# Tips for Arizona Sociology Graduate Students

last updated by Amanda Pierson and Louise Roth, August 20, 2025.

These "tips" are a compilation of advice from previous and current DGS. These tips are intended to supplement the Sociology's Graduate Program Handbook. You should consult that document about official procedures and requirements.

## DGS and Program Staff

Director of Graduate Studies (DGS): The DGS is a member of the faculty and is available to advise you on graduate student matters throughout your graduate career. The current DGS is Louise Roth, lroth@arizona.edu, 520-621-3525, Social Sciences 424.

Raquel Fareio, pinar@arizona.edu, Manager of Administration, 621-3492, Social Sciences 405, and Steffi McInnes, steffimc@arizona.edu, Program Coordinator, (520) 621-3531, Social Sciences 400, are staff members who help to administer the graduate program, **so please carefully review all emails you receive from them, respond to their emails in an adequate time and comply with any deadlines you receive from them**. **You will receive reminder emails IF needed, but after one attempt, they will no longer follow up.**

## General Topics

***Attendance and Presence on Campus for Courses and Employment***

Class attendance and availability for work on campus during the fall and spring semesters is mandatory for all students who are either enrolled in courses or employed as graduate assistants. Residence off campus (you are not living in the Tucson area) during the semester is only possible if: (a) the student has completed all required coursework; AND (b) the student's employment arrangements make this possible, e.g., teaching an online course or employment outside the UA.

What does residence "during the semester" mean? That depends on both your class schedule as a student, and your employment contract. You should expect to arrive a week before the first day of classes, and to stay until the end of the final exam period.

If you are funded as a Teaching Assistant (TA) or as a Graduate Instructor, the start/end dates will be listed on your Notice of Appointment (NOA) form, which is sent to your UA email account. The start date typically precedes the first day of classes by about a week, and the University expects you to be available for preparatory work. Likewise, you must be available to work during the final exam period, through the end date of your formal appointment, which typically extends until exams are over.

Faculty members determine start/end dates for graduate research assistants in accordance with their grant requirements. Inquire about your supervisor's expectations and plan accordingly. A Notice of Appointment (NOA) form will be generated and sent to your UA email account.

Mark the dates in your calendar and review your NOA thoroughly. Then "accept" the position where indicated, this will activate your contract. If you fail to do so, you will not receive funding or health benefits. The form is *time-sensitive*.

If a situation arises that will delay your arrival, require that you depart early in the semester, or will miss classes for more than a week during semester due to family or health matters or unforeseen circumstances, you *must* get the approval of the faculty members whom you TA for in that semester, the DGS, and the Director of the School. You must also notify the Manager of Administration. All parties must agree before the request can be approved. Be aware that any changes could potentially affect your pay and benefits. In some instances, reimbursement to the University is required. Likewise, unapproved absences during the semester can also jeopardize program status, pay, and benefits. If travel, family, or health affect TA duties for only a week, you can make arrangements with the faculty instructor without the approval of the DGS or Director of the School.

Regular attendance for enrolled courses is also required. Check with instructors about final exam dates if relevant. Promptly report unforeseeable absences and explain your absence to the instructor. You should also make arrangements to make up missed work.

Students sometimes misunderstand or poorly plan travel in ways that conflict with their course obligations and employment contracts. Don't allow that to happen. Get informed before you plan travel as to what dates you need to be on campus. Plan travel for either research (fieldwork, conferences) or personal reasons (vacation, wedding) such that it does not conflict with mandatory attendance and work availability. **You should request any exceptions *in advance* and avoid making travel plans until after approval**.

***Friday Colloquium Series***

The weekly colloquium speaker series in the UA School of Sociology has a reputation as one of the best departmental seminars in the country. That's in part because faculty and graduates attend regularly. There are numerous benefits for you: you get to know the faculty and other graduate students better; you observe a wide array of presentational styles and techniques; you can see what types of questions scholars ask and how presenters respond to them; and you get exposed to substantive issues and methodological techniques that may not be covered in our graduate course offerings. **The School expects you to attend every Friday at noon.**

***Grants and Fellowships***

SBSRI (the Social and Behavioral Sciences Research Institute) has a Funding Database where you can search for funding that you may be eligible for. For more information, please visit their website at http://sbsri.sbs.arizona.edu/. It's a terrific source of information about all kinds of grant and fellowship opportunities. For further information, please contact Beth Stahmer, estahmer@arizona.edu, 621-1135.

