

Department of Sociology  
Purdue University

# **GRADUATE HANDBOOK**

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## A. Introduction to the Sociology Graduate Program

The graduate program in Sociology at Purdue University is designed to prepare students to become well-rounded researchers, scholars and teachers. The program offers students a well-balanced theory and methods core curriculum and an individualized plan of study designed to train students to conduct sociological research at the forefront of the field. We also offer a number of opportunities for graduate students to become first-rate classroom instructors.

In addition to the core curriculum, our program offers concentrated training in six fields of sociological specialization: Family and Gender; Health, Aging, and the Life Course; Law and Society; Sociology of Religion; Social Inequality; and Social Movements and Political Sociology.

The first two years of the program, leading to an MS degree, focus on the core curriculum and one field of research specialization, and culminate in each student producing an original research product, the analytic project. Further study toward the PhD exposes students to other areas of specialization and emphasizes the development of greater depth of knowledge within the area that will be the subject of a student's major research product, the dissertation. In order to be successful on the job market students are strongly encouraged to publish and to teach as they work toward the doctorate.

A small student-faculty ratio provides graduate students with the opportunity to work closely with faculty members in their research, teaching, and publication activities. The department sponsors travel to professional meetings and a colloquium series featuring outstanding sociologists. The Graduate Committee organizes informal professional seminars and meetings to assist students in developing their plans for conducting research and teaching. The department maintains up-to-date computer hardware and software to assist the research process.

Most students in the PhD program teach their own classes at some point during their degree progress. Some teaching experience is nearly a requirement for the academic job market. Preparation for teaching is provided in part through assisting faculty in the classroom during the MS program and taking SOC 610 "Seminar on Teaching Sociology" during their second year in the MS program. In addition, students are encouraged to take advantage of graduate teaching certificates offered through Purdue's Center for Instructional Excellence.

## B. Admission Requirements

Purdue University seeks graduate students with diverse intellectual perspectives and experiences, and accepts students without regard to age, race, gender, ethnicity, creed, national origin, disabilities, or sexual preference. The faculty members of the Graduate Committee, selected to represent the department's faculty and interests, make admission and funding (financial award) recommendations to Purdue's Graduate School. The Graduate Committee evaluates each applicant in terms of potential for success as a graduate student in this particular department and potential for successful professional work in the field of Sociology.

### 1. General Requirements

There is a general **written English proficiency requirement** for all degree-seeking graduate students in Sociology. Incoming students are expected to fulfill the English proficiency requirement before beginning their graduate studies at Purdue. Students whose native language is English satisfy the requirement (a) by earning a grade of B or better in an undergraduate English Composition

course (or its equivalent) prior to graduate admission or (b) scoring 600 on the old GRE scale, or 160 as per the new (2011 and after) GRE score scale, or higher on the verbal section of the GRE. Students whose native language is not English satisfy the written English proficiency requirement if they (a) have completed an English proficiency test with valid scores or (b) 600, or 160 as per the new (2011 and after) GRE score scale, or higher on the verbal section of the GRE.

In addition to demonstrating proficiency in written English, as explained above, the Sociology department requires valid English proficiency test scores (e.g., the TOEFL iBT, see below) from all international applicants applying to the graduate program. The department will NOT waive this requirement even for applicants who have received a baccalaureate, graduate, or professional degree from a U.S. institution within the past 24 months & in addition the department MAY require those admitted to take Purdue's OEPP test.

Students admitted to the MS program must have completed a BA or BS degree. It is strongly recommended that applicants have successfully completed a sociological theory course, a social statistics course and a research methods course.

Students admitted directly to the PhD program must have completed an MA or MS in Sociology. Students with advanced degrees in related fields (e.g., family studies, law, gerontology, social work, theology, or applied Sociology) may be admitted to the MS program, but not the PhD program.

Students may begin the MS or PhD program **only during the fall semester**.

In addition to the electronic application and an application fee (see the Graduate School website for amounts) several; additional types of information are required for an application file:

**Grades:** Transcripts for all previous undergraduate and graduate work are required. A minimum 3.0 ("B") undergraduate cumulative GPA is required for admission.

**Aptitude Test Scores: Graduate Record Examination (GRE)** scores are required for all applicants. The **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)** exam is required for international non-native speakers of English with a minimum acceptable score of 25 on the speaking section of the exam. Students may also take the **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)** and are required to score a minimum of 8 on this exam.

**Letters:** Three letters of recommendation are required. The letters should be from persons who can assess your academic potential such as a college or university professor. Please do not include letters from employers, academic counselors, or individuals in the community.

**Personal Statement:** A brief statement of scholarly interests is required. Your statement, approximately 300-500 words long, should indicate your purpose for undertaking graduate study and professional work in Sociology. The statement should also identify the area(s) of concentration or specialization that attract you to the Sociology program at Purdue.

**A Diversity Essay:** See the Graduate School web page for instructions. These are needed in case the Graduate Committee submits your application for special fellowship opportunities.

**Writing Sample:** A paper or manuscript-length writing sample (more than five pages) should be included (e.g., a course term paper, senior thesis, master's thesis or journal manuscript, especially a paper that addresses a question or problem, presents evidence or arguments, and draws conclusions based on the evidence or arguments). The paper can come from a field other

than sociology though a sociology paper is preferred. The writing sample should be the student's own work, not coauthored writing that has been prepared in collaboration with mentors or colleagues.

**Current Curriculum Vita:** A CV showing educational background, work history, publications or presentations (if any), interests within sociology, honors, etc. These are needed if the Graduate Committee submits your application for any special fellowship opportunities.

## 2. Requirements for International Applicants

In addition to the general requirements listed above, international students should consider the following:

### ***Aptitude Test Scores:***

All required test scores must be transmitted to Purdue University by ETS prior to the application deadline shown on the website. The institution code for Purdue University West Lafayette is 1631. Because ETS transmission may take several weeks, applicants should contact ETS as soon as possible to request that test scores be reported to Purdue University.

