SCHOOL OF SOCIOLOGY

Graduate Program Handbook

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

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This guide was last revised on October 14th, 2026. The most recent version is available on the school website: https://sociology.arizona.edu/graduate/resources.

The requirements set forth in this handbook apply to students entering the graduate program of the School of Sociology. The requirements for the minor in Sociology apply only to students entering the program in the fall of 2020 and thereafter. This document also contains some additions and clarifications that apply to all current graduate students. Students are responsible for knowing and following these requirements as well as knowing Graduate College (https://grad.arizona.edu/policies) and University policies (https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/general-academic-policies/all-general-academic) Minor revisions maybe made throughout the year. The School will notify students of any further revisions.

In addition, the Graduate College (https://grad.arizona.edu/) sets policies applying to all graduate programs across the university. Likewise, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences (https://sbs.arizona.edu/), which houses the School of Sociology, sets policies pertaining to its units. Students should consult the websites of these divisions to familiarize themselves with general requirements, regulations, and procedures.

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Abbreviations

ABD: All-But-Dissertation
DGS: Director of Graduate Studies
GSAS: Graduate Student Academic Services
GSC: Graduate Studies Committee
UA: University of Arizona
GrADS: Graduate Admissions & Degree Services

Overview

Program Structure

The PhD program in Sociology at the University of Arizona includes the following stages:

1. *The Master's Program*: The master's program is the first step towards the PhD. MA requirements consist of coursework and a master's paper and must be completed within two years. After completing MA requirements, the MA committee will make a recommendation about whether a student should formally advance to the doctoral program.

2. *The Doctoral Program*: Students in the doctoral program will: complete additional course requirements, pass written and oral comprehensive exams in two subfields, defend a dissertation proposal, and complete and defend the dissertation. Most students complete their comprehensive exams and most additional coursework during the third year. Doctoral students should defend a dissertation proposal no later than the fourth year and should complete the dissertation within an additional one to three years, depending on the research design.

   In totality, the master's and doctoral programs are subsets of a *single* program for the PhD degree. All requirements for the MA are also requirements for the PhD. Although we award an MA degree to doctoral students who don't already hold an MA degree in Sociology on the way to the PhD, we only admit students to our PhD program. There is no terminal MA degree program.

   Upon matriculation, most students will formally enter the master's program and will transfer to the doctoral program upon completion of MA requirements. Admitted students who have an MA in sociology from another institution will immediately enter the doctoral program. However, such students will still need to complete most of the requirements for our master's program, as these are also requirements for the PhD (see section IV). The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will also review their MA thesis or paper and determine if it fulfills the MA paper requirement.

Administration

3. The DGS is a member of the graduate faculty in the School of Sociology (see Appendix for the list of graduate faculty in Sociology).

The DGS is responsible for developing and interpreting graduate program requirements and administering academic affairs including advising, committee appointments, and evaluation of student progress. The DGS works in consultation with the school's Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) and the director of the school. Any exceptions to program requirements *must* be approved in writing by the DGS (and, where warranted, the school director and/or the dean of the Graduate College through GradPath).

4. Petition process: Students who believe, with good academic reason, that they deserve redress or exception to Graduate College or Sociology graduate program rules, regulations, or policies can formally petition for an exception. A petition form must be submitted to the GSC or the Graduate College Degree Certification Office explaining all relevant facts. Petitions regarding the student's degree program must be signed by the major advisor and department head, while petitions concerning a course must also include the instructor's signature. The petition must be accompanied by supporting documents and a letter of support from the student's major advisor, director of graduate studies, or department head. The Graduate College Petition is available through GradPath (https://grad.arizona.edu/degree-services/gradpath).

5. Appeals process: Students may appeal any decision made by the DGS and/or the GSC by requesting a review within 30 days of the decision. Requests and supporting documentation should be submitted in writing to the DGS and copied to the school director and the Graduate Coordinator.

6. Grievance policy: Should a graduate student feel he or she has been treated unfairly, there are a number of resources available. With few exceptions, students should first attempt to resolve difficulties informally by bringing those concerns directly to the person responsible for the action, or with the student's graduate advisor, the department head, or the immediate supervisor of the person responsible for the action. If the problem cannot be resolved informally, the student may be able to file a formal grievance. For more information on Graduate College grievance procedures, see https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies/grievance-policy.

7. The Graduate Coordinator(s), staff in the School of Sociology, are the main point of contact for routine administrative aspects of the graduate program.

8. Most of the "paperwork" related to graduate program requirements and progress is administered electronically via the GradPath system. A couple of forms are internal and are available from staff. For further details on GradPath forms and procedures, see the "Tips for New Grads" handout (also available on the school's website) and the Graduate College's GradPath website (https://grad.arizona.edu/degree-services/gradpath). General questions about degree requirements and procedures can also be directed to the degree counselor in Graduate Admissions & Degree Services (GrADS), https://grad.arizona.edu/directories/studentsupportspecialists.html

The Master's Program in Sociology

The master's program is the first stage of the PhD program and is designed for students who intend to complete the doctoral degree. Coursework and an MA paper are the core requirements of the master's program.

Enrollment and Residence Requirements

Students receiving financial support from the School of Sociology must be registered for at least 9 units during each semester of enrollment in the master's program. Note this exceeds the UA minimum requirement for full-time status.

Enrollment must be continuous, unless a formal leave of absence is granted by the Graduate College.

Students should also plan to be physically in residence during the fall and spring semesters. MA-level courses in the school meet face to face, and it is not possible to complete degree requirements long- distance.

Students who are receiving financial support from other sources and/or who are subject to international visa restrictions may need to meet additional enrollment or residence requirements. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and arrange to satisfy requirements of both the university and external agents such as funders or visa regimes. More information on UA policy on full- time status available here: https://catalog.arizona.edu/policy/registration-tuition-fees/registration-enrollment/enrollment

Course Requirements

9. The master's degree requires a total of 32 units of credit for 500/600-level courses offered by the graduate faculty in the School of Sociology.

Students should indicate the courses they intend to apply toward the master's degree on their MA Plan of Study form in GradPath. This should be done in consultation with their major professor/advisor during the first year (and can be updated, as needed).

10. 13 units of credit toward the master's degree must include the following (referred to as "core" courses):

Soc 500a	Sociological Theory	3 units
Soc 570a and 570b	Social Statistics I & II	6 units (total)
Soc 575	Social Research Methods	3 units
Soc 595a	Graduate Study in Sociology	1 unit
Soc 910	Master's Paper	1 unit

A particular core course can be waived if (1) the student has taken the course or its equivalent in graduate work elsewhere with a grade of B or better, (2) the student has a 3.5 average in all graduate courses in sociology taken elsewhere, *and* (3) an Arizona graduate faculty member designated by the DGS attests to these facts and so informs the DGS in writing. Waiver of the statistics requirements (570a and 570b) also requires passing a written exam.

Waiver of a required course does *not* reduce the total number of credits required to receive the degree; rather the waived course can be substituted with an additional elective course in sociology.

11. The additional 18 units of credit applied toward the MA minimum requirements normally will be restricted to 500- or 600-level courses in Sociology. Eligible courses are subject to the following restrictions.

a) Some courses listed at the 500-level in the Graduate Catalog are co- convened undergraduate/graduate courses (also listed at the 300 or 400 level). Credit for such courses cannot count toward the MA.

b) Courses from other departments at UA can only be applied toward the MA with the approval of the DGS, in writing, prior to registration for the course. Students should not assume that a course will automatically apply to the MA just because it was approved previously for another student. The DGS will consider the request holistically in light of the student's master's program of study and progress in the program.

c) Transfer credits will normally be treated as extra-school electives and should be applied toward the doctoral degree but not the MA degree. The DGS will consider requests to apply transfer courses toward the MA minimum credit requirements, but the course must be equivalent in rigor and substance to 500-level seminars offered by the School. When courses applied toward the MA are also applied toward the doctorate, such courses will count toward the 12- unit total maximum of combined extra-school credit that can satisfy doctoral program requirements. See also sections III.D and IV.

12. The School strongly recommends the following two courses, which students can apply toward minimum unit requirements for the MA.

    a) 596c, a 1-unit teaching seminar, is not required for the MA but is required for the PhD. We strongly encourage s*tudents to take it during the second year in the MA program*. To teach, students must both have an MA degree *and* have taken this course. We expect students to be able to teach independently after advancement to the doctoral program (whether they will need to do so depends on funding allocations and school needs; see section VII).

    b) 696D, Research Practice Workshop, is a 3-unit seminar that students can take during development of the MA paper and/or the dissertation proposal (students can repeat the course for credit but only apply it once toward minimum requirements for advancement to candidacy, see section III).

13. Students will typically take *more* than the 32 units required for the MA during the two years of enrollment in the master's program. MA-level students receiving support from the school are required to enroll in at least 9 units of credit per semester, that is, 36 units over four semesters. Three additional one-unit courses, e.g., SOC 595a, SOC 596c, and SOC 910, will bring the total earned during the first two years to 39 units.