The Social Science Business Center can assist you with preparing budgets for grant applications. The best contact email is SBS-SocSciBusCtr@email.arizona.edu. There are currently four Business Administrators that can assist you. Most fellowships require students to complete the Federal Application for Financial Student Assistance (FAFSA) online at https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-

foraid/fafsa. If you do not show need according to the FAFSA guidelines (due to many different circumstances), you may complete the following forms using your projected income for the coming academic year rather than last year's income: Resource Re-Evaluation; Cost of Attendance (Budget) Re-Evaluation forms found at: http://financialaid.arizona.edu/forms

***Travel Money***

The Graduate Professional Student Council awards travel grants to graduate students who are presenting their research at academic conferences. Students can also receive grants for attending a conference if the applicant and supporting faculty explicitly explain the importance of attendance for the student's professional development. Students can submit applications several times per year. See, https://gpsc.arizona.edu/travel-grants

The School of Sociology also has travel funds available for graduate students who are **presenting** their research at academic conferences. These are NOT awards, rather, we process travel reimbursements for eligible expenses. Funds are renewed each fiscal year, July 1st- June 30th. If you do not use your funds during the current fiscal year, they do not roll over into the new fiscal year and you cannot bank them. The Business Manager will send out a notification email to all graduate students with the available amount for travel expenses.

***Conferences***

It's a good idea to attend several conferences during your graduate school years. Conferences, including presenting your research, are part of being a sociologist. The American Sociological Association, http://www.asanet.org/ holds its annual meeting in August each year; papers or extended abstracts are due in February. There also are various regional sociology associations, as well as various area- or issue-specific ones that you can learn about from faculty, other graduate students, or via the web. Many only require an abstract to get on the program.

***Office Supplies and Photocopying***

You are allowed to use sociology office supplies (printer paper, pens, envelopes, etc.) and the photocopy machine and scanner for your work as an "instructor", Teaching Assistant (TA), or Research Assistant (RA), but not for your own work as a student. The only exceptions are stationary and postage for students who are on the job market. Be prepared for the staff to inquire thoroughly about what you are copying, and the purpose.

***Software Licensing***

New students are eligible for UA software as of their first day of class. See also VCAT for virtual software you can use online. To see a list of software licenses available to students, visit https://softwarelicense.arizona.edu/students

***Information Technology Support***

Requests for information technology support - webpage creation and update, antivirus/antispyware software installation, virus/spyware removal, other software or hardware installation, projector setup for Powerpoint presentations, and so on - will be handled by Information Technology (https://it.arizona.edu/student-resources , 626-8324).

Report any emergencies that impact your ability to teach your class to Classroom Technology, https://it.arizona.edu/contact-classroom-technology-services-cts or (520) 621-3852 or UITS-CTS@email.arizona.edu. Emergencies that impact your ability to do research for a professor or yourself are handled on a case-by-case basis. You need to submit a ticket via the SBS College IT support request system online at https://ticketdog.arizona.edu/

***Research: Human Subjects Protection***

University policy requires that any research involving human subjects - not just clinical work but also surveys, interviews, etc. - must be reviewed prior to study in order to fulfill the university's obligation to protect human subjects. Each student who wishes to conduct research with human subjects must have her/his own approval. If an MA paper or dissertation involves human subjects, the approval or exemption notice from the Human Subjects Protection Program (HSSP) must be indicated on the relevant Graduate College form. See https://research.arizona.edu/compliance/human-subjects-protection-program.