**Graduate Record Examination (GRE)** scores are required for all applicants.

The **Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)** exam is required for international non-native speakers of English. Applicants must score 550 or higher on the paper-based test or 77 or higher on the Internet-based test in order to be considered for admission. In addition, applicants who take the TOEFL iBT must achieve the following minimum test scores: reading, 19; listening, 14; speaking, 25; and writing, 18.

As an alternative to the TOEFL and/or the TSE, applicants may submit **International English Language Testing System (IELTS)** scores of 8.0 or higher.

### ***Financial Support:***

International students will be considered for departmental funding in the form of teaching assistantships, research assistantships or fellowships. Students not offered financial support by the department must provide to the Purdue University Office of International Students and Scholars evidence of sufficient funds available to pay tuition and living expenses during residence in the U.S.

### ***Oral English Proficiency:***

Purdue University requires that any student whose first language is not English demonstrate adequate oral English proficiency before being assigned duties involving direct instruction of students. This is done by taking Purdue University's Oral English Proficiency Program (OEPP) Speaking Test. International students offered teaching assistantships at Purdue are expected to pass the OEPP Speak Test as soon as possible after they arrive on campus. The department graduate secretary will schedule with OEPP days and times for international students to sit for this exam and inform them via email as when and where they should report for the exam. Students must receive a score of 50-60 to be certified by OEPP. If the student is not certified they must enroll in the ENGL 620 course before they will be allowed to teach their own course in the department.

Students whose first language is not English can also satisfy Purdue's Oral English Proficiency standard (required for duties involving direct instruction of students) if they obtain a score of 8 on

the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) or a score of 27 on the speaking section of the TOEFL iBT.

### C. Application Deadline

All applications submitted for consideration for admission in Fall must be completed by the application deadline shown on the website (usually during the previous December or January)

### D. Financial Support and Departmental Awards

#### 1. Financial Support

The Sociology program offers financial support in the form of a teaching assistantship (TA), a research assistantship (RA), or a fellowship on a competitive basis to qualified students. Financial support includes a tuition waiver, health insurance, and a monthly stipend (with amounts determined by the College of Liberal Arts or the Graduate School in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies).

Applicants to the graduate program are automatically considered for departmental funding. No separate application or additional information is required. For over ten years it has been **the policy of the Graduate Committee to give full funding to all students selected for admission**. Although this policy could change, such change is unlikely.

Students entering the MS program with an offer of funding are generally guaranteed funding for five years: two years to complete the MS degree, two years to complete coursework and preparation for the PhD preliminary examination, and a fifth year of funding to complete the PhD dissertation. Students entering the PhD program are generally guaranteed funding for three years: two years of funding to complete PhD coursework and preparation for the PhD preliminary examination, and a third year of funding to complete the PhD dissertation.

**Funding guarantees are conditional: students must remain in good academic standing and must make satisfactory progress towards degree objectives (including maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater) each year in order to retain funding.** Students' progress toward degree goals is checked at the end of the fall semester, and a full review of all aspects of students' academic progress students is conducted annually by the Graduate Committee near the end of the spring semester. Students making unsatisfactory progress will be notified in writing by the Graduate Committee at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Any student whose GPA falls below 3.0 at the end of the fall semester is not making satisfactory progress and will be notified that she or he has been placed on probation; the student must raise his or her cumulative GPA to 3.0 or higher by the end of the spring term to remain in the program. Further, receiving a grade of "F" in any course will result in termination of funding for the following semester. See section E7 "Evaluation of MS Work", section F14 "A Summary of the PhD Program" and section I "Unsatisfactory Progress" for more information.

Students are strongly encouraged to seek external financial support for the PhD dissertation research.

Students who are supported as TAs or RAs *by this department* are required to maintain full-time registration (at least 8 credit hours) for each fall or spring semester during which they receive departmental support.

Students on some fellowships are required by the Graduate School to maintain full-time registration (at least 8 credit hours) for each fall or spring semester of fellowship support.

Information regarding Purdue University fellowships and external funding sources is available on the Graduate School website at <http://www.gradschool.purdue.edu/funding/>.

## 2. Departmental Teaching Assignments

The responsibilities of graduate TAs may include any task related to the instruction of students. Students who assist faculty members may be assigned to grade papers or exams, prepare course materials and update information on Blackboard, hold office hours, or supervise a recitation section. Students who are assigned to teach their own course assume responsibility for all duties related to the instruction of that course. Generally, MS students working as TAs are assigned to assist faculty members.

PhD students who wish to teach may be assigned to teach their own course. Students must successfully defend the Analytic Project prior to serving as an instructor of record (i.e., teaching “their own courses”). Students are also required to complete SOC 610 “Seminar on Teaching Sociology” before serving as an instructor of record. The SOC 610 requirement may be waived by the Graduate Committee when a student has taught as the instructor of record at the college or university level.

Students teaching their own course are required by the department to participate each semester (including summer) in PICES (Purdue Instructor Course Evaluation Service) teaching evaluations administered by Purdue’s Center for Instructional Excellence.

## 3. Departmental Awards

An annual contest is held within the department for the “Outstanding Graduate Student Paper,” and all students who teach their own courses may be nominated for the “Outstanding Graduate Teacher Award.” Winners are awarded \$100.00 prizes by the department.

The submission date for the Outstanding Graduate Student Paper is announced in the spring. The Graduate Committee reviews all the submitted papers and determines the winner. Papers submitted should be prepared according to the ASR Style Guide. Although there is no preference for any particular theory, topic, or research method, the Graduate Committee expects the submitted papers to be revised, final drafts, more suitable for submission to a professional journal than a course or seminar. Please note that names should not be included anywhere on the papers submitted for consideration.

The department’s Teaching Committee solicits nominations for the Outstanding Graduate Teacher Award. Generally, the award is made to a more advanced student who has independently taught one or more courses in the department.

The Graduate Committee also administers the Walter Hirsch Graduate Student Dissertation Award. Walter Hirsch was a faculty member in Sociology at Purdue University from 1947 until his retirement in 1989. The award provides up to \$1000.00 to help with the cost of dissertation research. Any PhD candidate in Sociology is eligible to apply.

