



FLORIDA STATE
UNIVERSITY

Department of Sociology
Guide to Graduate Studies

Effective August 1, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Sociology Graduate Program at Florida State University. This document describes our requirements, procedures, and programs. For updates, please visit our web-site at <https://coss.fsu.edu/sociology/>. You also will find information about us on our Facebook page (search for FSU Sociology).

Continuing a tradition of distinguished scholarship and teaching, our faculty have won national, regional, and university-wide awards for teaching, mentoring, and research. We have been recognized as Fulbright Scholars, been honored with named professorships, won article and book awards from sociological organizations, been awarded research grants from state and federal funding agencies, and

served as leaders in regional and national academic associations. Among public universities, we are ranked the 29th best sociology graduate program in the nation and the 2nd best in the 17 states that make up the Southern United States (U.S. News). Among 118 public and private sociology programs across the nation, we rank among the top 20% with regard to the number of publications and grants per faculty member (The National Research Council).

The FSU Sociology Department offers graduate degree programs leading to the Master of Science in Sociology, the Master of Science in Applied Social Research, the Master of Science in Applied Social Research with a major in Aging and Health, and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees.

Many of our graduates secure jobs as professors at either research-oriented universities or teaching-oriented and liberal arts colleges. Some graduates successfully land research jobs with nonprofits and government agencies. Others leverage their skills and experience to secure university administrative or research positions. And a few translate their training into political work or nonprofit management. Although our program emphasizes research and teaching, we support students pursuing diverse career paths.

Facilities and Location

The Department of Sociology is located on the fourth, fifth, and sixth floors of the Bellamy Building, in the center of the FSU campus. The fifth floor houses the departmental office (Rm. 526), the Meyer Nimkoff Conference Room (Rm. 519), the Sociology Library (Rm. 517), the departmental computer laboratory for graduate students (Rm. 522), student workspaces (Rms. 504, 506, and 509), and a supply/mail room (Rm. 520) where students have individual mailboxes. The Department also maintains bulletin boards on the fifth floor for the posting of announcements, including departmental memoranda, SGSU meetings, colloquia, job opportunities, and funding opportunities (grants, post-doctoral fellowships, etc.). Faculty associated with the [Center for Demography and Population Health](#) are located on the sixth floor of Bellamy, as are several small meeting/classroom spaces and computer facilities that are available to students working with Center-affiliated faculty. Several faculty members also have offices at the [Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy](#), located a short walk away from Bellamy in the Pepper Building. Graduate students working with these faculty also have access to office space, computers and other facilities in that building.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

The Director of Graduate Studies is the faculty member responsible for coordinating the graduate program. The Academic Program Specialist is the staff member responsible for overseeing most graduate student matters on a day-to-day basis and is located in 523 Bellamy.

Admission Requirements

Minimum admission requirements are established by the State of Florida and enforced by Graduate School. Our admissions committee selectively admits about 10 new graduate students each year. A minimum GPA of 3.0 during the last two years of undergraduate study is required, a combined Verbal and Quantitative GRE score of 300 makes one competitive, and a background in sociology and doing well in an undergraduate statistics course is desirable. All applicants must submit three letters of recommendation, an official copy of all transcripts, a writing sample, and a statement of purpose (applicants to the Health and Aging major in the Applied MS program do not need the statement). Our

committee evaluates each applicant's entire file holistically in making admission decisions. Strong letters of recommendation, a clear and focused personal statement, research interests that fit with faculty expertise, and an exemplary academic writing sample are at least as important as other factors. Admission to the program is decided by the Director of Graduate Studies who considers the recommendations of the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee.

Date of Entry Rule

Graduate students are governed by the requirements in effect for the semester in which s/he enters that degree program, as indicated by the University [Graduate Bulletin](https://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/) (<https://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/>) and the Department's statement of Graduate Program requirements (Part II, below). Since a student who enters the Master's program in Sociology is not automatically admitted into the doctoral program, this rule means that the rules in effect at the time of admission to the doctoral program apply.