    Thirty units from the MA Plan of study may be applied toward the PhD. Therefore, students should consider the requirements of the doctoral program when they select additional electives (see section III).

14. The timing of MA program coursework is typically as follows: In fall of the first year, students take Sociological Theory (500a), Graduate Study in Sociology (Soc 595a), and the first semester of Social Statistics (570a). In spring of the first year, students take Social Research Methods (Soc

575) and the second semester of Social Statistics (570b). In fall of the second year, most students take the Research Process Workshop (696d). In spring of the second year, most students take the Graduate Teaching seminar (596c). Students take electives each semester around these courses. See the rubric on the last page for a visual guide to the scheduling of coursework.

Grade Requirements

15. The student must maintain a grade point average of 3.5 or better on all coursework completed in the school and counting toward the 32 units required for the master's degree.

16. Courses identified as required in the master's program, except SOC 910, must be completed for graduate credit, that is, with a grade of A, B, or C.

    Instructors for Soc 910 assign grades of "S" (superior), "P" (pass), or "F" (failure).

Incompletes

Here are the rules governing incompletes: https://registrar.arizona.edu/faculty-staff-resources/grading/grading-policies/incomplete. In addition, students who take an incomplete must complete a form that has their name, the course number, what is still due, and when it is due. The student and instructor must sign this form at the time the incomplete is recorded with the Registrar. See the Graduate Coordinator for the form and return the form to them.

If a student takes an incomplete in SOC 570A, they must complete the work before the first day of classes in January if they want to take SOC 570B the following semester.

Disability Resources

The School of Sociology aims to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Graduate students who require accommodations in their graduate courses must first register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will communicate with instructors about course-related accommodations. For more information, see: https://drc.arizona.edu/.

Master's Paper Requirement

17. The required Master's paper is a School requirement that students must fulfill before receiving a Master's degree, teaching as the instructor of record, or advancing to Ph.D. candidacy. However, the Master's paper is not a formal thesis as defined by the Graduate College (see the Graduate Catalog) and thus is not filed with or reviewed by the Graduate College.

18. In the second year of the program, students must register for Master's paper credit (Soc 910). They should register in the section supervised by their major professor/advisor.

19. The purpose of the master's paper is to demonstrate that the student can meaningfully relate sociological theory and evidence. Therefore, the paper must contain both (a) a theoretical argument and (b) evidence (i.e., data or findings) that speaks to that argument. The paper should be journal- length (i.e., approximately 25 to 40 pages including references, figures, and tables), include a cover page and abstract, and be a self-contained piece of scholarship that is the original work of the author. The paper should be prepared in either ASA or *Social Forces* format (see current issues of the *American Sociological Review* or *Social Forces*).

    The paper may be inductive or deductive in form and may use any of the accepted types of sociological evidence, including but not limited to survey, archival, experimental, computer simulation, field observational, historical, or comparative case study methods. The paper may use original evidence collected by the author or an original analysis of secondary data but should have been largely carried out by the student after beginning the master's program.

20. The student's MA committee will conduct an oral exam of the master's paper after the committee chair has judged it ready to defend. The student must pass the oral examination to fulfill this requirement for the MA degree.

Master's Paper Committee

21. There are three members of the master's paper committee (also referred to as the "MA committee"). When the student is ready to begin working on the master's paper, he or she asks a member of the graduate faculty to chair the committee. The MA chair is by default also the student's major professor/advisor and formal advisor.

The student, in consultation with his or her chair and the DGS, then asks two additional faculty members to serve as members of the committee. Normally all three members of the committee should be graduate faculty in the School of Sociology. Exceptions must be approved by the DGS.

22. Students must form the MA committee by November 1 in the student's second year in the program. An internal MA Committee form for reporting committee membership is available from the Graduate Coordinator. Students must complete and return this form to the Graduate Coordinator before submitting the Master's/Specialist Committee Appointment Form in GradPath.

23. The MA committee conducts the final oral examination on the master's paper. This should be scheduled during the spring semester of the second year in the program. Students will receive an internal MA completion form that confirms the final MA result and a recommendation for candidacy. Students must present this form to the committee on the day of the defense. It is then completed by the committee and submitted to the Graduate Coordinator.

Continuation and Advancement to the Doctoral Program

24. Students should complete the MA program within four semesters. The DGS must approve any extensions.

    Students registered with the DRC do not automatically receive additional time to complete the MA. However, the DRC will work with students on a case-by-case basis if the student believes that their disability warrants additional time to complete the MA.

25. If a student fails to satisfy the above requirements or to make satisfactory progress on the MA, the school may recommend to the Graduate College that the student be disqualified from the program (and hence will be ineligible to proceed onto the doctoral program). Procedures for appeal of such decisions are outlined in Section VI. C.3.

26. At the MA defense, the MA committee will make a recommendation regarding whether the student should proceed to the doctoral program or leave with a terminal MA degree.

27. Upon completion of the master's program, the GSC will evaluate the student as to whether the student's overall performance is of sufficient quality to warrant advancement of the student to the doctoral program.

If not, the school may recommend to the Graduate College that the student be disqualified from the program (and hence will be ineligible to proceed onto the doctoral program). Procedures for appeal of such decisions are outlined in Section VI.C.3.

The Doctoral Program in Sociology

Requirements for the doctoral program consist of all requirements for the master's program (which automatically transfer to the doctoral program) plus some additional requirements. During the first stage of doctoral study, the student completes additional coursework and both written and oral comprehensive exams.

Next, the student "advances to candidacy," once they have successfully passed the oral comp exam and have completed almost all of the coursework listed on the Ph.D. Plan of Study. After completing, defending, and filing the dissertation, the student is awarded the PhD degree. The requirements below will apply to the vast majority of doctoral students. Exceptions are possible when warranted for the student's professional development as a sociologist but must be approved in writing by the DGS. Discuss any potential exceptions with the DGS *before* proceeding with such a program of study.

Enrollment and Residence Requirements

Students receiving financial support from the School of Sociology must be registered for at least 9 units each semester until they have advanced to candidacy. Note this *exceeds* the UA minimum requirement for full-time status. Students may reduce enrollment to 6 units in their final semester prior to advancement to candidacy, *if and only if* they can complete remaining course requirements with fewer than 9 units. This could apply to students who have transferred credit from a prior graduate program, or who have taken extra courses during previous semesters. Most students will need a full 3 years to achieve ABD status (see section B below).

Once the student has advanced to candidacy, students receiving financial support from the school may reduce their enrollment to 6 units per semester of dissertation credit (Soc 920), which will allow them to maintain full-time status and eligibility for assistantships. Students who do not need full-time status or financial support can reduce enrollment to 3 units per semester until they have completed 18 dissertation units, and 1 unit per semester thereafter. Students who plan to graduate in summer and who are not in need of dissertation units can do no-fee summer enrollment in Grad 922.

Enrollment must be continuous unless the Graduate College grants a formal leave of absence. See the following links for more information on UA policy on full-time status (https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/enrollment-policies) and continuous enrollment (https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/enrollment-policies/continuous-enrollment).

Students who are receiving financial support from other sources and/or who are subject to international visa restrictions may need to meet additional enrollment requirements. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and arrange to satisfy requirements of both the university and external agents such as funders or visa regimes.

After students have completed degree requirements that involve in- person coursework and examinations, they may complete their degrees while residing elsewhere, unless their funding arrangements require residence. However, we recommend that students remain in residence throughout the doctoral program, as a permanent move away from the university limits access to advisors, peers, and the everyday academic environment of the school; and restricts opportunities for financial support.

Total Course Credit Requirements for the Major, Minor, and Doctoral Degree

28. The Graduate College requires doctoral students to complete coursework for both a "major" field and a "minor" field before advancement to candidacy for the doctoral degree (the major and minor field can be the same). All doctoral students admitted to the PhD program will major in Sociology. Most will also minor in Sociology, but they can opt to minor in another department at UA.

29. The major in Sociology requires 45 units of course credit.

30. The minor in Sociology requires 12 units of graduate level courses in the School of Sociology. Requirements for minors in other fields are set by the department offering the field.

31. All doctoral students must complete 18 units of Soc 920 dissertation credit (after advancement to candidacy).

32. Students should complete course requirements within three years of full-time enrollment. The combined major/minor in sociology involves 57 units of course credit. This can be completed within three years at a pace of 9-10 units per semester (3 three-unit

courses each semester, plus 3 one-unit requirements- 595a,596c, 595b- over three semesters).

33. All units of required course credit for both the major and the minor must be completed before advancement to candidacy for the doctoral degree.

34. Students must indicate the courses they intend to apply toward the major and minor on the doctoral Plan of Study form in GradPath (it can be updated as needed). This should be done in consultation with their major professor/advisor during the first year of advancement to the doctoral program, and well before scheduling the oral comprehensive exam.

Grade Point Average Requirements

35. Students must maintain a grade point average of 3.5 or better on all coursework completed in the School of Sociology.