## E. The Master of Science Degree in Sociology

### 1. MS Coursework

The MS degree program is a two-year program that requires a minimum of 38 semester hours beyond the BA/BS degree. Two required theory courses and three required methods and statistics courses must be completed. Students must also complete SOC 591 (Proseminar in Sociology) in both the fall and spring of their first year and SOC 610 (Seminar on Teaching Sociology) in the spring of their second year. Three elective courses and a total of 9 credit hours of SOC 695 "Analytic Project in Sociology" are required. The following schedule shows the sequence of coursework and SOC 695 credits for the MS degree.

Semester I:   SOC 600 (Development of Sociological Theory)  
                  SOC 580 (Methods of Social Research I)  
                  SOC 591 (Proseminar in Sociology) (1 credit)  
                  Graduate Elective\* (3 credits)

Semester II:   SOC 602 (Contemporary Sociological Theories)  
                  SOC 581 (Methods of Social Research II)  
                  SOC 591 (Proseminar in Sociology) (1 credit)  
                  Graduate Elective\* (3 credits)

Semester III:  SOC 680 (Advanced Social Research Methods - Multivariate Statistics) or  
                  SOC 686 (Qualitative Research Methods)\*\*  
                  SOC 695 "Analytic Project in Sociology" (3 credits)  
                  Graduate Elective\* (3 credits)

Semester IV:  SOC 695 (Analytic Project in Sociology) (6 credits)  
                  SOC 610 (Seminar on Teaching Sociology) (3 credits)

\*Typically graduate electives are taken in the Department of Sociology; students may request permission from the Graduate Committee to substitute graduate-level courses outside of the department.

\*\*These requirements will be effective for students who file plans of study after August 21, 2011. Up to that date, students currently enrolled in the program may choose to adhere to the requirements in place at the time they were admitted to the program or to the new requirements shown above.

### 2. Selection of the Major Professor and Advisory Committee

A student working toward the MS degree should select a major professor and an advisory committee by the end of the first year of the graduate program and must have made these selections at the time that the Plan of Study (see below) is submitted. The major professor must be a member of the Sociology Department. Students request approval of their major professor on a department form that is signed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

An MS advisory committee must include at least two faculty members in addition to the major professor. Professors from outside the department who are qualified and willing to assist students in graduate study may serve on the advisory committee. Retired faculty members and faculty members



from other universities may be on the committee if certified by the Graduate School and if they do not make up a majority of the members. The Graduate School approves the advisory committee listed on the MS plan of study. The Major Professor Appointment Request form should be signed by the student and the major professor and returned to Graduate Secretary for the Director's signature.

### 3. The MS Plan of Study

The major professor, the advisory committee, and the graduate student jointly develop and submit a plan of study (POS) for the MS degree to the Graduate School. A plan of study includes a primary research area, the specific courses the student will complete to satisfy degree requirements, and expected date of degree completion. An approved POS constitutes formal admission to candidacy for the MS degree. Students must submit the POS to the Graduate School for approval no later than during their third semester in the program. **Failure to submit a complete POS before the end of the third semester in the MS program may preclude graduation in the fourth semester. Thus, it is strongly advised that you submit your POS to the Graduate School by October 1 if you plan to graduate the following May.** (See above for the specific program requirements.)

Only courses numbered at the 500 or 600 levels should be included on the POS. Only one SOC 590 may appear on the POS for the MS degree. Coursework used to satisfy the requirements for one master's degree may not be used on the plan of study for another master's degree.

### 4. The MS Analytic Project Proposal, Third Semester

The analytic project in Sociology is designed to give MS students a research experience that includes:

- the definition of a research problem
- an assessment of relevant literatures
- the use of appropriate sociological theory and methods
- the preparation of an application to secure approval or exemption from review by Purdue's Committee for the Use of Human Research Subjects
- the preparation of a written document, prepared in the style of a professional journal article

The expectation is that the analytic project be comparable in quality to a manuscript prepared for submission to an academic journal for publication. In addition to publishing their work, students are strongly encouraged to present their research at scholarly conferences.

Each student selects a major professor by the end of the first year in residence. The analytic project is completed over a two-semester period during the second year in residence. Second year students enroll in 3 credit hours of SOC 695, the analytic project course, for the fall semester.

The student completes a proposal for the research project by the end of the third semester. The major professor, the student, and the student's advisory committee meet for an oral defense of the proposal by the end of that semester. The advisory committee signs a departmental form showing that the committee met and discussed the project with the student. If the project is not approved by the student's advisory committee at the first meeting, a second date for an oral defense must be set. All analytic project proposals or abstracts must be approved in this manner. The major professor grades the 3-credit SOC 695 analytic project proposal. Only grades of A or B are acceptable.

### 5. Human Research Subjects Approval or Exemption

**Approval or decision to exempt from review by the Purdue's Committee on the Use of Human**

**Research Subjects must be presented to the major advisor and Director of Graduate Studies before data collection or analysis begin. Further, the CITI Basic Course (see below) must be completed successfully prior to the oral defense of the AP proposal.**

*Online Training:* The Purdue Education Policy for Conducting Human Subjects Research states that “all Purdue faculty, staff, and students who wish to conduct research involving human subjects must be certified as having completed appropriate formal training and education before an application and protocol in which they are named will be approved or determined exempt by one of Purdue University’s Institutional Review Boards”. Graduate students become “certified” by completing the Collaborative IRB Training Initiative (CITI) Basic Course for Investigators and Key Personnel with an overall passing score of 80%. All Master’s students should complete the CITI Basic Course during their first year of graduate study. Students must become “certified” before submitting an *Application to Use Human Research Subjects* or a *Research Exemption Request*.

*Application to Use Human Research Subjects or Research Exemption Request:* All proposed analytic project research must be presented to the IRB for approval or exemption from review before data collection or analysis begins. The student must review the Research Exemption Request Guidelines to determine whether an Application to Use Human Research Subjects or a Research Exemption Request is required. The student’s major professor serves as the project’s principal investigator, and must review and sign the application or exemption request.