Students enrolled in any degree program may elect to be governed by requirements as subsequently amended and approved for that degree program. This substitution may be made only with respect to the program requirements as a whole (i.e., no student may elect to substitute only a part or parts of the newer program requirements) and the substitution is nonreversible.

Fees and Course Loads

For a detailed official description of student costs, fees, out-of-state tuition, and regulations, consult the FSU [Graduate Bulletin](https://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/) (<https://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/>) or the [Graduate School webpage](https://gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards/tuition-waivers-and-fees) (<https://gradschool.fsu.edu/funding-awards/tuition-waivers-and-fees>).

A **full-time course load** for graduate students is 10 credit hours per semester for first and second year students in the PhD program (those currently working towards the traditional Master's of Science in Sociology degree) and 9 credit hours per semester for those in their third year or beyond. Students in the Applied Master's programs must register for 12 credit hours to be considered full-time. Fellowship-holders with no work responsibilities must register the same number of credit hours as their peers. Graduate students appointed as departmental assistants on a regular quarter-time or half-time basis (10 or 20 hours of work commitment per week) are eligible for matriculation waivers for their tuition fees provided they are full-time students.

Residency Status and Tuition

When applying through the graduate school, you will be prompted to complete a [residency declaration](#). If you are a Florida resident, you are also required to complete a "residency declaration for tuition purposes form" and may be asked to submit additional documentation before you are eligible for in-state tuition. Florida resident students with assistantships or fellowships who complete this process will receive waivers for in-state tuition.

U.S. citizens who are not Florida residents and who have assistantships or fellowships will receive waivers for out-of-state tuition for their first year only. To be eligible for a tuition waiver after the first year, out-of-state students must submit a "[Residency Reclassification Form](#)" and documentation in order to be reclassified as Florida residents. Importantly, some of the required and supporting documentation must be dated 12 months before the start of the fall semester of your second year, which means before the fall semester of your first year you will need to get a Florida driver's license or identification card

and file a Declaration of Domicile (at the Leon County Courthouse, Clerk of Courts, Public Records Office). For additional information about these and additional requirements, due dates, and links to the forms, visit the Office of Admissions Residency webpage: <https://admissions.fsu.edu/Residency/>.¹

Conference Travel

Participation in the annual meetings of regional and national scholarly associations (e.g., Southern Sociological Society, the American Sociological Association) is an important part of an academic career and we encourage students to present their research at such meetings. To help offset travel costs, the department or affiliated Centers or Institutes will provide a stipend, when possible, to students who attend and present research papers at regular or special sessions, poster sessions, or roundtables. Our goal is to partially fund student requests for one meeting per year, departmental budgets permitting. Stipends normally are awarded only to students who are currently enrolled full-time. The department Chair can award travel assistance to Ph.D. students who do not meet these criteria.

All students planning on conference travel must file a Travel Authorization Request (TAR) with the department's Administrative Associate no less than two weeks in advance of the departure date. Students are encouraged to apply for travel support from the [FSU Congress of Graduate Students \(COGS\)](#) office, which has separate funds for presenting and participating. Forms for applying for both departmental and COGS support are available on the Sociology website. After the conference, students who have been approved for stipends must provide receipts and a reimbursement request to the department's Administrative Associate within two weeks of returning from the meeting.

PART II: MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMS

Sociology has two master's degrees: the **Master of Science in Sociology** and the **Master of Applied Social Research**. (A Master of Arts degree is also possible for students who fulfill certain language requirements. See the [Graduate Bulletin](#) for details.) The Master of Science in Sociology degree is designed to prepare students who plan to continue on for a doctoral degree and the Applied Social Research degree is designed to prepare students for employment in the public or private sector.

A. Master of Science in Sociology Degree

A minimum of 35 semester hours is required for this degree, with a minimum of 21 hours on a letter-grade basis in graduate level courses in the Department of Sociology. Students must satisfactorily complete a number of core courses and write a Master's research paper that is approved by their supervisory committee.