***Join the American Sociological Association (ASA)***

First year students can join ASA for free, the department will provide ASA with your information. You will receive an e-mail with instructions for completing the application for free ASA and section membership. To join ASA at a discounted rate, see http://www.asanet.org/ . This gives you access to *Footnotes,* a monthly newsletter, and the *American Sociological Review*. You must be a member to attend the annual conference or pay a significantly higher registration fee. You should also consider joining an ASA section or two that reflects your interests. These substantive sections are smaller communities in which there are wonderful opportunities for graduate students to play important roles and to network with senior scholars. It typically costs little to join a section as a student member once you are an ASA member. Some sections periodically do membership drives in which they sponsor student members on their dime.

***Bowers Paper Award***

The Bowers Graduate Student Paper Award was established some years ago by Professor Emeritus Raymond Bowers to honor graduate students in our program who have written outstanding papers. Papers submitted for consideration are judged by a panel of faculty. The GSC awards first and second place cash awards or travel funding, worth $300 and $200, to the students judged to have written the best papers. Any paper you have written while in the graduate program at Arizona is eligible for consideration. You may submit one paper that is single-authored and/or one co-authored paper (i.e., co-authored with another student, *not* with a faculty member). Papers must be typed in standard journal format and should not exceed ordinary article length. The submission deadline is usually early November. You will receive several emails announcing the award.

***Bunis Teaching Award***

The William K. Bunis Teaching Award was established in honor of a former graduate student and instructor in the school. The Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) awards it each Spring to a graduate student who demonstrates excellence in teaching. The recipient must have taught at least two classes for the school and have not been a previous winner of the Bunis Award. Faculty,

fellow graduate students, and undergraduate students can nominate graduate student instructors for this award. *No self-nominations, please.*

***The Sanchez-Jankowski Paper Award***

This is an annual award that will be given for an empirical graduate student paper involving qualitative data (broadly understood) in Sociology or Computational Social Science. Here qualitative data is defined as including, but not limited to, ethnography, in-depth interviews, historical documents, content analysis, mixed-methods approaches involving text, or any other data source/approach not solely reducible to statistical analysis. The Sanchez-Jankowski award will give $250 to 1 student per year.

***Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Recognition Award***

The School of Sociology calls for nominations for the Diversity, Inclusion & Equity Recognition Award. The Award recognizes the achievements of graduate students in the School who have distinguished themselves in the area of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Eligibility includes any current graduate student in sociology. Achievements may include published research, teaching accomplishments, service efforts, and outreach initiatives, among others. Nominations should focus on a concrete achievement or set of achievements during the two academic years prior to the award deadline (e.g., academic year 2019-2020 and 2020-2021 for the 2021 award), and may recognize the efforts of one graduate student or a group of graduate students. Nomination packets should include (1) a one-page letter outlining the achievement and its suitability for the award and (2) supporting materials (e.g., published research, teaching examples, etc.). Nominations will be reviewed according to their alignment with the Principles of Community as well as with regard to impact. Self-nominations are acceptable. The award carries a cash prize of $200. Nominations are due by March 15.

***Certificate Program in Computational Social Science (CSS)***

The College of Social and Behavioral Science (SBS) offers a certificate in CSS to masters and Ph.D. students at the University of Arizona. Many of the students in the program are from Sociology. The courses are offered in Sociology, Linguistics, Communication, Anthropology, English, Government and Public Policy, Geography, and the School of Information. A description of the program, requirements, and members of the advisory committee can be found at their website: https://css.arizona.edu/

## Tips for First Years

***General***

First-year students will get lots of advice from the DGS during the weekly proseminar in the fall. Here are a few general suggestions:

Take the required methods and theory courses seriously. For most grad students, these courses aren't the primary thing you came to graduate school to do, so it is tempting to focus your attention elsewhere. Try to resist this temptation. These courses are critical to helping you become a good sociologist. They provide you with tools to better answer the substantive questions you are interested in.

Take as many classes as you can, including some outside your area. For most students, three three-credit classes each semester is plenty. But if you've got the time and interest, consider auditing an additional class. And consider taking courses outside what you think are your main area(s) of interest. Now is the best time to explore. After the first year, your coursework will be more specialized. **Be aware that if you take a course outside of Sociology, you will need to send the syllabus and a brief statement on how the course contributes to your doctoral studies to the DGS and they need to approve the request.**

Think about every course paper as a potential publication. You needn't get something published right away, but it is important to begin writing and submitting manuscripts for review in your first couple of years, because moving things from the initial idea to a completed paper to send out for journal review takes time.

