committee awards the M.A. Graduate Student of the Year Award. One master’s-level student will be selected each year. Faculty members are encouraged to nominate one student when nominations are solicited by the Graduate Awards Committee each spring. The nomination packet consists of a letter of nomination by a faculty member, the student’s CV, and a maximum of two student products (e.g., publications, thesis, seminar papers).

Forms

All Graduate College forms (e.g., Candidacy, Application for Thesis Topic and Committee Membership, the Graduation Application Card) are available on the Graduate College website. For master's degree forms, go to the following URL:

<http://www.ou.edu/content/gradweb/aud/current/masters/norman.html>

The Department of Sociology forms (e.g., Authorization to Proceed with Thesis/Dissertation Defense, Graduate Student Travel Award) are available on the Department of Sociology website (<http://soc.ou.edu/resources>).

Checklist for Master's Degree Students

- Apply to the Office of Admissions and Records for admission to the Graduate College. (Have all transcripts of previous college studies sent to the Office of Admissions and Records).
- Obtain registration materials. Consult the Graduate Liaison of your academic unit for an advisor. Plan your program of study - check the master's degree requirements for your academic unit and the Graduate College Bulletin. Register for coursework.
- Select a thesis topic in conjunction with your advisor.

Graduate College Guideline → Complete the *Thesis Title* form and have it signed by all members of your thesis committee and the Graduate Liaison for your academic unit. Return the form to the Graduate College at the time the *Admission to Candidacy* is filed.

Graduate College Guideline → File an *Admission to Candidacy* form for the master's degree in the Graduate College. Submit your candidacy form and obtain your packet from the Graduate College no later than the first Monday in October (for spring graduates). Some academic units have individualized *Admission to Candidacy* forms, but the Department of Sociology uses the generic form from the Graduate College.

- Enroll in a minimum of two credit hours of 5980 (thesis research) each semester following your initial enrollment in 5980. Hence, if a student plans to graduate in May, takes four credit hours of 5980 in the spring semester, and does not finish the thesis, that student will take two credit hours each semester until s/he finishes the thesis.

Graduate College Guideline → File for graduation. Deadlines are: Fall – November 1; Spring – March 1; Summer – July 1.

Department of Sociology Guideline → 1) Submit a reading copy of thesis to each committee member 21 days prior to a Master's thesis defense meeting. The committee members will have two weeks to respond to a thesis with comments and sign the formal authorization to proceed to the defense by signing the "Authorization to Proceed with the Thesis/Dissertation Defense" form.

- Check with the members of your thesis committee to select an examination date and suitable

hour. Notify all thesis committee members of the time and place. Only one attempt is afforded the candidate to defend the thesis.

Department of Sociology Guideline → 2) Submit the “Authorization” form to the Graduate Liaison no less than 7 calendar days prior to the thesis oral defense date.

- Present a reading copy of your master’s thesis to the Graduate College two days prior to the defense. Obtain authorization at least two days prior to the defense.

Department of Sociology Guideline → 3) The student is responsible for providing every committee member with a draft of the thesis. If there are revisions, the student is responsible to provide committee members with a copy of the thesis.

- Within 72 hours after the thesis defense, submit the report signed by all committee members to the Graduate Dean.
- Within 60 days after passing the thesis defense submit three copies of your thesis signed by all committee members to the Graduate College and then to the Library. Return the signed deposit form to the Graduate College.

Congratulations!

Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology Degree Requirements, Rules, and Regulations

Adopted September 2002, Revised January 2015

To earn the PhD degree, the student must complete at least 90 hours of graduate hours inclusive of electives, required classes, and dissertation hours, pass the general examination, and write a doctoral dissertation.

All students admitted to the Ph.D. program must complete the following required courses:

Advanced Methods of Sociological Research (SOC 5293)
Fundamentals of Sociological Statistics (SOC 5283)
Sociological Theory (SOC 5933)
Issues in Sociological Theory (SOC 6903)
Advanced Sociological Statistics (SOC 6233)
Advanced Regression Analysis (SOC 5483)
Teaching Seminar (5831)
Professionalization Seminar (5832)

A maximum of 24 dissertation preparation hours (SOC 6980) may be applied to the dissertation. A maximum of 44 credit hours may be transferred from other universities with the permission of a student's advisory committee and the dean of the Graduate College. The purpose of the coursework is to prepare the student for the general examination and the dissertation. The accumulation of coursework, in and of itself, does not constitute progress toward the degree.