¹ A residency form (from the Office of the Registrar) and required documents (driver's license, voter registration, vehicle registration, or other evidence related to permanent domiciliary status) must be presented at the Leon County Courthouse, to the Clerk of Courts, Public Records Office, where you will fill out a Declaration of Domicile to the State of Florida and Leon County. The form will be notarized and you will be charged a fee. Take your Declaration of Domicile to the residency officer in the FSU Office of the Registrar, who will write an approval letter and update your enrollment files. Also, give a copy of this letter to the Department Academic Coordinator, to be included in your permanent file.

It is possible to take courses that will simultaneously fulfill the Master's requirements and constitute normal progress toward the Ph.D. The Master of Science in Sociology degree is usually a way-station on the journey to a Ph.D., although some students stop with the M.S. degree.

Students must take one theory course (SYA 5018 Social Theory) for a letter grade and four methodology/statistics courses for a letter grade (SYA 5305 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods, SYA 5315 Introduction to Qualitative Methods, SYA 5406 Multivariate Analysis, and SYA 5407 Advanced Quantitative Methods). In addition, students must take a professionalization seminar in both Fall and Spring of the first year (SYA 5625r), a Master's writing seminar (SYA 5357) during the first summer, a research practicum and writing seminar in both Fall and Spring of the second year (SYA 5515 and SYA 5516, respectively), and several substantive courses. Students must pass all theory and methodology/statistics courses with a minimum grade of B-. Students may not advance to the next course in the methods sequence until they have passed each preceding methods course. Students may not formally enter the Ph.D. program until they pass the required methods courses and theory course.

Entry into the Ph.D. program is not automatic and requires a separate request for admission and letter or acceptance from the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee (see Section III).

Master's Paper

During the summer between their first and second year, students must complete a Master's paper writing seminar. The summer seminar is organized and coordinated through class meetings with a central instructor. Through the course, and with the advice of the students' major advisors, students will lay the groundwork for their master's papers by narrowing down a topic, specific research questions, and appropriate data.

Students in their second year must complete a two-semester research practicum and writing course, also organized and coordinated through class meetings with a central instructor. The fall-semester practicum focuses on writing skills, as well as making progress on data collection and analysis. The spring-semester course focuses on completion of the Master's paper. In general, the Master's paper is a research project that should lead to an academic article-length manuscript of about 25 pages.

Students must form a faculty committee to supervise their Master's Paper. The committee will consist of three sociology faculty members with Graduate Faculty Status or sociology faculty members with Graduate Teaching Status who also hold Co-Master's Directive Status or Co-Doctoral Directive Status. Students should first select a major professor and consult with that person about the other two sociology faculty members. Committee members are responsible for reading the Master's paper and providing feedback to the student. No oral defense is required. Students will have satisfactorily completed the Master's paper when all members of the supervisory committee sign to indicate approval. Students must turn in to the Academic Program Specialist an approved (signed and dated) copy of the Master's paper for their official file.

Requirements: Master of Science in Sociology

SYA 5018	Social Theory (3 hours) or SYA6933 Sociological Theory (3 hours)
SYA 5305	Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods (3 hours)
SYA 5315	Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods (3 hours)
SYA 5357	Developing Sociological Research (3 hours)

SYA 5406 Multivariate Analysis (3 hours)
SYA 5515 Sociological Research Practicum (1 hours)
SYA 5516 Reporting Sociological Research (1-3 hours)
SYA 5625r Proseminar (0-6)
Elective courses: A minimum of 9 hours

B. Master of Science in Applied Social Research

This degree requires 33 semester hours of graduate coursework, a minimum of 21 of which must be in the Sociology Department. Additional hours can be in Sociology or other departments (with approval from the Director of Graduate Studies).

15 hours of research methods and statistics are required, choosing from among:

SYA 5305 Introduction to Quantitative Research Methods
SYA 5315 Introduction to Qualitative Research Methods
SYA 5406 Multivariate Analysis
SYA 5407 Advanced Quantitative Analysis
SYA 5458 Social Statistics and Data Analysis for MPH
SYD 5133 Population Data
SYD 5135 Techniques of Population Analysis
SYD 5137 Fundamentals of Epidemiology
or an approved comparable course from Sociology or another department.