Seek out external fellowships and grants. Consider applying for an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship, a three-year predoctoral fellowship, if you are eligible. To identify other funding opportunities, take advantage of the resources at SBSRI.

Get to know faculty and other grad students. This is a friendly unit. **This is a friendly and collegial unit. Take advantage of the social and professional opportunities!** We're a pretty chatty and fun group, and some of us are even capable of talking about popular topics such as … (checks notes) movies and… (rechecks notes) sports! Take advantage of the student mentor assigned to you and your first-year faculty adviser.

Seek out "hands on" research opportunities to get a sense of the requirements and rhythms of sociological research. There are two routes to "hands on" research experience under faculty guidance: work as a research assistant on someone's external grant or volunteer your time. Approach faculty whose research interests you and ask them to keep you in mind should they need research assistance. If they cannot offer a paid assistantship, ask them to consider doing a "research apprenticeship," for which you can receive course credit (SOC 900-research unconnected to your MA or PhD thesis). This usually will not happen in the first year, when students are busy with core courses and elective seminars. But now is the time to gather information about potential opportunities.

Take professionalization seriously. Being a professional sociologist involves more than just doing research. It also includes assessing others' research, presenting your research, teaching, and serving on various types of committees. It also means working on projects collaboratively. We try to help prepare you to do these things. But it's good to be proactive. Ask questions of faculty and more senior grad students. Consider serving on a sociology committee (such as Graduate Studies or Undergraduate Studies).

***Credit for Prior Graduate-Level Work***

Students may request credit for up to twelve hours (typically four courses) of graduate-level coursework. This includes both courses on campus outside Sociology and prior coursework taken elsewhere. Minimum grades must be an A or B from the awarding institution. The DGS must approve transfers as equivalent to a graduate course at UA. (Note: students can take more than

twelve hours of outside coursework during their graduate career, but only twelve hours can be included on their Ph.D. program of studies.)

Provide syllabi for courses you wish to transfer, and a copy of your transcript for confirmation of credits and grades. Once the DGS reviews and indicates approval of your transfer credits, you must submit a Transfer Credit form through "GradPath," which will then be routed to the Graduate College for final review and approval. Normally, transferred credit reduces the number of elective courses you would have to take to complete the PhD program. It is rare that students are exempted from one of our required courses on the basis of prior coursework.

If you are entering the program with a prior MA, you may also be able to substitute the MA thesis you wrote in lieu of our required MA paper. Check with the DGS early in the fall semester of your first year about this. Please do not delay.

Students who enter with MAs sometimes elect to take the first written comprehensive exam, normally taken in the third year, during the second year instead. Students planning on doing so should consult with the DGS in the spring of their first years as to their intended field(s) and semester in which they plan to take it.

***GradPath***

"GradPath" is the Graduate College's paperless degree audit processing system. Students must complete and submit forms required for their program online using their UAccess Student account. To learn how to navigate to the forms please review http://grad.arizona.edu/system/files/GradPath_student_faq.pdf. The first form you must complete is the Responsible Conduct Research Statement (RCRS) form. Complete the RCRS form in the first semester of your first year. Once you submit this form, you can access the next available form in your program. If you have any questions or need assistance, please see Raquel Fareio.

***MA Degree***

If you do not enter with a Master's degree, you will get an MA on the way to the Ph.D. but the Sociology MA will not automatically show on your program because you are a PhD student. To remedy this, you must complete and submit the ***Change of Program*** form, which adds the MA to your program. Raquel Fareio will ask you to complete this form during the new graduate student orientation. If you have any questions, please see her for assistance.

***NSF Fellowship***

Consider applying for an NSF Graduate Research Fellowship. To be eligible, you must be a first- or second-year student without having already earned an MA degree. The application deadline usually is in November. SBSRI typically holds a "proposal preparation" workshop for this fellowship early in the fall semester. For more information, please check the Graduate College website at: https://grad.arizona.edu/financial-resources and fill out their "Application Support for the NSF Graduate Research Fellowship Program (GRFP)" survey to register for application support.