With few exceptions, the student seeking this degree anticipates a career in teaching and/or research. Departmental requirements emphasize professional competence in sociology as a whole, especially research methodology, and expertise in two fields within sociology. At the PhD level, the student should acquire a broad knowledge of the fundamentals of sociology and a focused specialization in two substantive areas of expertise.

Mentors for New PhD students

All new PhD students are assigned a faculty mentor who advises the student regarding course selections until the student has identified his or her areas of interest and chooses a dissertation chair. The Graduate Liaison distributes the assignments in August at the start of every year.

Important Deadlines for Doctoral-Level Students

Below is a list of important deadlines. These deadlines are the responsibility of the student. The dates for any particular year may be found on the College website

(<http://www.ou.edu/content/gradweb/aud/current/deadlines.html>).

1. File the "Advisory Conference Report" form by the 12th month in the PhD program.
2. File the "Application for Doctoral General Examination" form 2 weeks prior to taking the general examination. This form requires signatures from all members of the committee.
3. Defend the dissertation proposal with doctoral advisory committee in a semester prior to the graduating semester.
4. File Graduation Application Card in the Office of Records by March 1 for spring semester graduation, by October 1 for fall semester graduation, by July 1 for summer graduation. Students who do not file the graduation application will not be cleared for graduation.
5. Submit the dissertation reading copy to doctoral advisory committee 30 days prior to the defense.
6. Request a Degree Check online with the Graduate College 10 days prior to the submission of the dissertation reading copy to the Graduate College.
7. Submit the dissertation reading copy to Graduate College at least 14 days prior to the defense.
8. At least 14 days prior to the defense, the student must also submit (1) the "Request for Authority for Defense of Dissertation," to the Graduate College, and (2) a letter indicating IRB approval to Graduate College.
9. Defend the dissertation at least one week prior to the last day of class in the graduating semester. Note that this is a Department of Sociology deadline.
10. Deposit the dissertation in library within 60 days and by the last day of finals in the semester in which you will graduate.

Advisory Committee & the Advisory Conference

Within a year of beginning the PhD program, the doctoral student must form an advisory committee, hold an Advisory Conference, and submit a "Report of the Advisory Conference" form to the Graduate College. This form is signed by all committee members and the Graduate Liaison before it is submitted to the Graduate College. Failure to submit this form will result in not being allowed to enroll in additional courses. **All spring Advisory Conference meetings must be held before March 31st.**

The Advisory Committee is made up of five members. The student chooses a dissertation chair, who chairs the committee, and one faculty member from another department. The other three members are faculty members assigned to the committee by the Graduate Liaison to reflect the student's two substantive areas in sociology. The purpose of the Advisory Conference is to record and approve the coursework the student has taken/will take for the Ph.D. In addition, this committee will serve as the student's general exam committee (see Exam Committee below).

The “Report of the Advisory Conference” form outlines a plan of study that should develop a student’s knowledge of and expertise in sociology broadly defined, as well as two substantive areas of sociological expertise. The areas are listed below. **The plan of study must include the core requirements for the MA plus one additional theory course.** This is especially important to highlight for students who are transferring credits from other universities or entering the doctoral program with a Master’s degree in a related field. The plan of study must contain sufficient coursework to prepare a student for the general examination. The program of coursework and the committee can be amended as needed.

General Examination

The general examination in sociology consists of two components, a written component and an oral component. The written component consists of writing answers to questions covering two substantive areas within the discipline of sociology. The oral component consists of verbally answering questions covering these substantive areas. The general examination is usually taken in the **fall semester of the third year** of the PhD program, once a student has completed all the required coursework and most of the elective hours of coursework (except dissertation hours). During the departmental orientation every August, the Graduate Liaison will direct all new PhD students to the reading lists and sample questions on the D2L sites. S/he will also give them a document outlining the schedule and structure of the exam.

The two exam areas are selected from eleven specialty areas.

Below are the areas and the faculty members comprising each area committee:

1. Class Stratification (Bass, Burns, Clark, Diaz, Peck, St. John)
2. Criminology and Deviance (Chapple, Hope, Sharp, Worthen)
3. Cross-National Sociology (Burns, Clark)
4. Environmental Sociology (Burns, Caniglia)
5. Family (Bass, Beutel, Burge, Hope, Kroska)
6. Gender (Beutel, Burge, Kroska, Sharp, Worthen)
7. Quantitative Methods (Peck, Piotrowski)
8. Race/Ethnicity (Chapple, Diaz, St. John)
9. Social Demography (Bass, Beutel, Piotrowski, St. John)
10. Social Psychology (Beutel, Burge, Kroska)
11. Students interested in the intersection of class, gender, and racial stratification can take a combined exam covering all three areas rather than choosing two areas from above.