36. Required courses and elective seminars applied toward the major or minor must be completed for a grade, that is, with a grade of A, B, or C. Soc 699 and Soc 900 units may be graded on an alternative scale and must be awarded a grade of S (superior) or P(pass) to count toward the degree.

Distributive Course Requirements

All sociology doctoral students, regardless of minor field, must complete the following coursework prior to advancement to candidacy.

37. **15 credits from required core courses**

Soc 500a	Sociological Theory	3 units
Soc 570a and 570b	Social Statistics	6 units (total)
Soc 575	Social Research Methods	3 units
Soc 595a	Graduate Study in Sociology	1 unit
Soc 596c	Teaching Seminar	1 unit
Soc 595b	Presentation Seminar	1 unit

Students will normally take all courses except for 595b will during the first two years of study (while enrolled in the MA program, or immediately upon admission to the doctoral program for students

with Sociology MAs from other universities). Students should take Soc 595b during the fall semester of the third year.

Criteria for waiver of these requirements are detailed in Section II.C.2.

38. **Minimum of 12 credits from elective substantive seminars** (four 3-credit courses), selected from the following list:

Soc 505 (World-System Theory and Research)
Soc 508 (Sociology of Culture)
Soc 510 (Political Sociology)
Soc 515 (Social Movements and Collective Action)
Soc 520 (Sociology of Health & Medicine)
Soc 525 (Organizational Theory)
Soc 527 (Social Network Analysis)
Soc 530 (Structure, Action, Identity)
Soc 534 (Core Issues in Environmental Sociology)
Soc 535 (Environmental Inequality and Justice)
Soc 551 (Stratification and Class)
Soc 553 (The Family)
Soc 555 (Gender and Society)
Soc 557 (Gender and Labor Markets)
Soc 560 (Race and Ethnicity)
Soc 565 (Work and Professions)
Soc 583 (Law, Politics, and Inequality)
Soc 587 (Economic Sociology)
Soc 596A (various, including: Comparative Political Economy; Law and Society; Advanced Topics in Organizational Analysis).
Soc 596F (Theory and Research on the Nonprofit Sector)
Soc 596J (Advanced Topics in Social Movements Research)
Soc 600 (Sociology of Knowledge)
Soc 617 (Punishment & Society)

The DGS will announce additional courses that satisfy this requirement from time to time. Courses that fulfill this requirement must be taken in the School (transfer credits and cross-listed courses based in other programs do not apply).

We recommend that students take courses in areas that will prepare them for comprehensive examinations (see Section E below), but this is not required.

Note these are minimums, not maximums. We encourage students to take more than four substantive seminars. You can apply additional substantive seminars toward the additional 27 required elective credits described in point 4 below.

39. **Minimum of 3 credits of elective- advanced methods and statistics seminars** (one 3-unit course) from the following list:

Soc 501 (Computational Social Science)
Soc 511 (Formal Models of Cultural Analysis)
Soc 526 (Methods in Social Network Analysis)
Soc 552 (Advanced Topics and Methods in Stratification)
Soc 561 (Programming for the Social Sciences)
Soc 574c (Categorical Data Analysis)
Soc 576 (Field and Observational methods)

The DGS will announce additional courses to satisfy this requirement from time to time. Courses that fulfill this requirement must be taken in the School (transfer credits and cross-listed courses based in other units do not apply).

Note this is a minimum, not a maximum. We encourage students to take more than one advanced methods course. Additional methods seminars can be applied toward the additional 27 required elective credits described in section 4 below.

40. **27 units of additional elective credit**, subject to the following restrictions (reduced to 12 for external minors, all of which must be within the School).

a) **At least 15 additional units must be taken within the School of Sociology.** Cross-listed courses based in other departments do not qualify as courses in the School (even if they have a Soc course number).
b) Maximum of 9 units of credit *combined* of **Soc 900** (Research Apprenticeship) and/or **Soc 699** (Independent Study).

The School strongly encourages students to take Soc 900 research credits. These credits are for joint research with faculty that is NOT related to the MA or dissertation.

The School discourages students from taking Independent Study credit for purposes of studying for comps. Independent Study credits

are appropriate if the student is doing supervised reading and discussion with faculty members on topics for which we do not offer more formal course work.

c) **Maximum of 3 units of credit from 696d can be applied toward minimum elective requirements for advancement to candidacy.** Students who need to complete an MA in Sociology will normally take 696d in their second year, and this can be applied toward the PhD. They can repeat the course during preparation of the dissertation proposal, but this will normally be done in the fourth year, after advancement to candidacy. Students who enter directly into the doctoral program due to having an MA in sociology will normally not take the course in the second year but may take it in the third year in lieu of another elective.

d) **Maximum of 12 units of credit combined external to the School of Sociology, including:**

- Graduate coursework in other units at UA. This includes cross-listed courses based in another department, even if they have a Soc course number.
- Transferred graduate credit of any kind (maximum of 12 units and subject to approval by DGS; see section IV)

The School does not require or expect students to take courses in other units; they may take all elective credits in the School of Sociology. Courses in other units that are relevant to the students' sociological training and professional goals may be applied toward the sociology PhD requirements. Effective Spring 2016, the DGS must approve application of such courses toward the minimum course requirements for the sociology PhD. Students should contact the DGS prior to enrollment to verify that the course is eligible and receive approval in writing.

For non-sociology minors: This option to apply courses in other units to the sociology doctoral program does NOT apply to sociology majors who are minoring in other disciplines. Sociology majors with external minors must take all 45 units for the major in the School of Sociology.

e) **Incompletes**

The rules governing incompletes in the Graduate School are the same as govern coursework in Sociology see: https://www.registrar.arizona.edu/grades/incomplete-i-grade. In addition, students who take an incomplete are to complete a form that has their name, the course number, what is still due, and when it is due. The student and instructor must sign this form at the time the incomplete is recorded with the Registrar. See the Graduate Coordinator for the form.

f) **Disability Resources**

The School of Sociology aims to provide appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities. Graduate students who require accommodations in their graduate courses must first register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC will communicate with instructors about course-related accommodations. For more information, see: https://drc.arizona.edu/.

41. Coursework after advancement to candidacy

The School strongly recommends the following two courses designed for ABD students. These courses are not required and are usually taken after advancement to candidacy and so are not applied to the sociology major or minor.

a) Soc 696d (Research Process Seminar) is a 3-unit seminar that students usually take in the fall semester of the fourth year. Soc 696d may be taken during the third year (in which case it can be applied toward the Sociology major/minor elective requirements). However, 3rd year students should only take 696D if they can realistically focus on the dissertation proposal and defend it in the third year.

b) Soc 595c (Negotiating the Job Market, 1 unit): students usually take this course in the spring before they anticipate going on the academic and non-academic job markets.

42. There is no foreign language requirement for the PhD degree.

Comprehensive Examinations

Doctoral students must pass written comprehensive examinations in two areas within sociology and an oral examination covering both areas. Two areas are required for *all* sociology majors, regardless of the minor field. Students who elect to minor in another field outside of sociology will

complete an additional written examination in the minor, in which case the minor field will also be covered during the general oral examination.

The school normally expects that students complete the two written examinations and the oral examination by the spring semester of the third year in the graduate program.

43. Examination Areas

a) Regular examination areas

The School currently offers regular comprehensive examinations in the following areas: Criminology; Culture; Family; Gender; Global and Transnational Sociology; International Migration; Law and Society; Medical Sociology; Methods/Statistics; Networks; Organizations and Work; Race and Ethnicity; Science, Knowledge and Innovation; and Social Movements. Faculty working in those areas develop reading lists of scholarship that the student should master. Current reading lists are available on the School's website.

The GSC periodically reviews comprehensive examination areas. The areas that we regularly offer may change as the graduate faculty or their interests change.

b) Petitioned examination areas

In ***exceptional*** cases, the GSC permits a student to take an examination in an area that is not represented among the school's regular areas. To be eligible for approval by the GSC, a special exam area must meet several conditions:

(1) It must represent an area of disciplinary specialization, not a specialized subarea of an existing, regular exam area.

(2) At least two members of the sociology graduate faculty must have sufficient expertise to grade responses (if two sociology graduate faculty are unavailable, one member may be a graduate faculty member from another unit with relevant sociological expertise). At least one of the members must be willing to develop a reading list and draft the examination.

(3) The area must be equal in breadth to the regular examination areas. Examples might be an established field in sociology that is a minor area or specialization for several faculty but is not represented

among our regular examination areas, or an area of the student's own design that brings together broad knowledge from several existing examination areas to focus on a particular subject area.

Students who wish to take a comprehensive exam in an area outside of the regular areas must petition the GSC for approval. The petition must include: (1) a full justification for the special exam, which addresses how the exam meets the guidelines above; and (2) a letter of support from a graduate faculty member who is willing to chair the examination committee and to consult with the student in developing a reading list, and (3) the name of at least one other Sociology graduate faculty member willing to grade the examination, and (4) a proposed reading list.