## Tips for Second Years

***MA Paper and Degree Procedures and Timeline***

The MA thesis must be defended via an oral examination before the end of the spring semester of the second year.

The Master's Paper is an internal departmental requirement and is not a formal thesis as defined by the Graduate College. Therefore, it is not filed with or reviewed by the Graduate College.

The student must assemble an MA committee consisting of a chair and two other members. The student is responsible for asking faculty to serve. Upon establishing an MA committee, you must complete the *Sociology Graduate Committee* form, no later than **November 1**. The selection of the committee is subject to the approval of the DGS. This is an internal form, not part of GradPath. See Raquel Fareio for this form.

To provide an opportunity for you to develop your MA paper, second year students typically enroll in SOC 696d. This seminar is a workshop where students can focus on their MA paper and get feedback from other students and the faculty instructor. Students working on their prospectus also enroll in this class.

The MA paper defense occurs in the spring semester of the second year. You must coordinate a date/time (2 hours) for your defense with your committee and reserve Rm 407A, or Rm. 420 for your oral. You must inform the Program Coordinator or the Manager of Administration of the date and time of your defense so they can reserve the room on your behalf. Don't delay in scheduling a date, as faculty's calendars fill up with defenses for other MA orals, oral comprehensive exams, dissertation proposal defenses, and final dissertation defenses. Oral defenses and exams may occur in person or on Zoom.

Complete and submit your ***Master's Plan of Study*** form and the ***Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment*** form in "GradPath" at least **3 weeks** BEFORE your defense date.

The Chair of the MA Committee is responsible for determining when the student has fulfilled all requirements for the MA degree, and to complete all necessary written documentation to that effect.

A ***Master's Completion of Degree Requirements*** form will be completed by Raquel Fareio for everyone who has successfully passed their MA Oral Defense at the end of the spring semester.

***MA Paper Advice***

Choose a faculty chair for your MA paper committee early. You should have done so by early in the fall semester of your second year at the latest. Meet with them to discuss your MA paper idea. Be sure they know that you want them to be the chair, and not just to be on the committee. You can change the committee chair later if you want to, but we've had cases where a faculty member

didn't realize she/he was a student's committee chair until a few weeks before the MA paper defense. Don't let that happen to you.

You need two other faculty members for your MA committee. Usually, it's a good idea to ask the chair for advice about this, though that isn't required. Here too it's wise to ask faculty relatively early, as some end up getting asked by quite a few students and are thus less likely to be able to say yes to you if you delay.

You must be in regular contact with your committee chair regarding the progress of the paper. How closely you work with the other members of the committee is up to you and them. Some students get regular feedback from them; others have little or no contact with them until the paper is essentially done. You also need to negotiate a schedule for delivering drafts. A general rule of thumb is to have a draft of the paper for her/him no later than spring break, but your chair may have other preferences.

Consult with your chair as to when to share your draft with the full committee. At the very latest, you should plan to submit a complete draft of your thesis-preferably already revised in consultation with your chair- to everyone on your committee no later than **three weeks** prior to the defense. This gives them time to read it and to let you know if you need to make any changes before the defense.

Committee members should receive the FINAL version of the MA paper no less than two- weeks prior to the defense. Some faculty may need more time depending on other commitments - check with your committee members well in advance as to when they need the paper in order to review it before your defense.

Finally, you should be aware that the School requires the MA paper committee to make a recommendation regarding your status in the program and whether you should progress into the doctoral program. The Grad Studies Committee must seriously consider any negative evaluations. Usually, if students are not doing well, they will leave the program with an MA degree after the completion of the MA paper.

***Advice on Elective Courses***

Be sure to select enough elective seminars within sociology to meet the minimum units within sociology for the MA. Most students will take 38 credits in their first two years, so this still leaves units of additional elective credit that can be applied toward the doctoral degree. These could be additional courses in sociology, research apprenticeships or independent study within sociology, or coursework outside of sociology during the second year.