Exam Committees

The exams are written and graded by a committee of five faculty members – the student’s dissertation chair, three additional members of the sociology faculty (assigned to the committee by the Graduate Liaison based on the examination areas), and a faculty member from outside the sociology

department. If the student's dissertation chair is not a member of the area committee for either of the student's specialty areas, then a sixth member will be added to the committee (so that each student has two graders for each specialty area).

Reading Lists

Each area has a set list of readings. Exam questions will be written from the reading lists, so students are expected to read and master all the material from the reading lists in preparation for the exams. Students will have access to all of the area reading lists, along with sample exam questions, in their first year of the PhD program. The reading lists will be updated (as needed) each April. **Students are responsible for the version of the lists that are posted six months prior to the exam date.**

Outside Members

The university requires that an outside (non-departmental) member serve on all general exam committees. During the first year of the Ph.D. program the student and the student's intended dissertation chair will work together to find an outside faculty person to serve on the committee and sign the advisory report.

The outside person is assigned the role of overseeing the process and therefore could be from any department. The outside person's research interests do *not* have to overlap with the student's. The outside faculty person's primary role is ensuring that the process is in compliance with Graduate College guidelines.

Structure of the Exam

The general exam has two components, written and oral. The written component is take-home, and students have one week to complete it. **The written component consists of six questions, three from each area, of equal weight in the overall grade. Students are strongly recommended to limit each answer to 10 pages (double-spaced, 12-point font, one-inch margins).** Reference pages are not included in these ten pages. Every student taking an exam in the same substantive area and at the same time receives the same exam questions. The exam questions are not given to the students in advance. Students are expected to incorporate all relevant material from the reading list into their answers. They may also include material from outside of the reading list. If the grading members of the committee determine that the answers to the written portion of the exam are satisfactory, the student will proceed to the oral component of the exam.

Oral Defense

The university requires that general exams have an oral component. Therefore, all students who have satisfactorily completed the written portion of the exam have to orally defend their exam. During the oral component, all members of the committee will have the opportunity to ask the student questions. Students should be prepared to do any of the following during the oral component of the exam:

clarify/expand on answers from the written component of the exam; answer questions from the written component of the exam that the student did not answer; answer questions covering any material from the two areas. Students may bring notes to the oral component of the exam and will be provided with copies of their answers from the written component of the exam – no other material is allowed. The oral defense should not exceed two hours. **Both the written and oral components of the exam must be completed within the same semester, per Graduate College guidelines.**

Sample Questions

Each area committee has compiled a list of sample questions that are available to students on the D2L sites. These questions will not be used on exams, but are intended to give students a sense of the types of questions they can anticipate.

Exam Schedule

Students are required to declare their two exam areas one year before the scheduled exam (October of the previous year). Students will have access to questions for the written component of the general exam (via the dropbox folders on D2L) beginning at 12:00 am on the first Friday in October. Students must upload their exam answers by noon the following Friday. Members of the examination committee will download the answers from the D2L dropbox folders.

Fall Exam Schedule

First Friday in October: Students download exam questions from D2L dropbox folders.

Second Friday in October: Students upload their answers to the D2L drop-box folder.

Second-third week in October: Committees grade the written answers.

Last week in October: The dissertation chair notifies the student and Graduate Liaison about the results for the written component of the exam.

November: Committees hold the oral component of the exam for each student who has been allowed to proceed beyond the written component. At the conclusion of the oral component, the committee decides if the student has passed the general exam – **note that students must pass both the written and the oral components of the exam.** As mandated by the Graduate College, the committee gives the final exam results to the Graduate Dean within 72 hours of the oral component of the exam. Each member of the committee signs the general exam report.

Exam Feedback

After the written portion of the exam has been graded, students will meet with their dissertation chair, who will summarize the feedback from the graders. Students satisfactorily completing the written portion of the exam may also contact the other members of the committee to seek advice for

preparing for the oral portion of the exam. Students who do not satisfactorily complete the written portion of the exam are strongly encouraged to consult with their committee members regarding improved performance before retaking the exam in the spring.