Remaining hours should be taken in a substantive area that fits the student's academic interests and needs. Students may engage in internship opportunities during the summer term to gain practical experience. Substitutions for any of these requirements may be made with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

C. Master of Science in Applied Social Research with a Major in Aging & Health

This is a 33-hour degree, with 21 hours in the Sociology Department and up to 12 hours in other College of Social Sciences (with approval from the Director of Graduate Studies).

Nine hours are required:

One 3-hour course centered on Aging, such as:

SYP 5735 (Sociology of Aging), or SYP 5733 (Social Psychology of Aging), or SYP 5737 (Dynamics of Aging and Social Change), or SYA 6933 (Aging and Life Course), or approved substitute.

One 3-hour course centered on Health, such as:

SYD 5215 (Health and Survival), SYO 5416 (Stress and Mental Health), SYO 6407 (Race, Ethnicity and Health), SYD 5136 (Life Course Epidemiology), SYO 5405 (Health Institutions and Social Policy),
or approved substitute.

Twelve hours in electives approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Twelve hours of internship (SYA 6933).

Substitutions for any requirements may be made with approval of the Director of Graduate Studies.

PART III: DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Formal admission to the doctoral program requires the approval of the Sociology Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee and of the Director of Graduate Studies, with action normally taken at the end of the student's second academic year or the subsequent summer. Students typically enter the doctoral program after they have successfully completed all requirements for the Master of Science in Sociology. Students officially become candidates for the Ph.D. degree upon successfully passing the major area preliminary exam.

Program Areas

The Department offers three major substantive areas. Students will pick a major area from among the following:

- ***Demography.*** This program area involves the study of population-related processes, including birth (fertility, fecundity), relationship formation and dissolution (cohabitation, marriage, divorce, etc.), health (morbidity), death (mortality), and migration (internal to the U. S. and globally), focusing on the processes themselves as well as their relationship with social institutions and systems of social inequality. We offer courses on demographic techniques, ethnicity and immigration, mobility, fertility, mortality, family demography, gender and development, and international population dynamics.
- ***Health and Aging.*** This program area offers courses focusing on medical sociology, caregiving in later life, sexual health, successful aging, health over the life course, race/ethnicity and health, stress and mental health, gender and mental health, families and the life course, sexual and reproductive health, social epidemiology, health and aging, neighborhoods and health, and data analysis for public health.
- ***Inequalities and Social Justice.*** Our Inequalities and Social Justice area offers courses focusing on gender, sexuality, race and ethnicity, education and social class, work and family, organizational dynamics, interactional processes, politics, media, critical race theory, and social movements.

Students in the doctoral program must successfully complete the following:

- 1) Five (5) courses in their major area, 15 hours total (can include all such courses completed for the Master's Degree),
- 2) Three (3) non-DIS substantive Sociology courses outside of their major area, nine (9) hours total (excluding required statistics, methods, theory, and proseminar/practicum/writing courses),
- 3) Additional required courses:
 - SYA 5407 (Advanced Quantitative Methods, 3 hours), which must be passed with a grade of B- or higher

- SYA 5969 (Prospectus Writing Seminar, 1-3 hours)
 - SYA 6660 (Teaching at the College Level in Sociology, 3 hours)
 - Other hours, such as preliminary examination preparation and 24 hours of dissertation research
- 4) A written preliminary examination in their major area,
 - 5) Teaching an undergraduate course as the primary instructor of record,
 - 6) Doctoral dissertation.

NOTES:

- See Appendix A for an example of progression through the program.
- Courses counted for the major area cannot also be counted for methods course requirements.
- A list of courses appears in [Sociology Graduate Course Descriptions \(https://coss.fsu.edu/sociology/graduate-courses/\)](https://coss.fsu.edu/sociology/graduate-courses/).
- Students entering with a Master’s degree in Sociology from another institution may be eligible to exempt methods/statistics courses that are substantively similar to those required in our program. See *Policy and Procedures on Exemption*, below.