Be mindful of the requirements for the doctoral degree as well as the MA degree when selecting electives. Courses taken at the MA stage are also applied toward the doctoral degree.

Other things being equal, it is helpful in the second year to enroll in elective courses that will help prepare you for comprehensive exams (see page for third years for more details on comps). However, courses are useful for purposes other than comp preparation, and it is possible to comp in fields in which you have not taken a course. Enroll in a range of courses to expand your

knowledge of the discipline; but be aware that coursework now should be preparing you for the comps and dissertation.

The second and third years are a good time to arrange research apprenticeships (SOC 900) with individual faculty to receive hands-on training. Talk to faculty with whom you are interested in working to see if they have any research opportunities for you.

Be cautious about requesting independent study (SOC 699) with faculty. Independent studies are very time consuming for faculty, reduce student enrollment in regular course offerings, and on balance are an inefficient use of faculty time. Independent study is only appropriate in limited situations in which faculty agree to supervise reading and discussion on topics for which we do not offer relevant formal coursework. **Independent studies must be approved by the DGS.** It is not appropriate to arrange independent studies solely for the purpose of studying for comps.

Note you may take a maximum of 9 credits combined of SOC 900 and SOC 699.

***Preparing to Teach***

All graduate students must take the Teaching Seminar - a one-credit course, Soc 596C offered in the spring semester-if they plan to teach while a grad student.

Also note that you cannot teach until you receive your MA, and you cannot receive the MA if you have any incomplete courses on your MA Plan of Study. Thus, it is especially critical that students who hope to teach in the summer after their second year have completed *all* degree requirements by the end of the spring semester. The only exception is the student who comes in with an MA. They just need to complete Soc 596c to teach.

***Preparing for Comprehensive Exams***

In the spring semester, notify the DGS, the Manager of Administration, and the Program Coordinator of the written comprehensive exams you plan to take in the upcoming fall and spring semesters. Request to receive copies of previous exams, to help you prepare for the comprehensive exams. Please become familiar with the details surrounding the comps by reviewing the Handbook carefully. If you have questions, ask!

Students who enter with an MA (and were excused from the MA paper) sometimes elect to take the first written comprehensive exam in the spring of the second year instead. Please discuss and arrange this through the DGS no later than the fall semester of the second year.

## Tips for Third Years

***Program of Study Form***

You must complete and submit the ***Doctoral Plan of Study,*** indicating the courses you plan to apply toward your degree requirements, through "GradPath" at the beginning of your spring semester, by the end of January.

***Comprehensive Exams***

Most students take their two written comprehensive exams in their third year. The norm is to take one in the fall and the other in the spring, but you can to take both in the same semester if you prefer. You should consult with the DGS and your advisor prior to deciding on this option.

After you've passed two written comps, you do an oral comprehensive exam. The committee consists of four faculty members - the two graders of each of your two written exams. Typically, students do the oral comp at the end of the spring semester in their third year. You must coordinate a date and time (2 hours) with the four faculty serving on your committee, and be sure to reserve a conference room (Rm 407A or Rm 420). See the Program Coordinator or the Manager of Administration to make the reservation. Do not delay scheduling your defense, as it may be difficult to find a date and time that works for everyone, late in the semester. Many students and their committees now feel more comfortable having their oral exam on Zoom.

You must complete and submit a ***Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Committee*** form through "GradPath" upon passing your second written comprehensive exam. On this form you will need to indicate which faculty member has agreed to serve as the Chair. Please discuss this with your faculty members before you list a person as the Chair. Once the ***Doctoral Comprehensive Exam Committee*** form has been processed through "GradPath," your next step is to submit your ***Announcement of Doctoral Comprehensive Exam*** form online. This form must be approved by Graduate College, before you can take your oral comprehensive exam.

After your defense, your Chair will record the results on the ***Results of Comprehensive Oral Exam*** form through "GradPath" on behalf of the committee.

***Research Presentations***

Soc 595b (1), course trains sociology graduate students in the science and art of making effective research presentations. It also explores other ways that sociologists communicate professionally with peer and non-academic audiences, e.g., websites, op-eds, essays, articles, books, etc. All students will prepare and deliver research presentations of their MA papers or appropriate equivalent. This course will be offered in the fall semester.