Exam Success

In order to pass the general exam:

1. *Students must perform satisfactorily on both of the substantive areas on the written component of the exam, otherwise they will have failed the general exam.* Students who perform satisfactorily on both of the areas on the written component of the exam may proceed to the oral component of the general exam. Students who fail the general exam may retake it the following spring semester (March). However, if only one of the substantive areas on the written component was considered unsatisfactory, then the student will retake only the unsatisfactory substantive area. Once the relevant elements of the written component of the exam are considered satisfactory, then the student may proceed to the oral component of the general exam. A second failure on the written component of the general exam will result in dismissal from the program.
2. *Students must also perform satisfactorily on the oral component of the general exam.* If a student does not perform satisfactorily on the oral component of the general exam, the general exam has been failed. In cases where the student's written answers were considered satisfactory but the performance on the oral component of the exam was not, he/she will retake the oral component of the general exam in the following semester (timing to be determined in consultation with the student's committee). A second unsatisfactory performance on the oral component of the general exam will result in dismissal from the program.

Spring (retake) Exam Schedule – Written Component

January 15-30: A student preparing to take the exam must file an amended Advisory Conference Report showing the new members of his/her committee, if they have changed (this requires signatures from all new members and all old members being replaced). The student must also apply for authorization to take the general exam with a form signed by all members of the committee. The Graduate College will send paperwork to the dissertation chair.

February 1-15: As required by the Graduate College, students taking the March exam must fill out the Application for the General Exam form two weeks prior to the exam date.

First Friday in March: Students download exam questions from D2L dropbox folders.

Second Friday in March: Students upload their completed answers to the D2L drop-box folder.

Second-fourth week in March: Committees grade the written answers.

First week in April: The dissertation chair notifies the student and Graduate Liaison about the results for the written component of the exam.

Second - third week in April: Students whose answers for the written portion of the remedial exam are considered satisfactory proceed to the oral portion of the exam. As mandated by the Graduate College, committee chairs will give the final exam results to the Graduate Dean within 72 hours of the oral component of the exam. Exam committees sign the general exam reports for all the students whose exams they graded. If a student fails an exam twice, the department will recommend to the Graduate College that the student be dismissed from the doctoral program.

Academic Misconduct

Students are subject to the OU Integrity code, which can be reviewed at: http://integrity.ou.edu/students_guide.html. Additionally, students are committing academic misconduct if they: (a) receive exam assistance from anyone during the week they are completing the written component of the exam, (b) share their answers with anyone else in the graduate program while they are working on the exam *or* after they have completed the exam, (c) view another student's exam answers at any time while they are in the graduate program.

If students are asked questions on the general exam that they have previously answered in a graduate seminar, they may draw upon prior written work, but answers should not be exact reproductions of prior answers.

Dissertation Research Proposal

As part of their degree program PhD students must write a doctoral dissertation. A dissertation is an original research project. In most cases a dissertation is the equivalent of scholarly monograph or two or more articles published in a scholarly journal.

Once a student has successfully passed his/her general exams, s/he forms the dissertation committee. The dissertation committee can be the same composition as the examination committee or can be adjusted in consultation with the dissertation chair. The dissertation committee is comprised of the chair, three Sociology faculty members, and an outside member. Before a PhD student can begin dissertation research (i.e., collecting and/or analyzing data) s/he must have a research proposal approved by his/her dissertation committee. A dissertation research proposal is a detailed description of the rationale for conducting the proposed research and the design (i.e., methods/analysis) that will be used.

The dissertation research proposal must be approved at least one semester before the semester in which the dissertation will be defended (e.g., approval in fall for defense in spring). **All spring semester proposals must be held before March 31st.**

The dissertation research proposal must be approved before an application is submitted to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval of research using human subjects (if such approval is needed). The student must have approval from the IRB before s/he can engage in any data collection or data analysis involving human subjects. There are very few exceptions for any kind of sociological research (e.g., use of archival census data on aggregates like countries). Any project involving contact with humans (such as interviews or questionnaires), even if the data already have been collected by someone else (existing surveys), requires IRB approval. The student should be mindful of the fact that getting IRB approval can be time-consuming, so procrastination is not a sound idea.

Committee members must receive a copy of the proposal at least two weeks before a meeting to approve the proposal is held.

Dissertation Defense

The doctoral dissertation is written and defended under the guidance of a student's dissertation committee, consisting of five members of the graduate faculty (of whom one is outside the Department of Sociology).