Major Area Preliminary Examination

When students have completed or nearly completed their coursework, and have completed any area-specific required courses, they take a Major Area Preliminary Examination in their major area of study (i.e. Demography, Health & Aging, Inequalities & Social Justice). Test preparation materials, including prior exam questions and reading lists will be available from the Academic Program Specialist. Exams are offered only twice a year—on the second Friday of the fall semester and on second Friday of the spring semester. Students will take the exam at the University’s Testing Center at University Center C, Suite 1100. If a student with a disability or specific health-related issue requests accommodations, the Director of Graduate Studies will work with the Testing Center to meet the student’s needs and/or ask the [Office of Accessibility Services \(OAS\)](#) to administer the exam. The Director of Graduate Studies will share a protocol of how to handle possible technical difficulties or medical crises with the exam takers and Testing Center staff.

The Examination will be prepared and evaluated by three faculty members in the student’s major area. Questions are designed to allow students to demonstrate an integrative, critical, and comprehensive understanding of empirical and theoretical work in the student’s area. All students sitting for an examination in an area will receive identical examinations. Thus, students who take the exam in their fourth year or beyond will be examined on the current reading list rather than the one offered in their third year.

A student will be considered to have taken an examination once s/he has received the examination questions. For any examination the student shall be allowed a maximum of 8 hours (with an additional 30 minutes for a lunch break) in which to write answers to the examination questions. No consultation with another person or with on-line or hard-copy material is permissible during the 8-hour period, although the Academic Program Specialist will provide students with an exam packet that includes a bibliography of the reading list. Failure to observe the no-consultation rule will result in a “not qualified” decision.

Areas have some discretion in the format of the exam, as long as it provides students with enough questions so that they have a degree of choice and as long as students answer a total of three questions. If one set of questions is offered, students should be presented with a minimum of five (5) questions. If two or more sets of questions are offered, each set must contain a minimum of two questions.

After conducting an independent and blind evaluation of each exam based on uniformly applied criteria, the examination committee will determine by majority vote the level of performance on each examination and render one of three decisions: “qualified,” “not qualified,” or “conditionally qualified.” The Area Committee Chair will report its decision via an official memorandum to the Director of Graduate Studies no later than 14 days from the date of the exam and the Director of Graduate Studies will inform the student of the results. In no case should the Area Committee Chair inform the student directly.

Exceptionally strong exams may be acknowledged by a designation of “with honors.” A decision of “conditionally qualified” is granted in cases where the performance is at a qualifying level for all but one question. In such cases, the committee will report specific reasons for their assessment and decide on a course of action to remove the conditional grade. The student will turn in the work product stipulated by the condition within one month of the date the student learned of her/his exam results, and the committee will decide by majority vote if the condition is met and notify the graduate director of the result within two weeks. Students who do not turn in the work constituting their condition within the one-month period will be considered “not qualified.” To be judged “not qualified” on an exam, the student must fail at least two questions. The committee will report specific reasons for assessing an exam as “not qualified.” Students may request re-examination at the next regularly scheduled exam offering. Re-examination must be accomplished no later than the end of the 12th calendar month following the initial examination. No student may take an examination more than twice. The re-examination, like the original, is written, not oral. Students who fail a preliminary examination twice are dismissed from the program.

Satisfactory completion of a preliminary examination shall be required for admission to candidacy for the PhD degree. No student may register for dissertation hours prior to the point in the semester in which the preliminary examination was passed. An admission to candidacy form must be completed and filed in the Office of the University Registrar prior to registration for dissertation hours. After completion of the admission to candidacy process, the student may retroactively add dissertation hours for that semester in which the preliminary examination was completed. Retroactive changes are only permitted if the preliminary examination is passed by the end of the seventh week of the semester. For term specific deadline dates, please refer to the “Academic Calendar” in the Registration Guide.

The preliminary examination is designed to test scholarly competence and knowledge and to afford the examiners the basis for constructive recommendations concerning the student’s subsequent formal or informal study. The form and content of this examination will be determined by the department, college, school, or examining committee (typically, but not necessarily the same composition as the supervisory committee) administering the degree program. Prior to the examination, the student’s examining committee will determine whether the student 1) has a 3.0 average, and 2) has progressed sufficiently in the study of the discipline and its research tools to begin independent research in the area of the proposed dissertation.