Students and/or the major professor should give the graduate program secretary copies of the e-mails sent from the IRB to the major professor indicating approval of the research plan or exemption from review so that these can be kept on file.

Complete information about the Purdue Committee on the Use of Human Research Subjects and all forms can be found at <http://www.irb.purdue.edu/>.

## 6. The MS Analytic Project, Fourth Semester

Students must complete the Analytic Project (AP) by the end of the second year in residence. Students enroll in 6 hours of SOC 695 during the fourth semester. Regular consultation with the major professor and other members of the advisory committee is essential for the completion of the AP. The final analytic project paper must be double spaced and in the format and style of the *American Sociological Review* or other major sociological journal. It should contain a statement of the problem, an appropriate literature review, an analysis section, and conclusions and interpretations. It should be comparable in quality to a manuscript prepared for submission to a professional journal for publication. The major professor grades the 6-credit SOC 695 analytic project. Only A and B grades are acceptable.

The advisory committee meets with the student no later than two weeks before the last day of classes for the oral defense of the completed analytic project (the final examination for the MS degree). The *Report of the Master’s Examining Committee* (Graduate School Form 7) is used to record the outcome of the oral defense.

The oral defense of the analytic project is an open meeting. All faculty and graduate students may attend. Guests are asked to observe quietly and avoid hallway conversations. Only the advisory/examining committee conducts the exam and determines the outcome of the oral defense. The committee meets before and after the oral exam in closed session to discuss the student’s work.

A final digital copy (e.g., .pdf file) of the analytic project should be sent to the Graduate Secretary. This copy should include any revisions required by the advisory committee.

If the oral defense of the analytic project (the final examination for the MS degree) is not successful, at least one semester must elapse before a second MS exam is attempted.

## 7. Evaluation of MS Work

Course and seminar grades, SOC 695 grades, and the examination/advisory committee's assessment of the analytic project constitute an overall evaluation of a student's MS level work.

Coursework should be completed with A ("Excellent") or B ("Satisfactory") grades. Grades below a B indicate "Unsatisfactory" work. Students must complete the MS program with a minimum GPA of 3.25 to be considered, under any circumstances, for admission to the PhD program. A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 at the end of the academic year, or whose plan of study shows more than two C grades, will be dropped from the graduate program. No grade lower than a B is acceptable in theory and methods courses (SOC 580, SOC 581, SOC 600, SOC 602, SOC 680, SOC 681, and SOC 686). Students earning less than a B in any theory or methods course will be required to retake it for a higher grade. Note that a "straight" grade of B is required; a B- does not meet the threshold for successful completion of required theory and methods courses.

Incomplete grades ("I") for coursework or SOC 695 credits are given only under special circumstances such as a prolonged illness or a personal crisis. University policy requires that incomplete coursework must be completed and graded by the 12<sup>th</sup> week of the second semester following the semester in which the incomplete was received. "I" grades automatically turn into "F" grades if the work is not completed and graded by that time.

The progress of all second-year MS students is evaluated by the Graduate Committee in the late spring or early summer following their fourth semester. In addition, the Graduate Committee will conduct a detailed review of each first-year student's progress in the program early in the fall of the student's third semester. The Graduate Committee will consider the following:

- The student's performance in first year core courses (SOC 580, 581, 600 and 602) as reported by the instructors of those courses.
- Evaluations of the student's first year TA or RA work by supervising faculty members.
- Progress on the Analytic Project proposal as detailed by the student's major professor.
- The student's entire graduate academic record, including grades received in elective courses and course incompletes.

Students will receive a written assessment following this review from the Director of Graduate Studies. This assessment will outline the student's current standing in the MS program, including strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement. This assessment will also provide a provisional estimation of whether the student is considered a strong candidate for admission to the PhD program in Sociology at Purdue.

Following the successful defense of the Analytic Project, students who wish to continue will be considered by the Graduate Committee for admission to the PhD program in Sociology. Typically, students who complete the AP project successfully and who are recommended for admission to the PhD program by the AP advisory committee will be admitted to the PhD program by the Graduate Committee. However, admission to the PhD program is not guaranteed. The Graduate Committee will consider the following:

- The student's performance in second year coursework (particularly SOC 680 or 686).
- Evaluations of the student's second year TA work by supervising faculty members.

- The recommendation of the student's major professor and AP advisory committee using the sociology department form 'Recommendation Concerning Study toward the PhD Degree' to be completed at the defense of the Analytic Project.

## F. The PhD Program in Sociology

### 1. Admission to the PhD Program

At the completion of the MS final oral exam the examining committee may recommend study toward the PhD on Graduate School electronic Form 7. Students who wish to continue in the program will then be considered for admission to the PhD program by the Graduate Committee, as detailed in section E7 "Evaluation of MS Work".

A student with a master's degree in Sociology from another university may be admitted conditionally or unconditionally to the PhD program. Conditional admittance typically requires additional coursework in theory or methods. Students admitted directly to the PhD program will be required to complete the department's M.S.- level theory and statistics/methods courses if they have not already taken equivalent coursework. Coursework from other universities will be accepted in lieu of courses taken at Purdue *only upon recommendation of the Graduate Committee and the appropriate section committee (i.e., theory or methods/statistics)*. No student may enter the PhD program without an MA or MS in Sociology.

### 2. Selection of Major Professor and Advisory Committee

All PhD students should select a major professor by the end of their first semester in the program. The major professor must be a member of the Sociology department. Students request approval of their major professor on a department form that is signed by the Director of Graduate Studies.

A PhD advisory committee must include at least three faculty members in addition to the major professor. Professors from outside the department who are qualified and willing to assist students in graduate study may serve on the advisory committee. Retired faculty members and faculty members from other universities may be on the committee if certified by the Graduate School and if they do not make up a majority of the members. The Graduate School approves the advisory committee listed on the PhD plan of study.