A student who is interested in this option should check with the DGS well in advance for details. The petition with supporting documents and reading list should be submitted *at least* six weeks before the deadline for declaring examination areas in the following semester (i.e., by February 1 for fall exams and by September 1 for spring exams).

44. Written examinations

The purpose of comprehensive exams is for graduate students to demonstrate mastery over two (2) subfields in sociology. Students gain mastery over time as they read, write, and grapple with debates in the literature. The first written exam will take place in-person during a 6-hour period. Students will write 3 essay responses (approximately 1500-2000 words per essay) on a WiFi disabled computer, with no access to smart devices (phones, tablets). For the second written exam, students can take another in-person exam (3 essays, 6 hours) or they can write a review essay. We *strongly advise* students to consult with their major professor/advisor and with the DGS about the choice of fields and exam format.

Regardless of format, students should substantially engage literature on the reading list. Students are also welcome to discuss relevant scholarship that is not on the reading list, but this should be a supplement, not a substitute, for engaging works on the reading list.

Review essays have a maximum word count of 10,000 words, excluding references. Note this is a *maximum*, not a recommended length; many exams will fall in the 6,000-8,000 range. Greater quantity does not necessarily produce greater quality; students should take the space they

need to answer the question, and should strive to write in clear, focused prose.

Exams should be prepared in 12-point, double-spaced font, in Microsoft Word or Google Docs format. Exams of either format will be due during the same week each semester.

Students must work independently on exams of either format. They should not solicit feedback on drafts from faculty, peers, or anyone else. Each exam will be graded by a committee of two graduate faculty with expertise in the field, appointed by the DGS. Faculty will provide feedback on the written exams.

a. *In-person exam*

A committee of two graduate faculty with expertise in the area, appointed by the DGS, will prepare essay-style exam questions to give to students during comps week. Students will sign up for a 6-hour time slot, with a lunch break, to write their exams. Longer time slots across multiple days will be available for students with DRC accommodations. If more than one (1) student is taking an exam in the same area, then all students taking that exam must take it on the same day. Students will write 3 essays of approximately 1500-2000 words each for the in-person exam. Students taking an in-person exam should tailor their responses to the specific questions on the exam.

At the beginning of the exam, students will leave all smart devices (phones, tablets, etc.) and personal items with the Graduate Coordinator. Students will receive a clean copy of the reading list, blank scrap paper, and the exam questions. Students may bring in up to 2 double-sided 8.5" by 11" pages of notes (typed or handwritten – student's choice). At the end of each exam, the Graduate Coordinator will retrieve all written materials (including the completed exam responses from the WiFi disabled computer, the exam questions, the student's personal notes, and anything they wrote on the scrap paper) and will share de-identified exams with the faculty graders. Faculty who wrote the exam will be the graders.

Students registered with the DRC can receive additional time to complete the in-person written comprehensive exam if they have a disability that requires accommodations. The DRC will work with the student on a case-by-case basis to determine appropriate accommodations.

During exam week, students taking an in-person exam will be excused from other obligations for the day(s) of the exam. Otherwise, students are expected to continue to fulfill their other work requirements in the graduate program, including attending classes in which they are enrolled and performing assistantship duties.

b. Review essay

For the second written exam, students may opt to write a review essay that addresses the following general question.

> "What are some major theoretical debates, methodological hurdles, and substantive problems posed by scholars working in the field? How has the orientation of the field changed over time, and what are the major unsettled questions in the field that continue to inspire scholarly debates? The review essay should engage with at least two major issues in the field, and consider them from theoretical, methodological, and empirical perspectives."

The review essay gives the student flexibility in identifying significant questions and issues in the field. In so doing, the student should demonstrate broad knowledge of the field (and the reading list for the field developed by faculty) and avoid an excessively narrow focus. Students choosing the review essay option can start working on the paper whenever they like. They must save all files associated with their comps, from the time they start working on them, in a Google Drive subfolder set up by the Graduate Coordinator and shared with the student's arizona.edu account. The Google Drive will contain a Google Doc for the student's exam answers that will maintain a version history. We also recommend for the student to use the Google Drive subfolder to retain notes, outlines, and any other documents that might be useful for their writing process, although this is not required. Review essays are due at the end of comprehensive exam week, when the Graduate Coordinator will retrieve the completed exam responses and will share de-identified exams with the faculty graders.

Students opting for the review essay have more time and more license in determining how to discuss the issues in the reading list, but **the review essay must cover the full breadth of the reading list** (all subsections, but not all individual readings). Faculty expectations for coherence of narrative and argument will be higher for this format given that students have more time to develop the essay.

Students doing a review essay are informed of the examiners in April and October for the September and February comprehensive exams respectively, roughly four and a half months in advance. Students who want to write the review essay may communicate with the examiners soon thereafter to align expectations. Thus, students approaching their examiners should have some ideas about how to structure the exam already. This policy does not require that the student meet with examiners, only that they have the option to.

45. Timing of exams and declaration of intent to take exams

Written examinations are administered during a one-week period ("comps week") each semester (as long as the unit can accommodate all students taking comps within one week), usually around the third week of the semester. The exact timing will vary from year to year and will be announced by the end of the previous semester.

Students must defend their MA paper before taking their first comprehensive exam. Students who enter the program with an MA must have their MA thesis accepted in fulfillment of the MA paper requirement before taking their first comprehensive exam.

Most students take one written exam in the fall of the third year, and a second written exam and the oral exam in the spring of the third year. Students who enter the program with an MA must obtain permission from the DGS and their advisor to take comps before the third year. They must also notify the Graduate Coordinator by March 15 for fall examinations, and by October 15 for spring examinations. These students often take comps in the spring of the second year and fall of the third year.

Students may opt to take both exams in a single semester. Students must obtain permission from the DGS and their advisor about the advisability of this option.

Petitions to take comprehensive examinations outside the regularly scheduled exam periods will be approved only in cases of illness, family emergency or other exceptional circumstances.

Students must notify the Graduate Coordinator of the comp exam area or areas and the chosen format for each by March 15 for fall examinations, and by October 15 for spring examinations.

Switching areas or formats on short notice may not be possible, as the DGS appoints faculty examiners in advance, taking into consideration the distribution of student requests and faculty availability across fields to distribute the labor of writing and grading exams as evenly as possible.

Possible grades are pass or fail. A passing grade requires demonstration of comprehensive knowledge of the field and sufficient depth of understanding to advance to candidacy and begin work on a dissertation. Graders will account for exam format in evaluating the quality of the exam.

The faculty graders must report their decisions to the Graduate Coordinator within two weeks of the examination date. In the case of a disagreement about the exam grade, the DGS will appoint a third graduate faculty member to resolve the question. If a third grader is required, they will report the final grade to the DGS within one week after receiving the examination. Students receive comments from each of the two graders, but only the overall exam grade reached by the two (or three, if necessary) graders.

Students can retake failed examinations no later than the standard exam period in the subsequent semester. The examination graders must approve the timing of the scheduled retake. If the student failed an exam based on a review essay, the exam graders will determine whether the retake should be a revision of the review essay, or whether the student should be required to pass an in-person exam instead.

If a student fails an exam in the same exam area twice, or fails an exam in two areas, the student will leave the program at the end of the semester and will receive an automatic “unsatisfactory” annual evaluation. If the student wants to remain in the program, they can petition the GSC to be allowed to continue with the examination process. (Members of the GSC who also served as examiners will recuse themselves from consideration of the petition). The petition must include supporting materials from the student's major professor/advisor and the exam committee. If the GSC accepts the student’s petition, the student can retake the failed examination no later than the standard exam period in the subsequent semester and the GSC will evaluate the student per normal procedures. If the GSC denies the petition, the student will leave the program and will receive an “unsatisfactory” evaluation.

46. Oral examination

The oral part of the comprehensive examination is the last requirement prior to advancement to candidacy and cannot be scheduled before the requirements for both the major and minor have been met (or, will have been met by the end of the semester).

The oral comprehensive examination is conducted by a faculty committee composed of four (4) graduate faculty members. Ordinarily, the committee consists of the readers of each of the student's two written comprehensive exam areas. If one or more of the readers are on leave/sabbatical, or if one faculty member graded two fields, then the DGS will choose a replacement(s) in consultation with the student. If the student is minoring in a different department, the committee will include an additional member from the minor department. The student must ask one of the committee members to chair the committee and report the results. For Graduate College policies on composition of the committee, see https://grad.arizona.edu/degree-services/degree-requirements/doctor-philosophy#committee-appointment-form.

It is the student's responsibility to identify a mutually agreeable time for the oral exam with the committee members and to reserve space in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator.

Students registered with the DRC who need accommodations during the oral exam should work with the DRC to determine reasonable accommodations.

Scheduling the oral exam also requires two steps in GradPath. First, the student must submit the comprehensive exam committee appointment form. After the committee appointment form is approved, the student must then submit an additional GradPath form announcing the scheduled date of the oral exam. All of this should be completed well in advance, at least two weeks before the exam.