The student must submit a reading copy of the dissertation to each committee member **30 calendar days prior** to a doctoral dissertation defense meeting.

The student's dissertation committee members will have 14 calendar days to respond to a dissertation with comments and the formal authorization to proceed to the defense by signing the "Authorization to Proceed with the Thesis/Dissertation Defense," which is available on the Sociology Graduate Program webpage. If a faculty member does not respond in 14 calendar days, then it is considered authorized by that faculty member.

A student should tentatively reserve the conference room for a dissertation oral defense meeting when submitting the reading copy of the dissertation to his/her committee. **Note that no defenses may be scheduled during the last full week of class in the fall or spring semester.** Therefore, to adhere to the Graduate College guideline of holding the defense by the last day of class of the graduating semester and the Sociology guideline of not holding defenses during the last week of class, a student should defend the dissertation at least one week prior to the last day of class in the graduating semester.

The student must submit the Sociology Department's form, "Authorization to Proceed with the Thesis/Dissertation Defense," to the Graduate Liaison no less than 14 calendar days prior to the dissertation defense date. Students may not take a reading copy to the Graduate College or hold a dissertation defense until this authorization is submitted to the Graduate Liaison.

In addition, the doctoral candidate must submit the Graduate College form, "Request for Authority for Defense of Dissertation," to the Graduate College at least 14 calendar days prior to the dissertation

defense date -- this form must be signed by all members of the dissertation committee and the Graduate Liaison. The Graduate Liaison will not sign this form until the student has submitted the "Authorization to Proceed with the Thesis/Dissertation Defense" form to the Graduate Liaison, indicating that all members of the dissertation committee have read the dissertation and believe it is ready to be defended.

At least 14 days prior to the dissertation defense, the student must also submit a letter indicating IRB approval for use of human subjects, if necessary. The Graduate College will not approve the reading copy without this letter.

Once the Graduate College has approved the reading copy it will issue authorization for holding the defense (a form indicating defense success or failure).

In a dissertation defense the student must demonstrate that s/he has executed the research project that was approved at the proposal stage to the satisfaction of his/her committee. Normally, committee members have seen and had the opportunity to comment on drafts of the dissertation so that by the time a dissertation defense is held it is *pro forma*. At the dissertation defense, students may be asked to make revisions to their dissertation. Normally, these revisions are minor.

The student is responsible for providing every member of the committee with a reading draft of the dissertation. If there are revisions, the student is responsible for providing every member of the advisory committee with a final copy of the dissertation.

If there is an extenuating or emergency circumstance, the department chair and Graduate Committee may allow an altered timeframe. To be considered, the student must submit a formal petition to the Graduate Committee through his/her committee members with their support, and therefore, signatures.

Residency Requirement

The student must be in residence as a full-time student at the University of Oklahoma for at least two consecutive 16-week semesters and be engaged in coursework or research activities as prescribed by the academic unit.

Time Limits

A doctoral student who enters the University of Oklahoma graduate program with a bachelor's degree is expected to pass the general examination within five calendar years. A doctoral student who enters with a master's degree is expected to pass the general examination within four calendar years. A doctoral candidate is expected to complete all degree requirements, including the written dissertation and its defense, within five years of the semester in which the student passed the general examination.

Teaching as a Graduate Student

At the doctoral level, a student in good academic standing generally assists a professor for one year as part of GTA duties. During the second year of the PhD program, the student normally begins to teach his/her own section of an introductory-level course. Once the student has successfully passed the general examination, the chair may assign the student an upper-division course in one of the student's two areas of expertise.

PhD students having sole responsibility for teaching a course in the Sociology Department are required to take the Professionalization Seminar (SOC 5970) and the Teaching Seminar (SOC 5831).

As a general rule, students should not have appointments that exceed .5 FTE (including jobs outside the department or university). After the master's degree, students will not be supported by the department for more than five years as a graduate assistant, graduate instructor, or adjunct instructor.

Doctoral Graduate Student of the Year Award

In consultation with the faculty, the Graduate Awards Committee selects the Graduate Doctoral Student of the Year Award. One PhD-level student is selected each year. Faculty members are encouraged to nominate one student during the spring semester when nominations are solicited by the Graduate Committee. The nomination packet consists of a letter of nomination by a faculty member, the student's CV, and a maximum of two student products (i.e., publications, thesis, seminar papers, syllabus for course taught, teaching evaluations).