### 3. The PhD Plan of Study

The Graduate School recommends that a student entering the PhD program *draft a tentative Plan of Study (POS) in advance of registration for the first session of graduate work toward the degree*. The formal POS is submitted for approval by the Graduate School as soon as possible and no later than several weeks before the scheduled date of the prelim exam (see below). A POS includes a primary research area, the specific courses the student will complete to satisfy degree requirements, and expected date of degree completion. The POS must be filed with the Graduate School prior to a request for the appointment of a preliminary examining committee (described below).

Students must complete 90 credit hours of combined coursework and research to earn a PhD. A master's degree from any accredited institution may be considered to contribute up to 30 credit hours toward the 90 credit hours needed but those master's degree courses should not be listed on the PhD POS. The remaining 60 credit hours of coursework or research must be completed according to PhD program requirements.

The Sociology PhD program requires 24 credit hours of coursework. Of the remaining 36 credits, 18 hours minimum must be dissertation research (SOC 699, 699A, or 699B). The remaining 18 may be either additional research hours or additional coursework. A dissertation is assumed to represent 18 – 36 hours of research, and a PhD represents a minimum of 60 hours of combined coursework and research hours beyond a Master's degree.

Only PhD coursework should be listed on the PhD POS. 30 credits from one Master's degree may be used (unless the Graduate Committee or a *student's major professor determines that fewer than 30 credit hours from a Master's degree may be used*) Dissertation research hours are **not** listed on the plan of study.

#### 4. PhD Coursework

The PhD requires a minimum of 24 semester hours of course and seminar credits beyond the required 38 hours for the MS degree. A maximum of 9 hours (3 courses) may be taken toward the PhD before the MS degree is completed. Only one SOC 590 (for 3 credits) may be included on the PhD POS. Students must complete two additional required methods courses (SOC 680 and either SOC 681 or SOC 686). These two courses are in addition to any methods courses taken as part of an MS degree at Purdue or in addition to any Master's level methods courses required by the Graduate Committee as a condition of admission into the PhD program. Thus, students who took SOC 680 as part of their MS degree or as a requirement of admission into the PhD program will need to take two additional methods courses. PhD Students must also take two advanced seminars. The advanced seminars in Sociology must be 600 level seminars completed in two of the following fields in Sociology:

1. Family and Gender
2. Health, Aging, and Life Course
3. Law and Society
4. Social Inequality
5. Social Movements and Political Sociology
6. Sociology of Religion

The remaining course credits (12 credits) are electives. The student's advisory committee may require specific coursework.

Coursework should be completed with A ("Excellent") or B ("Satisfactory") grades. C grades indicate "Unsatisfactory" work. A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, or whose plan of study shows more than two "C" grades, will be dropped from the graduate program. No grade lower than a "B" is allowed in theory and methods courses (SOC 580, SOC 581, SOC 600, SOC 602, SOC 603, SOC 680, SOC 681, and SOC 686). Students earning less than a "B" in any theory or methods course will be required to retake it for a higher grade. Note that a "straight" grade of B is required; a B- does not meet the threshold for successful completion of required theory and methods courses.

*These requirements will be effective for students who file plans of study after August 21, 2011. Up to that date, students currently enrolled in the program may choose to adhere to the requirements in place at the time they were admitted to the program or to the new requirements show above.*

*Note on Sequence of Methods Courses: SOC 680 must be completed in the PhD program if it was not taken to fulfill the MS requirements or as a condition of acceptance into the PhD program. In addition, either SOC 681 or SOC 686 must be completed to fulfill the PhD methods requirements. SOC 680 must*

*be completed before taking SOC 681. SOC 686 has no prerequisites. A total of two additional methods courses (beyond any methods courses that were taken to fulfill MS requirements or courses required as a condition of admission into the PhD program) must be taken as part of the PhD program.*

## 5. A Summary of the PhD Program

The academic progress of all graduate students is reviewed annually by the department. The summary below shows a schedule for completing coursework, the preliminary examinations, the dissertation research, and the final oral examination. It includes a description of expected achievements and a profile of a student in “good standing” for each year in the PhD program.

### **Expected Achievements for Students in the Sociology PhD Program:**

#### **First Semester**

- A methods course (see below): SOC 680 **or** SOC 686 **or** SOC 681
- A 600-level Seminar **or** SOC 681 (if SOC 680 has been completed)
- An Elective
- Select major professor and draft a PhD plan of study

Students are advised to carefully read the methods requirements for the PhD program described in section F4 above. PhD students must take two more methods courses (in addition to any methods courses taken as part of the MS program or as a condition of admission into the PhD program). SOC 681 (Selected Problems of Social Research) has a prerequisite of SOC 680. With the approval of the student’s major professor and advisory committee and the approval of the Graduate Committee, a student may petition to have a methods course from another department count towards the two methods course requirement for the PhD.

#### **Second Semester**

- SOC 681 — Selected Problems of Social Research **or** SOC 686 (Qualitative Methods) *if methods requirements have not already been completed.*
- 600-level Seminar Elective

A first year student in the PhD program is in “good standing” if s/he has met the following criteria: 1) Completion of 18 credit hours beyond the MS with a minimum GPA of 3.25; 2) completion of two required courses and two advanced seminars; 3) selection of a major professor; 4) preparation of a draft of the PhD plan of study; and 5) initiation of preliminary work towards the dissertation proposal. Students in good standing at the end of the first year of the PhD program should expect a second year of funding in the PhD program, unless funding was specifically granted for only one year or one semester.

#### **Third Semester**

- Electives and Research Hours
- Submit PhD plan of study for final approval by advisory committee and Graduate School
- Draft dissertation proposal

#### **Fourth Semester**

- Electives and Research Hours Complete Preliminary Examination

A second year PhD student is in good standing if s/he has met the following criteria: 1) Completion of all coursework (24 hours beyond the MS degree); 2) filed a plan of study with the Graduate School; and 3) passed the PhD preliminary examination. Only students in good standing are assured eligibility for departmental financial support beyond this point in the program.