## Fourth Year and Beyond

***Dissertation Proposal***

Students need to identify a dissertation topic, identify a chair and other committee members, and write and defend a proposal by the end of the spring of the fourth year. To make this happen, students should at a minimum identify the Chair of the Dissertation Committee during the fall semester of the fourth year, and the remaining committee members by early spring.

If you find you are having trouble coming up with a dissertation topic, consult with other graduate students AND with faculty. Faculty members usually have lots of ideas for dissertations in their areas. If you talk to a faculty member and their idea grabs you, you can then ask that faculty member to Chair your committee and go from there.

Don't be overwhelmed by the seeming magnitude of the task. A dissertation can be excellent with three substantive chapters plus an introduction and conclusion.

Some students form dissertator groups. If you're interested in being part of such a group, ask around about these. If there aren't any established or if they're already "full," consider starting one yourself.

A few samples of dissertation proposals are on file in the Sociology Graduate Library, Soc Sci 418. If you borrow a proposal, please **RETURN** it so others have the opportunity, to review them as well. If you wish to add your dissertation proposal to the Sociology Graduate Library for others to use, please do so after it has been accepted by your committee.

You must complete the ***Doctoral Committee Appointment*** form in "GradPath" once your committee is determined. Your dissertation chair and two other committee members must be members of the graduate faculty at the University of Arizona, however, faculty outside the U of AZ can be added as fourth members or even co-chairs. See the Graduate College's website about Dissertation Committee http://grad.arizona.edu/academics/program-requirements/doctor--ofphilosophy/dissertation-committee

Coordinate a date/time (2 hours) with your committee and reserve the date/time for Rm 407A or Rm420 with the Program Coordinator or Manager of Administration. Oral defenses and exams may occur in person or on Zoom.

Raquel Fareio will email you the **Sociology Proposal Defense form** (internal form) prior to the defense. After you have successfully defended your proposal submit your signed Dissertation Proposal form to the Program Coordinator or Manager of Administration. They will complete a *Dissertation Prospectus Proposal* form, to report to the Graduate College, that you have satisfied that requirement.

***Dissertation Proposal Workshop***

SOC 696D (3 units) guides doctoral students through the design and writing of a dissertation proposal. It offers practical experiences with proposal writing, obtaining IRB approval, conference presentations, and seeking funding. This course is offered every fall semester. Even though you may have taken the course in preparation for writing your MA paper, you may enroll in SOC 696D a second time (although you can only get course credit for it once).

***NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant***

Consider applying for an ASA-NSF Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant. It provides up to $16,000 for "expenses associated with conducting the dissertation research (e.g., data collection, field work, payment to subjects, survey expenses, software, microfilm, data transcription, file creation and data merging, courses on specialized skills such as those offered at ICPSR, travel, and expenses incurred at sites away from the student's home institution)." There is only one application deadline: November 1. https://www.asanet.org/academic-professionalresources/asa-grants-and-fellowships/asa-doctoral-dissertation-research-improvement-grants-asaddrig

Also look at the Marshall Foundation Dissertation Fellowships. They provide fellowships of approximately $10,846 to PhD students in the process of writing their dissertation. See, https://grad.arizona.edu/funding/opportunities/marshall-foundation-dissertation-fellowship-and-drmaria-teresa-velez-marshall. Application deadline is in mid-September. Late applications not considered.

There are many other foundations that provide research grants and fellowships to doctoral candidates. These include Spencer, Sloan, Ford, the American Bar Foundation, the Social Science Research Council and many others. Faculty and advanced graduate students are a great resource for suggestions about funders for particular substantive areas or topics. SBSRI staff members are another resource. If you put in a little time making inquiries and doing web searches, typically you will be rewarded with multiple opportunities. Since external grants and fellowships are hard to get, apply for multiple opportunities for which you are eligible. You can do this efficiently by reworking material on ONE basic project, so that it fits the format and guidelines of multiple agencies.