The oral comprehensive examination must last a minimum of one (1) hour and may last up to three (3) hours. Each faculty member on the committee asks the student a series of questions related to the student's comprehensive examination areas.

Examiners may probe weaknesses in the student's answers to the written examinations, pose new questions in the exam areas, and ask broad questions that emphasize integration and synthesis across the exam

areas. Students are encouraged to meet with committee members before the oral examination for guidance in preparing for the exam.

Upon passage of the oral examination, and provided that all course requirements have been satisfied, the student advances to candidacy.

If the student fails the exam, the GSC in consultation with the exam committee will determine whether the student should be allowed to retake the exam or be disqualified from the program. The student may appeal recommendations for disqualification as per the procedures in section VI.C.3. If a reexamination is permitted, the committee members must be the same as those present at the first examination, as per Graduate College policy.

The Doctoral Dissertation

All candidates for the PhD must write and successfully defend, in a final oral examination, a doctoral dissertation. The dissertation can be either a monograph or a collection of articles reporting original research carried out by the student. The body of work must contribute significantly to sociological knowledge in a specialized area.

Per the Graduate College guidelines "at the option of the student and the committee, an alternate format permitting inclusion of papers published or prepared for publication in scholarly journals may be used. The decision to allow the inclusion of previously published or submitted work in a dissertation is left to the candidate's degree-granting unit. The published or publishable work must be logically connected and integrated into the dissertation in a coherent manner. Simply binding reprints or collections of publications together is not acceptable as a dissertation in either format or concept.

Published/publishable papers should be included in the dissertation as appendices. Any paper or article that has been published or submitted for publication should reference the journal of submission so the reader can find the published article. However, in order to provide coherency, the dissertation must also include chapters that present a summary of the research, an explanation of the student's contribution if it was not individual research, and an explanation of how this research contributes to the student's field. The committee will guide the student in presentation of this summary material. If references are cited in the dissertation chapters, they should be reported in a References section that follows the chapters and precedes the appendices."

https://grad.arizona.edu/gsas/dissertations-theses/dissertation-and-thesis-formatting-guides

In addition, the School of Sociology requires that articles in an article-based dissertation must be sole-authored papers at the time of the defense. Some papers in preparation may be co-authored for publication after the dissertation has been received by the Graduate College.

There must be at least three articles in an article-based dissertation, although the student's chair and dissertation committee can petition the GSC for an exception to this requirement – ideally early in the process so that the GSC has time to adjudicate the petition, and not during the semester of the oral defense.

47. Dissertation credit

Completion of the doctoral dissertation is typically the last requirement fulfilled in the doctoral program. Students usually devote an entire year of their program, and sometimes more (depending on the style of research), to work on the dissertation. The Graduate College requirement that students must register for 18 units of dissertation credit reflects this expectation.

Upon advancement to candidacy, students must register for dissertation credit (Soc 920). They should register in the section supervised by their major professor/advisor, even if they have not yet selected a chair or defended a proposal.

Instructors for Soc 920 assign grades of "S" (superior), "P" (pass), or "E" (failure) each semester to indicate continuation status. (They should no longer assign a grade of "K". To receive an "S" or "P" grade, students must demonstrate progress. So, students should be in touch with their major professor/advisor each semester about their progress.) Upon completion of the dissertation and fulfillment of all requirements for the doctoral degree, the grade for Soc 920 is changed to indicate passage.

48. The PhD Committee

Work on the dissertation is supervised by a PhD committee composed of a minimum of three current University of Arizona faculty members who are members of the graduate faculty either in Sociology or another unit. The chair and at least one other committee member must be a member of the graduate faculty in the School of Sociology. Students may

have four members if there is a compelling reason to do so. More than four is generally impractical and not advisable.

"Special" members who are not graduate faculty at the UA may serve on committees, subject to approval of the DGS and Graduate College. Special members must be "fourth" members (because at least 3 UA graduate faculty must be on the committee). Special members may co-chair but not chair committees.

The student selects the PhD committee when they are ready to prepare a formal dissertation proposal. This will usually follow (but may precede) completion of the comprehensive examinations. Typically, the student asks their major professor/advisor to serve as chair of the committee, and the chair advises the student on selection of the remaining committee members. The DGS must approve the committee. Any subsequent changes in the committee are also subject to approval by the DGS.

49. The Dissertation Proposal Hearing

As soon as the student has a fully-developed dissertation proposal, the PhD committee shall meet with the student to discuss the proposal. The proposal should describe the research problem, its sociological significance, the theoretical framework, related empirical research, and the research design, including plans for data collection, analysis, and interpretation. The proposal should be of sufficient length and detail to allow the committee to evaluate the importance and feasibility of the project and the adequacy of the research design.

Students should work closely with the chairs of their Ph.D. committees in developing their proposals. The outcome of the meeting should be an explicit agreement amongst the student and all committee members about what the dissertation project will entail and how the student will carry out the work. After the proposal is approved, the student should provide a copy to the Graduate Coordinator, who will submit the dissertation proposal confirmation form in GradPath on behalf of the student.

50. The Final Oral Defense: The PhD committee conducts the final oral examination on the completed dissertation.

51. Filing the dissertation: See the Graduate College guidelines for policies and procedures regarding filing of the approved dissertation and receipt of the doctoral degree.

Policies on Prior Graduate Degrees and Transfer Credit

Role of Master's Program in PhD Program

Students entering our program with MAs will still need to complete most of the requirements for our master's program. This is because the master's program is a subset of and integral part of our PhD program and is not equivalent to terminal MA programs offered elsewhere.

The rationale for having a master's program as part of the doctoral program is: (1) it allows students without prior MAs to become eligible for funding that requires an MA (at rank of graduate associate, required to teach independently), (2) it allows students who for some reason do not complete the doctoral program to earn an MA for partial fulfillment of the requirements for the doctoral degree, and (3) it enables students to learn how to use theory and methods that will prepare them for completing the Ph.D. program in Sociology.

Program Status

52. Students with a prior MA in Sociology *cannot* earn an additional MA in Sociology from UA (this is a university regulation). Therefore, they will enter the doctoral program, but do much of the same work as students enrolled in the master's program.

53. Most admitted students with MAs in other disciplines will begin in our Master's program and earn an MA degree in Sociology on the way to the PhD. However, students with MAs in closely related disciplines may forego an additional MA degree and enter directly into the doctoral program. Such students should consult with the DGS about whether this is possible and advisable.

Transfer of Course Credits

54. Students who have completed prior graduate work may transfer a *maximum of 12 units* of credit toward the doctoral program. Any transfer credit must be approved by the DGS as equivalent in content and rigor to electives offered at the UA.

55. Transfer credits will normally be classified as electives completed outside of the School of Sociology (see III.D.4.c). That is, they cannot substitute for required courses and distributive course requirements within the School of Sociology. This is true even if the transferred

credits are sociology courses. Exceptions must be approved in writing by the DGS.

56. The DGS will only grant exceptions to the transfer credit maximum in exceptional circumstances, such as when students transfer to UA from a "peer department," i.e. they completed a non-terminal MA in Sociology as part of an equivalent or higher ranked doctoral program with a similar doctoral program design. The DGS will make determinations on allowable transfer credit for students transferring from peer departments on a case-by-case basis.

57. The procedure for transferring course credit is as follows.

a) The student first notifies the DGS of intent to transfer course credit and provides a syllabus (in English, translated if need be) and copy of transcript with course grade to the DGS. The DGS will confirm whether the course can be applied toward the doctoral program.

b) The student next formally applies to the Graduate College to transfer the credits. There is a form in GradPath for doing so (see the Graduate Coordinator for assistance).

c) Once approved by the Graduate College, the credits can be added to the doctoral Plan of Study (in GradPath).

d) Students should apply for credit transfer during the first year in our program. Transfer credits approved by the graduate college can be held in reserve, i.e., they do not have to be applied toward the doctoral Plan of Study immediately. Having the transfer credits approved gives students flexibility as they progress through the program in determining whether they want to apply them toward the formal Plan of Study.

Substitution of Prior Thesis for Master's Paper Requirement

Students who have completed a master's thesis at another university may submit it for approval as a substitute for the master's paper, since they will be entering directly into our doctoral program.

58. The prospective student should submit the thesis (in English) to the DGS after admission to the program. The DGS and at least one additional faculty member will rule on its acceptability. To qualify, the thesis must demonstrate an ability to bring data to bear on sociological ideas. For a description of our expectations for a master's

paper, see Section II. The DGS in consultation with at least one faculty member may decide to (1) accept the thesis as fulfillment of the master's paper requirement, (2) require revisions, or (3) require that the student write a new master's paper.

59. The master's paper is also a requirement for the doctoral degree. Students whose master's papers are not approved as substitutes for our requirement must write a new master's paper, even if they enter directly into our doctoral program (see point B on program status above).