**Fifth Semester**

Dissertation Research and Writing

**Sixth Semester**

Dissertation Research and Writing PhD Final Exam

6. Foreign Language

There is no foreign language requirement in Sociology. However, a language may be required by the advisory committee, if it is the committee's opinion that a foreign language is necessary for the successful completion of the dissertation research or professional work in an area of specialization. It is the advisory committee's responsibility to determine proficiency in the required language.

7. The PhD Preliminary Examination

The PhD student who successfully passes the doctoral preliminary examination becomes a PhD candidate. To be eligible for the exam, you must have demonstrated written English proficiency, filed a PhD Plan of Study with the Graduate School, satisfactorily completed most (or all) of your formal coursework, and satisfied any foreign language requirement. The examination should be scheduled as soon as possible and *must be completed at least two semesters before the expected date of the doctoral final examination.*

- a. The purpose of the preliminary examination is to provide the PhD student's advisory committee the information it deems necessary to determine whether the student is qualified and ready to undertake or continue the dissertation research that is required for the PhD degree.
- b. The schedule for PhD students in Sociology to take the preliminary examination is not fixed. **However, to remain in good standing students must complete the exam successfully by the end of the second year in the PhD program.**
- c. The student selects an examining committee composed of the same four faculty members who make up the student's PhD advisory committee. In cases where one of these faculty members is unavailable or unwilling to participate, the preliminary exam may be conducted with an examining committee of only three faculty members. The examining committee is responsible for the exam and any procedures it deems appropriate for evaluating it.
- d. A PhD Plan of Study must be submitted to the Graduate School for approval at least **four weeks** before the oral portion of the preliminary exam is scheduled. The student must have an **approved POS** on file with the Graduate School before the oral portion of the preliminary exam is scheduled.
- e. The preliminary examination must be evaluated and passed in its entirety. It consists of three related components: a PhD dissertation proposal, a set of take-home exam questions to be completed within seven days, and an oral defense of both written portions of the exam (i.e., the proposal and the take-home). The advisory committee prepares the take-home questions.
- f. The dissertation proposal is similar in format to a proposal prepared for submission to an external funding agency or foundation, such as National Science Foundation, the Lilly Foundation, or the National Institutes of Health. The dissertation proposal includes a statement of the problem, a discussion of the significance of the problem, a literature review,

a theory section, and a methods section.

- g. The take-home exam questions are given to the student within two weeks after the dissertation proposal is submitted to the advisory committee. The questions may cover (1) the dissertation proposal, and (2) a substantive area of specialization within the discipline of sociology. Questions about the dissertation proposal will require the student to demonstrate a clear understanding of the methods of the proposed project, the theoretical foundation that will guide the inquiry, and how the proposed project is related to an extant body of literature.

Questions on the substantive area will ask the student to demonstrate an understanding of a body of knowledge (including theory, methods, and empirical research) in a particular field. Examples of substantive areas include aging and the life course, family, politics and economy, stratification, race, urban Sociology, gender, or social change.

- h. The oral portion of the exam should be scheduled by the major professor., Either the student or the major professor must notify the graduate program secretary *no less than three weeks prior* to the proposed oral exam date.

The major professor signs an electronic *Request for Appointment of Examining Committee* (Graduate School Form 8) to be submitted to the Graduate School. The oral exam cannot be held during the last week of classes. All requests for appointment of an examining committee must be made to the Graduate School *at least three weeks before* the oral exam is scheduled.

The oral portion of the exam has two goals: (1) to give a student the opportunity to respond to any specific questions about the dissertation proposal or the take-home portion of the exam that are raised by any or all members of the advisory committee; and (2) to give the student's advisory committee an opportunity to evaluate how well the individual responds to questions about the dissertation project or related literatures.

- i. The Report of the Preliminary Examination (GS Form 10) is electronically signed by the advisory committee immediately following the oral portion of the exam. The report indicates that the exam was "satisfactory" or "unsatisfactory." Three members of the advisory committee must evaluate the exam, in its entirety, as "satisfactory" for the student to be recommended for PhD candidacy (i.e., only one member of the advisory committee may evaluate the exam as "unsatisfactory" for the student to pass.) If the report is favorable, the Graduate School reclassifies the student as a PhD candidate. If the report is unfavorable, the advisory committee may recommend that the student be permitted to request a second examination. One semester must elapse before student may retake the exam. A student may not be given a third exam, except upon the recommendation of the advisory committee and with special approval of the Graduate Council.

## 8. The PhD Dissertation

Each student writes a dissertation in an area of specialization within Sociology under the direction of the major professor and in consultation with members of the advisory committee. The dissertation is assumed to represent the equivalent of 18 – 36 hours of coursework. A minimum of 18 hours of SOC 699 (or SOC 699A, or 699B for International students outside the U.S. in absentia) must appear on the official transcript. At least two academic sessions devoted to research and writing must elapse between the preliminary and final doctoral examinations.

**Approval or decision to exempt from review by the Purdue's Committee on the Use of Human Research Subjects must be presented to the major advisor and Director of Graduate Studies before data collection or analysis begin. Further, the CITI**



**Certification must be current.****9. Final Oral Examination**

A PhD candidate submits a complete, defensible draft of the dissertation to the chair and other members of the advisory committee in the semester in which the candidate intends to complete all requirements for the PhD degree. The final oral examination in defense of the dissertation takes places at least two semesters after successful completion of the preliminary exam.

The major professor is responsible for scheduling the final oral exam after consulting with the members of the advisory committee regarding the student's readiness for the final oral, i.e., the completion of a defensible dissertation. The major professor or the student must notify the graduate program secretary *no less than three weeks prior* to the proposed final exam date. The major professor electronically signs a *Request for Appointment of Examining Committee* (G.S. Form 8). Final exams may not be held during the last week of classes. All requests for appointment of an examining committee must be made to the Graduate School *at least three weeks before* the final oral exam is scheduled. Once a final oral exam is scheduled with the Graduate School, it must be held. It cannot become a "working session."