Forms

All Graduate College forms (e.g., Report of the Advisory Committee, Application for the General Examination, Graduation Application Card) are available on the Graduate College website. For doctoral degree forms, go to: <http://www.ou.edu/content/gradweb/aud/current/doctoral/Norman.html>.

The Department of Sociology forms (e.g., Authorization to Proceed with Thesis/Dissertation Defense, Graduate Student Travel Award) are available on the Department of Sociology website (<http://soc.ou.edu/resources>).

Checklist for Doctoral Students

- Apply to the Office of Admissions and Records for admission to the Graduate College. Have all transcripts of previous college studies sent to the Office of Admissions and Records.
- After admission, obtain registration materials. Consult with the Graduate Liaison of your major department for an advisor. To plan your program of study, check the doctoral degree requirements with your academic unit and the Graduate College Bulletin. Register for course work.

- Within a year of starting the PhD program, in consultation with your chair, schedule your Advisory Conference to plan your program of study. At the conference, it is the duty of the chair to secure approval of each committee member and file the Report of Advisory Conference in the Graduate College.

Graduate College Guideline → File the “Advisory Conference Report” form by 12th month in the program.

- Proceed with coursework. If any changes become necessary in the Advisory Conference Report, file in the Graduate College an amended report that has been approved by all members of the Advisory Conference Committee and the Graduate Liaison.
- Complete tools of research as specified in *Advisory Conference Report*.
- When all required coursework and research tools have been completed, file Application for general examination in the Graduate College two weeks prior to the general examination. Approval by the Graduate Dean is required if membership of the Doctoral Committee conducting the general examination is different from that assigned at the Advisory Conference.
- After the Graduate Dean authorizes the general examination, arrange with the Doctoral Committee for time and place of examination. General examinations should be completed during the semester in which approval was given. Within 72 hours after the general examination is completed, a report signed by the entire committee must be submitted to the Graduate Dean.

Department of Sociology Guideline → Defend the dissertation proposal with doctoral advisory committee in a semester prior to the graduating semester.

- Following initial enrollment in Research for Doctor’s Dissertation (course 6980), maintain continuous enrollment in a minimum of two credit hours each semester until all degree requirements are completed.
- File the Application for Graduation with the Office of Academic Records. Pay the microfilming fee in the Bursar’s office. Submit the Degree Check card to the Graduate College. (Deadlines are Fall – November 1; spring – March 1; summer – July 1).
- Prepare reading copies of the dissertation (one for each Doctoral Committee member) and when approved by the committee chairperson, present one copy to the Graduate College with a completed Request for Authority form. Reading copy deadlines are published in each semester’s class schedule and are available in the Graduate College office.

Department of Sociology/Graduate College Guideline → Submit the dissertation reading copy to doctoral advisory committee 30 days prior to the defense.

Graduate College Guideline → Request a degree check online with the Graduate College 10 days prior to the submission of the dissertation reading copy to the Graduate College.

- If approved, the reading copy will be returned with the Authority for the Final Examination. The Graduate Dean must approve any change in membership of the Doctoral Committee.

Department of Sociology Guideline → Submit the “Authorization” form to the Graduate Liaison no less than 14 calendar days prior to the dissertation oral defense date.

Graduate College Guideline → Submit the dissertation reading copy to Graduate College 14 days prior to the defense.

Graduate College Guideline → At least 14 days prior to the defense, the student must also submit 1) the “Request for Authority for Defense of Dissertation,” to the Graduate College, and 2) a letter indicating IRB approval to Graduate College.

- Arrange with members of Doctoral Committee the time and place of Final Oral Examination. Only one attempt to defend is afforded to the candidate. If a report of unsatisfactory is received, the student must discontinue candidacy.

Department of Sociology Guideline → Defend the dissertation at least one week prior to the last day of class in the graduating semester. Note that this is a Department of Sociology deadline.

- Incorporate any corrections and comments into the final dissertation copy.

Department of Sociology Guideline → The student is responsible for providing every committee member with a reading draft of the dissertation. If there are revisions, the student is responsible for providing every member of the committee with a final copy of the dissertation.

- Within 60 days after the successful defense of the dissertation, submit to the Graduate College one electronic copy and two hard copies of your dissertation on 100% cotton paper with the signatures of all committee members.
- Deposit your dissertation copies and the signed UMI Agreement with the Library. The Library will date and sign your Dissertation Receipt.
- Return the signed Dissertation Receipt, Survey of Earned Doctorates, Graduate College Exit Survey, and Entry Form to the Graduate College.

Congratulations!