The Sociology Minor for Non-Sociology Majors

The requirements for a minor in Sociology for PhD students from other departments at UA are as follows:

Course Requirements

Complete with a grade of B or better 12 hours of graduate-level courses in the School of Sociology. A maximum of 3 credits of research apprenticeship or independent study (Soc 920) can be applied to the minor.

Transfer courses and courses in other units at UA generally cannot be applied toward the sociology minor. This includes cross-listed courses in other home departments. Exceptions will rarely be granted (and for a maximum of 3 credits), and only when a course is equivalent in rigor and substance to 500-level courses offered by School of Sociology graduate faculty. Students should consult with the DGS well in advance of completing the minor to initiate the process of applying for approval, which can take some time.

Minor Comprehensive Exam

Sociology minors must pass a written examination in one substantive area of sociology. The written examination may be taken upon completion of the 12 hours described above or, at the discretion of the DGS, at any time during the semester in which they are registered for the courses necessary to complete the 12-hour requirement.

With the advice and consent of the DGS, the student may designate the appropriate area for the examination and identify a graduate faculty member in the School best suited to conduct the examination. It is the student's responsibility to identify a faculty member who is willing to write and grade the written exam (as well as to participate in the final oral comprehensive exam,

which will be organized by the student's home department). This should be done at least a semester before the student hopes to take the exam.

Students must notify the Graduate Coordinator of the comp exam area in which they wish to be examined and the desired timing of the exam in the beginning of the semester PRIOR to the initiation of exams.

This means October 15 for a spring examination date and March 15 for a fall examination date.

Minor Professor (or Advisor)

All students must have a minor professor (advisor) who is a member of the Sociology graduate faculty, who will approve the student's minor program of study. The minor professor (or advisor) is usually a faculty member with whom the student has taken a course and the faculty member who administers the exam (although this is not required). Students should consult with the DGS about identifying a minor professor.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidelines and Policies

B. Graduate Courses

Instructors of graduate courses will independently determine the AI policy for each graduate course. UCATT recommends articulating a clear AI policy in all syllabi. UA has 3 syllabus policy templates that instructors can use (https://ucatt.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/2023-08/Syllabus-Guidance-2.1.1.pdf). Graduate course instructors can also use the general AI guidelines under section VI. C.

C. Comprehensive Exams

The use of AI in comprehensive examinations is strictly prohibited. Any AI use in comprehensive examinations, including review essays, is a violation of academic integrity that faculty graders or staff will report to the Dean of Students.

D. General Guidelines for the MA Paper and Dissertation

The GSC developed the following general guidelines for AI use, which will govern MA papers and Ph.D. dissertations unless individual advisors explicitly articulate different guidelines for their advisees. Any AI use that these guidelines define as unacceptable, is a violation of academic integrity that faculty or staff will report the Dean of Students.

Research Task	Acceptable Uses	Unacceptable Uses
Record-keeping and Citation	- Maintain a record of what you enter into AI (save "chats," maintain version histories) - Use the following guidelines for acknowledging/citing generative AI: https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt	- Failing to maintain records of what you put into AI tools (deleting "chats" related to academic work) - Failing to cite or acknowledge use of generative AI
Qualitative Data Analysis	- Use QDA software (e.g., NVivo, MAXQDA, Atlas.ti) with embedded AI-assisted coding/visualization. - Use AI transcription programs (e.g., Otter.ai, Trint, Descript) for transcription.	- Uploading transcripts to generative AI for coding/theme generation (IRB violation). - Using AI to interpret participant responses without researcher oversight.
Quantitative Data Analysis	- Use AI to assist in writing repetitive code (e.g., syntax for cleaning data). - AI can suggest statistical functions or syntax, with student verification. - AI for data visualization assistance.	- Allowing AI to choose variables, define measures, or make analytic decisions. - Using AI to interpret results or generate conclusions.
Literature Review	- Use AI to generate summaries of articles as notes/reference materials. - Use AI for organizing thoughts/outlines. - AI to generate abstracts for sources missing them (e.g., law review).	- Generating a full literature review draft using AI. - Using AI to fabricate citations or references. - Copying AI-generated text directly into dissertation.
Writing & Drafting	- Brainstorming ideas, outlines, organizational structures. - Rephrasing sentences for clarity, conciseness, tone. - Editing for grammar, syntax, and English usage. - Reducing word count.	- Using AI to generate substantive sections (theory, methods, results). - Submitting AI-written text as original work.
Final Manuscript Preparation	- Include transparent statement on AI tool use (e.g., transcription, editing). - Use AI to check formatting/style consistency (APA, Chicago).	- Failing to disclose AI use. - Using AI-generated references (often inaccurate or fabricated).
Ethics & Compliance	- Disclose AI use in methodology/appendix. - Ensure alignment with IRB, university, and disciplinary standards. - Retain human responsibility for analysis/interpretation.	- Misrepresenting AI-assisted work as fully student-generated. - Entering sensitive data into unsecured AI tools without IRB approval. - Allowing AI to decide or justify ethical considerations.
Presentation & Communication	- Use AI to design figures, charts, or visual aids (with oversight). - AI for slide formatting or grammar editing.	- Creating fake results, figures, or visualizations. - Submitting AI-generated presentations without review.

Academic Advising, Progress, and Evaluation

The Major Professor and Academic Advising

The major professor/advisor serves as the student's faculty advisor and mentor. The DGS may designate a temporary major professor/advisor for incoming students. During the first year, students should select a major professor/advisor who must be approved by the DGS. Students may change major professors/advisors with departmental approval but are required to have a major professor/advisor to maintain Satisfactory Academic Progress.

1. Every student in our program must have a major professor/advisor from the graduate faculty in the School of Sociology. The major professor/advisor will counsel students on important issues related to graduate training (and advise on the master's paper or dissertation thesis, when serving as chair). The major professor/advisor will also evaluate student progress annually (along with other faculty with whom the student has worked). The major professor/advisor will also review and approve documents requiring signature by the major professor/advisor of record, such as committee appointment forms and human subjects protocols.

2. Students must meet with their major professor/advisor at least once per semester, preferably during the first few weeks of the semester. The meeting may take place via phone or Skype/Zoom if necessary.

3. The DGS will assign a temporary major professor/advisor to incoming students. Once a student forms an MA committee, the committee chair will become the major professor/advisor by default. Likewise, the PhD committee chair is the major professor/advisor by default. Students who have completed the MA but have not yet designated a PhD chair also need a major professor/advisor. The MA chair may continue as the student's major professor/advisor, but this is not required.

4. The major professor/advisor relationship is voluntary for both students and faculty. Faculty may decline to serve as major professor/advisor for a particular student, and students should feel free to change major professors/advisors as their interests and needs evolve. Students who need assistance with identifying a major professor/advisor or who wish to change major professors/advisors should consult with the DGS.

5. The major professor/advisor is formally identified as the advisor on the Plan of Study form in GradPath. After the student submits the change, both the DGS and the new major professor/advisor must approve the change. As a courtesy, students who elect to change major professors/advisors should inform the former major professor/advisor as to the change.

Satisfactory Progress

6. Satisfactory academic progress is required to remain enrolled in our graduate program. Criteria are as follows:

   a) Maintenance of a minimum 3.5 GPA in courses taken within the School of Sociology (in addition to the Graduate College minimum of an overall 3.0 GPA).

   b) Meeting minimum registration requirements (see sections II and III).

   c) Adherence to appropriate schedules for academic progress (as outlined below), including completion of degree milestones as well as timely filing of related forms.

   d) Submission of an annual self-evaluation report.

   e) Meeting at least once per semester with major professor/advisor.

7. Performance as a GTA/GRA

   a) Most students receive funding as a GA (graduate assistant) for 20 hours per week. GAs work as teaching or research assistants, and faculty supervisors evaluate their performance each semester. Satisfactory performance as a GA is an important component of satisfactory progress in the program.

   b) GAs sign a contract with the Graduate College. Violation of the written contract is grounds for an "unsatisfactory" evaluation and termination of funding.

   c) Problems fulfilling the GA role, when they do not violate the terms of the written contract, will lead to the development of an Expectation Review Plan (ERP) that brokers between the faculty member and GA, and communicates clear expectations and a timeline for improvement, with oversight by the Director, the DGS, and/or the DUS.

d) If the GA does not meet the expectations of the Expectation Review Plan (ERP), it may be grounds for an "unsatisfactory" evaluation, especially if the GA has been under an ERP with at least one other instructor or faculty member. We recognize that faculty-GA problems may be due to GA performance, faculty characteristics, or both. The GSC will consider the circumstances of multiple ERPs in the annual graduate student evaluation process in March.

e) GAs who have been under multiple ERPs can provide documentation and a statement explaining the nature of the problems that arose to the GSC to consider in the annual graduate student evaluation process in March.