The final oral examination is held during an open meeting announced by posted notice on the door where the defense will be held. Only members of the advisory/examining committee may take part in the evaluation of the student's work.

Each member of the examining committee indicates their approval or disapproval of the defense on the electronic *Report of the Final Examination* (G.S. Form 11). No more than one dissenting vote is acceptable in certifying a candidate to receive the PhD degree. Each committee member also signs the *Thesis Acceptance Form* (G.S. Form 9) or its electronic equivalent (soon to be established) to indicate their approval of the student's final draft of the dissertation.

If the final oral exam is unsatisfactory, at least one semester must elapse before a second final exam is scheduled.

**10. Final Dissertation Deposit**

All PhD dissertations must conform to the style requirements detailed in the *Thesis Preparation Manual* prepared by the Graduate School's Thesis/Dissertation Office. A copy of this manual can be obtained by contacting the Thesis/Dissertation Office.

A final revised copy of the dissertation must be deposited at the Graduate School prior the deadline set each session by the Graduate School (usually the end of the last week of classes). PhD dissertations are deposited online via electronic thesis deposit. Instructions for electronic thesis deposit can be found at <http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/research/thesis/process.html>

PhD candidates must also schedule a "final deposit appointment" at the Graduate School to deposit hard copies of both their original, signed *Thesis Acceptance Form* (G. S. Form 9) and a completed and signed *Addendum to the Doctoral Dissertation Agreement* (G. S. Form 14). Contact the Graduate School ([gradinfo@purdue.edu](mailto:gradinfo@purdue.edu) or 765-494-2600) to schedule your final deposit appointment. The electronic thesis deposit process should be completed at least 48 hours prior to your final deposit appointment to allow Graduate School staff time to review your electronic deposit and correspond with you about any necessary changes. (Because procedures for deposit of the dissertation are changing, please be sure to check for the current procedures and rules.)

PhD candidates must provide an electronic version of their dissertation as approved by the Graduate School to the department graduate office. Candidates should also provide electronic or hard copies of the dissertation to their major professor(s) and members of the advisory/examining committee if requested. Boiler CopyMaker in the Purdue Memorial Union provides printing and binding services.

## 11. Time Limits

All PhD candidates must complete the PhD research and dissertation within five years after the semester in which the doctoral preliminary examination was passed. Degree candidate status may be terminated by the department at the end of the fifth year. To be reinstated to PhD candidacy:

- a. A continuously registered student must retake the doctoral preliminary examination under departmental procedures that exist at the time of the retake.
- b. A student not continuously registered must reapply for admission to the PhD program. If admitted, the student appoints an advisory committee, a new plan of study is filed, and the doctoral preliminary examination is retaken and passed under the departmental procedures that exist at the time of the retake.

## 12. Temporary Leave

If circumstances make it necessary for a student to request a temporary leave of absence, a request in writing must be presented to the Graduate Director, who will bring the request to the Graduate Committee. A form requesting a temporary leave must also be completed and submitted to the Graduate School. If a leave is granted by the Graduate Committee, the student may be readmitted without meeting the requirements specified above. Students who do not register for classes for three or more consecutive academic sessions (including summer session) will be required by the Graduate School to reapply for admission.

## 13. Minimal Registration

Once all residence requirements are met, students need only register for 1 credit of SOC 699 each semester to remain enrolled in the PhD program.

Two types of minimal registration are possible for the candidate who intends to finish a degree. A candidate who has finished all degree requirements except for the final dissertation deposit prior to the first day of the academic session of graduation may request registration for "degree only" at a reduced fee. A student who has finished all but the final examination may register for "exam only" at a reduced fee. In both instances, the degree requirements must be completed by the deadline set by the Graduate School, usually the eighth week of the semester.

## 14. Research in Absentia

A student may petition the Graduate School to complete the PhD research in absentia under the following circumstances: (a) The doctoral preliminary examination was passed while in residence, (b) facilities exist for the student to conduct the research off campus, (c) employment does not interfere with the dissertation research, (d) significant progress is made on the dissertation research so that the remaining work may be completed off campus, and (e) provisions for supervision are arranged with the PhD candidate's major professor. *A Request for PhD Candidate Research in Absentia* (G.S. Form 12) must be submitted to the Graduate School to petition for permission to register for research in absentia.

## G. Academic Integrity and Honesty

The department is committed to bringing our best available resources to bear on your training and socialization as a sociologist. Excellence in research and scholarship demands high standards of integrity and honesty. **Academic dishonesty in any form is not tolerated.** Purdue University provides the following definition and examples of academic dishonesty:

“The commitment of acts of cheating, lying and deceit of any of their diverse forms (such as the use ghost written papers, the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal crib notes, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) ... knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts” (See University Regulations, Part 5).

Two of the most common forms of dishonesty found in graduate programs are plagiarism and copying other students' work for assignments. The department does not tolerate these or any other forms of dishonesty. In addition, the department discourages using the same paper or substantial parts of the same paper, for more than one class unless this has been approved by the instructors of those classes.

It is also very important that dissertations, AP papers, course papers, or manuscripts submitted by students for publication not be plagiarized, copied, or largely paraphrased from the work of other persons. Purdue University faculty have access to iThenticate, a website that compares the submitted manuscript with web content and published books and articles. The Department of Sociology considers plagiarism to be a very serious form of student misconduct. In recent years students have been dismissed from the graduate program for instances of serious plagiarism. If students have questions about whether one of their manuscripts might not meet acceptable standards for originality, they could ask a faculty member to submit their manuscript for analysis by iThenticate *before* the final version of the manuscript is submitted.

Because the line that separates academic honesty from dishonesty is, at times, ambiguous, it is important, whenever possible, to avoid even the appearance of dishonesty. Do your own work on out-of-class assignments. If you consult with others on these assignments, seek information regarding the process of reaching the answers, not the answers themselves. You might also acknowledge this assistance, especially from peers, in the assignment. When you write papers, carefully cite others whose ideas you have used and carefully reference page numbers when using direct quotes. Familiarize yourself with the reference and citation standards for our discipline (which can be found, for example, in journals such as *American Sociological Review* and *Social Problems*). If you want to pursue the same idea or set of ideas in papers for different courses, it is a good idea to consult with the professors involved. Let them know what you'd like to do and what aspects of the work will be unique for their course.