***Teaching***

If you are teaching for the first time, it likely will require a considerable amount of preparation and effort. It's important to do a good job but try not to let it interfere with your research.

Two suggestions to help you save a little time: First, if you know someone who has taught the course before, consider asking if you can borrow her/his lecture notes. Don't follow them to the letter, of course; you'll want to teach the course in your own way. But they can be a big help in preparing lectures. Second, build class participation into your lectures.

This is a good thing to do in any case; it tends to help students learn. Samples of syllabi are on file in the Sociology Main Office. See the Program Coordinator to request a copy via email. You may also scan them for your records but do not remove them from the office. **RETURN** all syllabi to their proper files in the Main Office.

***Job Market***

When should you go on the market? Consult with your dissertation advisor (and others) about this and notify the DGS and the Program Coordinator.

Notify the Program Coordinator that you would like to be added to the "PhDs on the Market" link on our sociology webpage. Ideally you should have a homepage to link too, but at the very least you need an up-to-date C.V. The principal way to find out about job openings is via the ASA's online "Job Bank." You have to be an ASA member to access the listings.

In the spring of every year, the DGS offers a one credit job market workshop, **SOC 595c**. You should try to time it so that you take this seminar in the year **before** you are on the job market or even two years prior. The job market workshop will include everything from deciding what job market niche you want to target, writing cover letters and application materials, “dos and don’ts for negotiating the job market and interviewing, etc. In short, this course familiarizes sociology doctoral candidates nearing completion with job market processes. Students receive training in

developing effective job market materials, in effective interviewing and negotiation techniques and in job-market related professional norms and ethics.

***Reference Letters***

When you get to the point of applying for academic jobs, you'll need three letters of reference. It's helpful to think about whom you'd like to have letters from before you get to that point. Your dissertation committee chair obviously should be one. Other members of your committee also are logical choices, though in some instances they might not be the best choices. Whoever your choices are, be sure they know a good bit about you before you ask them to write a letter. You want the letter they write to be an informed and detailed one, not simply a short "form letter." At a minimum, that means you should have had more contact with them than one or two brief chats and a dissertation proposal defense.

The Program Coordinator will inform you of the procedures that you need to follow so they can process your reference letters in a timely manner. You'll need to give them a list of names, addresses, and deadlines in an Excel file. They will provide you with a template on how to set up your data. Because many employers are doing everything on-line, faculty often will be solicited directly and then asked to upload their letters from their computer. If there is something special or peculiar about a job, please be in contact with your letter writers so that they can edit their letter accordingly.

Sociology has covered the postage costs for academic job applications. The applications are mailed by the school through regular USPS mail. If you choose to express mail your applications, Sociology **cannot** reimburse you – that would be at your own expense. Today, however, most employers solicit materials online which makes things much easier.

***Job Talk***

Early in the semester when you begin applying for jobs, you should request that the DGS schedule a full version of your job talk for the School (faculty and graduate students). You will want to give your "practice job talk" sufficiently in advance of potential interviews so that you can alter your talk in response to the thoughtful and experienced recommendations of those who attend your practice job talk. This will help you to "ace" your job talk when it counts. Some students plan to find employment in teaching schools or in non-academic settings. All students, regardless of their target market, are invited to make job talks.

***Announcement of Final Oral Defense***

You must complete in "GradPath" your ***Announcement of Final Oral Defense*** form at least 2 weeks prior to your defense date. Coordinate with your committee a date/time (2 hours) for your defense. To reserve Rm 407A or Rm 420, see the Program Coordinator or Manager of Administration. Again, some students and committees may feel more comfortable having the final oral on Zoom.

Notify the Manager of Administration, Raquel Fareio, if you plan to participate or not participate in the SBS College Convocation. She will notify the SBS staff accordingly. **Note: SBS only has ONE convocation for MA and PhD students, which takes place in May**. If you foresee

finishing the program in fall, consider participating in the convocation in the prior Spring semester or after.

Provide the staff with your new mailing address, phone number, and email address, once you are settled into your new job. This information is essential, should you need to be contacted, about university business following your departure.