8. Model schedule for satisfactory progress for students entering with a BA[1]

Timing[2]	Milestone
Year 1	MA Plan of Study filed with Graduate College; 3.5 minimum GPA in first year
Year 2	MA requirements completed (coursework and MA paper)
Year 3	Doctoral Plan of Study filed with Graduate College; written and oral comprehensive exams passed
Year 4	Dissertation proposal defended
Years 5-7	Dissertation completed and defended, all other requirements for degree completed

Deviation from the above schedule will not automatically trigger penalties. The Graduate College advocates a student-centered and compassionate approach to mentoring and degree planning that includes detailed, annual mentorship plans. Following this approach, the GSC takes into consideration individual circumstances such as dual degrees or minors in other units, faculty leaves, health, and family concerns. We can only take such considerations into account if we know about them. To protect individual privacy, there are many circumstances where we do not need to know specific details but require that an appropriate individual or office verify the extenuating circumstances. In their annual self-evaluation, the student must indicate that these issues impeded their progress in the program, but there is no need to go into the details of their family or health matters.

[1] Students who transfer 9-12 units of course credit may complete each milestone one semester sooner.
[2] Students should complete requirements in each year no later than the end of the spring semester. Students should not assume faculty will be available for summer defenses, although this is sometimes possible.

Students with personal/family/health matters that affect their progress in the program should contact the Dean of Students (DOS). The DOS can contact faculty to excuse absences and provide documentation to the GSC for their annual review if needed. Students with mental health needs can access services through Campus Health Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Disability-related accommodations are available through the DRC. Ongoing issues that cannot be resolved within a semester may warrant a formal leave of absence.

9. If a student does not make progress through the program for any other reason, the student should discuss the situation with both their major professor/advisor and the DGS, as well as explain delays and possible solutions in their annual self-evaluation. Slow progress coupled with a lack of communication with the major professor/advisor and the DGS greatly increases the risk of receiving an "unsatisfactory" evaluation.

10. Beyond the fourth year, satisfactory academic progress is mainly a function of progress on the dissertation, including professional development related to the dissertation (such as presentations, publications, grants). We expect the time needed to vary, depending on the student's research design, intensity of primary data collection, success on the job market, etc. Ideally students should complete their dissertations within two years of defending their proposals. Advanced students expecting to need more time should include in their annual self-evaluation reports a justification for additional time, including a detailed account of their progress and timeline for completion.

11. The Graduate College requires that the dissertation be completed within five years of passing the oral comprehensive exam, which is within eight years of beginning our graduate program for most students in sociology, as our students usually complete comps during the third year. If more than five years elapse, the entire comprehensive exam process must be repeated to remain enrolled in order to complete the dissertation. This is burdensome for both the student and the faculty, so this situation should be avoided.

12. Those who follow the schedule outlined in Section VI. B. 1 (for years 1-4) and VI. B. 4 (for years 5+) will be making satisfactory progress in the program. If they fall behind, but the GSC agrees that there were extenuating circumstances and the student has developed an individualized mentoring plan with their faculty advisor (see

Sections VI.B.3 and VI.B.4), then they too will be judged as making satisfactory progress.

13. Students who fall behind in the program must meet with their major professor/advisor and/or faculty members of the GSC, and develop a feasible written plan for getting back on track. The written plan will be individualized to the student's situation and where they are in the program. (For example, if a student is unable to defend their MA paper in the spring of the second year, they would work with their advisor to develop a plan to defend in the fall of the third year.) It does not prevent them from receiving funding.

Consequences of unsatisfactory academic progress

14. Determination of satisfactory progress is made by faculty members of the GSC through an annual evaluation process. Off-cycle notifications may also occur for various reasons, including if a student's GPA falls below the minimum requirements; if a student's MA committee does not recommend them for advancement to the doctoral program; if a student fails comprehensive examinations; or due to other major concerns.

15. Students who are not making satisfactory progress will lose their funding and/or the GSC may recommend that the Graduate College disqualify them from the program.

16. The GSC will notify the student and the student's major professor/advisor in writing if the student is judged to be making unsatisfactory progress in the program, and of any recommendations for termination. The student may appeal such decisions in writing within four weeks of notification. The student should provide a written rationale for the appeal, along with supporting documentation, to the DGS, and copy the Graduate Coordinator. The GSC will review the student's case and notify the student of its final decision within 15 working days of receipt of the request for appeal. If any member of the GSC is the student's major professor/advisor or otherwise works with the student in a role relevant to the recommendation (e.g., MA/dissertation/comp committee, supervisor for assistantship), they will be recused from evaluation of the appeal, and if necessary be substituted to ensure at least three faculty consider the appeal.

Annual Evaluations

All graduate students are required to participate in an annual evaluation process as a condition of continued enrollment in the program. The purpose of these evaluations is to assess satisfactory academic progress, support professional development, and inform decisions regarding funding, fellowships, and awards.

The process consists of the following components:

17. Student Self-Evaluation

    Each student submits a completed self-evaluation form, an updated CV, and, if applicable, a teaching self-evaluation. Students should also address any personal, family, or health circumstances that have affected their progress in consultation with their advisor and, when necessary, relevant campus resources. Students can contact the Dean of Students (DOS) for assistance in notifying faculty about the need to be excused for part of a semester or the need to withdraw for a semester. Students can also contact Campus Health, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) for assistance with mental health problems. Students who need disability-related accommodations should contact the Disabilities Resource Center (DRC). Graduate student self-evaluations are shared with their Chair/Advisor.

18. Faculty Evaluations

    Faculty members with whom the student has worked during the past two years. They provide evaluations on a 6-point scale based on academic performance, research progress, performance as a GTA or GRA, skills and competencies, progress in the program, and other relevant attributes. Faculty may also write comments explaining the basis for their evaluation. They are also invited to make comments to communicate directly with the student.

19. Graduate Studies Committee Review

    The DGS reviews data on each student and prepares a report for faculty members of the Graduate Studies Committee (student members of the committee do not participate in evaluations). The committee meets to discuss each student's academic progress in the program and to assess the student's professional development. If relevant, the GSC considers extenuating

circumstances that may have influenced a student's progress for the year. The committee makes a recommendation as to whether the student is making satisfactory progress for continuation in the program, what should be communicated to the student to facilitate their continued progress and professional development, and what is the student's priority ranking for funding, if beyond their guarantee (see Section VII).

20. Notification of Results

The DGS informs students in writing as to whether they are making satisfactory or unsatisfactory academic progress. If they are making unsatisfactory progress, the DGS will inform them of the reasons and what they must do to continue in the program. Specific student ratings and relative rankings will remain confidential.

Academic Progress and Professional Development

At a minimum, we expect that students will progress through the program requirements in a timely fashion. However, we hope the student will do more than the minimum to achieve their PhD. We also look for signs of professional growth in the areas of research, teaching, and service. These include:

21. High quality theses (MA and PhD)
22. Efforts and success at publishing in peer-reviewed journals
23. Efforts and success at receiving fellowships and grants, especially those external to the UA
24. Presentations at academic conferences
25. Merit in teaching, as assessed by the teaching self-evaluation
26. Service to the department, discipline, and/or community

Expectations increase the longer the student is in our program. Professional development is especially important for advanced students to be considered for continued funding. Priority will be given to students who excel in research, teaching, and service.

Financial Support

The School of Sociology provides financial support for graduate students in the form of assistantships and fellowships. We also encourage students to apply for external fellowships to support their graduate education.

Eligibility for Financial Support

27. Students who are making satisfactory academic progress are eligible for financial aid. Students who are not making satisfactory academic progress are ineligible for financial support.

28. Graduate assistants must meet minimum registration requirements (depending on stage in program, see Sections II and III).

29. Other sources of funding such as fellowships (internal or external) may have additional eligibility requirements; it is the student's responsibility to verify said requirements and comply with them.

Graduate Research Assistantships

Research assistantships are appointments to support faculty research and are usually selected and funded by individual faculty who have obtained grants. Faculty may hire any student who is eligible for continuation in the graduate program. Students should let faculty know if they are interested in an RA position, so that the faculty may consider hiring them when funds become available. Hiring decisions are a mutual agreement of faculty and student to work on a specific project.

An RA position is a contracted position. Violation of the written contract is grounds for an "unsatisfactory" evaluation. Other problems fulfilling the RA role may lead to an Evaluation Review Plan (ERP) with a timeline for improvement. Faculty can change RAs if a student does not fulfill their duties.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships

30. Teaching assistantships are appointments to either support faculty teaching (TAs) or to teach independent courses (instructors). TA assignments specify the number of hours per week (usually 10 or 20) that the graduate student must work to meet their contractual obligation.

31. A TA position is a contracted position. If a TA has a short-term inability to fulfill their responsibilities (1 week or less during a 15-week session, or less than ½ week during a 7.5 week session), they must notify their supervisor. If a TA is unable to work for a longer period, they must also notify the DGS and the Director of the School. Violation of the written

contract is grounds for an "unsatisfactory" evaluation and failure to fulfill TA duties can be a reason to suspend a student's funding.