In addition, give yourself sufficient time and energy to complete your work. Acts of academic dishonesty are often committed by otherwise well-meaning students when they find themselves without sufficient time and energy. Perhaps most importantly, integrity and honesty are most easily maintained if you commit yourself to them. Such a commitment reflects well on you as a student, on the department, and on the profession of which you will soon become a member.

## H. Responsible Conduct of Research

Purdue University is committed to establishing and maintaining the best possible research environment. All graduate students should read *Executive Memorandum III.A.2, Policy on Research*

*Misconduct.* <http://www.purdue.edu/policies/ethics/iiia2.html>. Students are also encouraged to attend Graduate School workshops on the responsible conduct of research. Visit the Graduate School website <http://www.purdue.edu/gradschool/gspd/workshops.html> for a workshop schedule and additional resources.

## I. Unsatisfactory Progress

A full review of all students' academic progress is conducted annually by the Graduate Committee near the end of the spring semester. **Students who do not make satisfactory progress through the MS or PhD program, as described in this manual, are subject to having their funding revoked and/or being dropped from the program.** The following conditions constitute unsatisfactory progress in the graduate program:

1. *Low GPA:* A student whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 at the end of any academic year will be dropped from the program. A student whose GPA falls below 3.0 at the end of the fall semester is not making satisfactory progress and will be notified that she or he has been placed on probation. She or he may remain in the program and continue to be funded by the department in the spring semester; however, the student must raise his or her cumulative GPA to 3.0 or higher by the end of the spring term to remain in the program. Further, receiving a grade of "F" in any course will result in termination of funding for the following session. Students completing their MS degree with a cumulative GPA lower than 3.25 will not be admitted to the PhD program.
2. *Failure to complete the Analytic Project by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of the MS program:* Students who fail to complete the AP by the end of the second year of the MS degree are not making satisfactory progress; they may remain in the program but will not be eligible for funding until the analytic project is completed and approved.
3. *Failure to complete the preliminary examination by the end of the 4<sup>th</sup> semester of the PhD program:* Students who fail to successfully complete the preliminary examination by the end of the second year in the PhD program will not be eligible for departmental funding until this requirement has been met. A student supported by a faculty member's grant must inform the principal investigator or the SRI chair that s/he is not a student in "good standing." The person funding the student uses discretion to determine continuation of funding.
4. *Failure to complete the PhD research and dissertation within five years after the semester in which the doctoral preliminary examination was passed:* Students who have not completed the dissertation five years after being admitted to candidacy may be dropped from the program. See section F10 "Time Limits" for more information.

## J. Dual Title PhD in Sociology and Gerontology

Purdue University offers a dual-title PhD linking several established, discipline-based programs of study with an interdisciplinary perspective on aging.

Sociology doctoral students are eligible to complete a dual-title PhD in Sociology and Gerontology. There is no separate application process. Students apply as usual to the doctoral program in Sociology via the electronic application for graduate study.

Once admitted to the Sociology program, students choose a faculty advisor who is also a faculty associate of the Center on Aging and the Life Course. Students complete 24 graduate credits in

aging-related courses, notify the Graduate School of their intention to complete a dual-title degree, and write a dissertation on a topic related to aging in order to receive the dual PhD in Sociology and Gerontology. Students who plan to complete a dual-title PhD need to notify the Graduate Secretary to obtain special form that needs to be signed by the student, the major professor and which is then sent to the Graduate School.

For more information, visit the Center on Aging and the Life Course website:  
<http://www.purdue.edu/aging/>.

### **K. Requirements for American Studies Major or Minor in Sociology**

MA and PhD students in American Studies may choose Sociology as a field of concentration. PhD students may also choose Sociology as a “related minor”. For more information, consult the American Studies Program Graduate Manual or visit the American Stud<https://www.cla.purdue.edu/american-studies/>.

### **L. Graduate Concentration in Women and Gender Studies**

A Concentration in Women and Gender Studies is offered jointly by the Women’s Studies Program and the Department of Sociology for those students who wish to delve more deeply into the links between feminist concerns about inequalities, difference, and women’s empowerment, on the one hand, and the Sociology Department’s focus on theory and methods in the areas of Family and Gender, Health, Aging, and Life Course, Law and Society, Social Inequality, Social Movements and Political Sociology, and Sociology of Religion. Three WOST courses are required for the Concentration: Feminist Theory (WOST 680), Contemporary Issues in Feminist Scholarship (WOST 681) and Issues in Feminist Research and Methodology (WOST 682). Beyond the above three core courses, students may choose electives from SOC, according to their research interests. Requirements for master’s degree and Ph.D. students differ; for details, see the Women’s Studies website: <https://www.cla.purdue.edu/academic/sis/p/wgss/>. Ph.D. students enrolled in the Concentration may apply for a teaching assistantship in the Women’s Studies Program.

### **M. Graduate Teacher Certificate**

Purdue’s Center for Instructional Excellence offers a Graduate Teacher Certificate for graduate teaching assistants. The Graduate Teacher Certificate is documentation of a graduate student’s involvement in actual classroom teaching and teacher development activities (e.g., pre-semester teaching orientations and workshops, micro-teaching with consultative feedback, classroom visitations or videotaping, student and peer feedback, etc.). Specific requirements for certification are: a) Two semesters of classroom teaching experience as a Graduate Teaching Assistant; b) attendance at a Purdue University GTA pre-semester instructional orientation; c) participation in continuous instructional improvement activities; d) Classroom videotaping/visitation with consultative feedback and self-analyses; and e) implementation of student feedback and evaluation with self-assessment.

All Sociology graduate teaching assistants are encouraged to apply for the GTC. Visit the CIE website <http://www.cie.purdue.edu/> or call 765-496-6422 for more information.