32. Problems fulfilling the TA role, when they do not violate the terms of the written contract, will lead to the development of an Evaluation Review Plan (ERP) with oversight by the Director, the DUS, and/or the DGS. The purpose of the ERP is to resolve any differences in expectations and/or conflicts between the TA and the instructor of record. All ERPs will include a timeline for improvement. We recognize that instructor-TA problems may be due to TA performance, instructor characteristics, or both, but they often cause significant problems for students in their courses. TAs who do not improve performance after 2 semesters with an ERP, especially with multiple instructors, may receive an "unsatisfactory" evaluation and suspension of funding.

33. When available funding does not suffice to support all students who request teaching assistantships, the following criteria are used in hiring decisions:
(1) Outstanding commitments (conditional "guarantees");
(2) Student merit, based on ranking in annual evaluation process;
(3) Instructional needs of the undergraduate program;
(4) Years in program (more senior students have lower priority).

34. The School Director, in consultation with the Directors of Graduate and Undergraduate studies, appoints students to work as assistants or instructors for specific courses.

35. Students without an MA may only work as teaching assistants, not instructors. Students with an MA may work as assistants or instructors. Typically, the School does not ask students to teach their own courses during the fall and spring semesters until the fourth year. Students in the fourth year and beyond typically teach independently. However, if there are insufficient funds to support all such students, the School gives priority according to curricular needs and cohort year (4^{th} before 5^{th}, 5^{th} before 6^{th}, 6^{th} before 7th and so forth.) Sometimes, the School must call upon third year students to teach independently, so all third-year students should be prepared to teach independently if necessary. Similarly, given curricular needs, students in the 4^{th} year and beyond sometimes serve as TAs.

36. In assigning assistantships, the School tries to match TA assignments with student interests, but undergraduate program needs must come first. The School expects TAs to attend the courses for which they serve as TAs; therefore, schedule constraints are the main factor determining

TA assignments for students who are still taking courses. Likewise, in assigning courses to graduate instructors, the directors balance student qualifications and preferences against undergraduate program needs. Course scheduling must prioritize core requirements and elective courses that are in high demand by our undergraduates. Teaching assignments must also be consistent with Graduate College policy (https://grad.arizona.edu/funding/ga)

37. Students with disabilities who require workplace accommodations for their assistantships should contact the DRC and request *employee* accommodations (https://drc.arizona.edu/). The DRC will then work directly with the faculty supervisor to determine reasonable individualized accommodations. (For example, someone who is immune-compromised might need to teach online rather than in-person.)

Graduate Tuition Scholarship

Students who do not have an assistantship or other source that covers tuition may request a graduate tuition scholarship (or GTS). The school receives a limited amount of tuition scholarship funds from the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences. The School will allocate these funds based on need, progress in the program, and program ranking.

Students should inform the Graduate Coordinator if they would like to be considered for a tuition waiver.

Guaranteed versus Elective Funding

Each student enters the program with a given number of years of "guaranteed" funding, usually in the form of an assistantship and/or fellowship. Assistantships may take the form of teaching assistantships or research assistantships; both count toward the period of guarantee. Many students will not graduate within the time period of their guarantees. Students beyond their guarantees may apply each year for additional funding on assistantships, which will be funded on a competitive basis as resources allow. Guarantees are conditional based on availability of funding and satisfactory progress in the program.

External Fellowships and Banking of Guarantees

38. Students who receive prestigious ***external*** fellowships bring external resources and recognition to the School of Sociology. To incentivize students to apply for fellowships and reward successful applicants, the

School of Sociology will add ***one*** year onto the student's outstanding guarantee and allow the outstanding guarantee to be banked while the student is on fellowship. When the student returns from fellowship, the guarantee "clock" will restart (and cannot extend beyond the seventh year). **For questions or clarification of this policy, please reach out to the DGS.**

39. Qualifying fellowships should be awarded to the student through a competitive process from a nationally or internationally recognized source external to the UA. If the qualifying fellowship does not cover tuition, the student should petition the School for a GTS waiver.

40. Examples of qualifying fellowships include NSF Graduate Research Fellowships, the Fulbright IIE or Fulbright Hayes Fellowships and Ford Foundation Fellowships. The DGS, in consultation with the GSC, will decide whether a particular fellowship beyond those mentioned in this paragraph, qualifies as a prestigious external fellowship.

41. External fellowships as defined here do not include grants that fund only the cost of research (e.g., NSF Dissertation Improvement Grants); internal fellowships awarded by UA; or research assistantships on faculty grants.

Interim Policy on Banking of Guarantees

42. Students may request exceptions to allow deferral of guarantees during leaves of absence for reasons such as maternity leave, family/medical issues, etc. Decisions will be made by the school director in consultation with the DGS, and will be based on the student's prior progress in the program as well as the projected availability of funds.

Student Conduct and Welfare

Students are expected to complete the program requirements for their degree in a timely manner and be responsive to the Director of Graduate Studies, their major professor/advisor, and the Graduate Coordinator when contacted about their program. Students very often are paid employees of the university, as teaching and/or research assistants. They are to follow the directions of their supervisor and/or the Director of the School with respect to their work duties. Students also receive grants and fellowships and are responsible for monitoring and meeting the requirements of their funders. Of course, students are bound by the University of Arizona code of ethics for students and employees https://policy.arizona.edu/ethics-and-conduct/student-conduct. Students should be familiar with these rules.

At times students may become overwhelmed by the demands put upon them which may affect their mental and/or physical health. In this case, we recommend that students first go to their major professor/advisor and/or Director of Graduate Studies for help. However, to protect their privacy they are not obliged to. They should be aware of resources on campus that they could utilize (e.g., http://grad.arizona.edu/new-and-current-students). For mental health services, students should seek help from professionals on campus http://www.arizona.edu/health-wellness-students.

Students who believe that someone affiliated with the School of Sociology or the Graduate School has treated them unfairly, imposed unreasonable punishments with regards to program deadlines, or feel that faculty, staff, or other students are treating them in a hostile, demeaning, or disrespectful way are able to file a grievance against said party(ies). The School of Sociology does not have a formal grievance procedure, and, if appropriate, complaints should be taken to the Director of Graduate Studies and/or the School Director for resolution. The procedures for filing a formal grievance using the Graduate School's procedures can be found at https://grad.arizona.edu/policies/academic-policies/grievance-policy. Because of the sensitive nature of many grievances, the student should not hesitate to seek information from the Graduate School early on in the process bypassing School officials.

Typical Graduate Student Program in Sociology

First Year				**Second Year**			
Fall		Spring		Fall		Spring	
SOC 570A	(3)	SOC 570B	(3)	*Master's Paper*		*Master's Paper*	
SOC 500A	(3)	SOC 575	(3)	SOC 696D	(3)	Elective	(3)
SOC 595A	(1)	Elective	(3)	Elective	(3)	Elective	(3)
Elective	(3)			Elective	(3)	Elective	(3)
						SOC 596C	(1)
						SOC 910	(1)
Hours	10		9		9		11

Third Year				**Fourth Year and Beyond**	
Fall		Spring			
Comprehensive Exam		*Comprehensive Exam*		SOC 920 (18 minimum)	Dissertation
Elective	(3)	Elective	(3)	SOC 696D (3)	Fall
Elective	(3)	Elective	(3)	SOC 595C (1)	Spring
Elective	(3)	Elective	(3)	Additional Electives	As desired
SOC 595B	(1)				
Hours	10		9		

Electives must include:

- 4 substantive seminars in sociology
- 1 advanced methods seminar in sociology
- 3 additional elective seminars in sociology

Electives may include:

- maximum of 9 units of Soc 900 (research apprenticeship) or Soc 699 (independent study)
- maximum of 12 units of credit external to School of Sociology (can be any combination of transfer credits from other institutions and courses in other units at UA, including cross- listed courses based in another department).
- maximum of 3 units of 696d can be applied toward the minimum 57 units of coursework.

Total credits required for the PhD: 57 units of coursework, plus 18 Dissertation credits (Soc 920)

Appendix

School of Sociology Graduate Faculty, 2026-2027

Young Choi (Assistant Professor, Sociology)
Charles Jonathan Gomez (Associate Professor, Sociology)
Erin Heinz (Assistant Professor of Practice, Sociology)
Erin Leahey (Professor, Sociology)
Diego Felipe Leal (Associate Professor, Sociology)
Daniel E. Martínez (Professor, Sociology)
Brian Mayer (Professor, Sociology)
Daniel Menchik (Associate Professor, Sociology)
Mohana Mukherjee (Assistant Professor of Practice, Sociology)
Louise Roth (Professor, Sociology)
Jeff Sallaz (Professor, Sociology)
Yongren Shi (Assistant Professor, Sociology)
Samantha Simon (Assistant Professor, School of Gov. & Public Policy and Sociology)
Justin Strong (Assistant Professor of Practice, Sociology)
Taylor Winfield (Assistant Professor, Sociology)
Jane Zavisca (Professor, Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, SBS)

School of Sociology Graduate Affiliate Faculty, 2026-2027
*See School of Sociology website: https://sociology.arizona.edu/affiliate-faculty