The chair of the major department, the academic dean, and the Dean of The Graduate School may attend any session of the supervisory or examining committee as nonvoting members. A member may be appointed to the examining committee at the discretion of the academic dean or Dean of The Graduate School or on recommendation of the major professor. Normally, the examining committee will be identical with the supervisory committee.

The examining committee will report the outcome of the examination to the academic dean: passed, failed, additional work to be completed, or to be re-examined; the report following the reexamination must indicate the student either passed or failed. The results of the examination will be reported to the Office of the University Registrar for inclusion in the student's permanent record.

If a student fails the preliminary examination before being admitted to candidacy, a re-examination may be offered by the student's supervisory committee or other relevant decision-making body within each department or unit, per that department or unit's doctoral student handbook. The Academic Dean's office should be notified of the outcome of any preliminary exam attempt.

Students can take the preliminary examination for admission to candidacy only two times. A second failure on the preliminary exam makes the student ineligible to continue in the degree program. The second attempt at the preliminary exam shall occur no sooner than six full class weeks after the results of the first attempt are shared with the student. For the purpose of this policy, a "full class week" is defined as a week with five days during which classes are held at FSU. Students must be registered separately for their first and second attempt, if necessary, within the same semester, and must receive either a "pass" or a "fail" grade for each attempt.

An exception request regarding the timing of the re-examination can be submitted for consideration to the Academic Dean's Office by either the student or the supervisory committee. Students who allege that academic regulations and/or procedures were improperly applied for the re-examination of their preliminary exam may have their grievances addressed through the general academic appeals process.

Doctoral Candidacy

Students who have completed all or nearly all (i.e., having no more than six hours remaining) of the program's required coursework and have passed their major area exam may be admitted to doctoral candidacy. According to FSU rules, a student may not register for dissertation hours until s/he is a doctoral candidate. The presumption is that a doctoral candidate is someone who can now work on the dissertation and whose main outstanding task in gaining the Ph. D. degree is the dissertation project. Student may enter candidacy still needing to complete one or two courses, but those should be completed quickly so that progress can be made on the dissertation. A student must be admitted to candidacy at least six months prior to the granting of the degree.

Doctoral Dissertation and Prospectus

The doctoral dissertation is a project entailing original research that the student completes under the supervision of their major professor and supervisory committee. Graduate students must register for and receive a grade of S in at least 24 hours of dissertation credit.

Students must form a faculty committee to supervise their prospectus and dissertation research. The committee consists of a minimum of three faculty members in the sociology graduate program and one

member from another academic unit, all of whom must hold Graduate Faculty Status. The outside member must also be tenured. The outside member represents the FSU Graduate School and assures that proper standards are met and procedures followed. Additional committee members, with or without Graduate Faculty Status, can be added if the student so desires and the faculty members are willing.

Prior to writing a dissertation, students must complete a written dissertation prospectus. The prospectus is a plan for the dissertation research that contains supporting materials, such as a review of literature and theories, framing of the research question, details of proposed data collection and analysis, and a timetable for completion of the dissertation. During the Fall semester of their third year, students will complete a dissertation prospectus seminar. The seminar is organized and coordinated through class meetings with a central instructor. Through the course, and with the advice of the students' major advisors, students will lay the groundwork for their dissertation prospectus by narrowing down a topic, specific research questions, and appropriate data. The final prospectus must be approved by the student's supervisory committee following an oral Prospectus Hearing. Students should provide a copy of the prospectus, signed and dated by each committee member, to the Academic Program Specialist for the student's official file.

Upon completion of the dissertation project, the student orally defends the dissertation before the same committee. All dissertations are submitted electronically to the Graduate School of Florida State University. The final dissertation requires specific formatting to meet Graduate School requirements; see the Academic Program Specialist for more advice.

PART IV: RESPONSIBILITIES, EVALUATION, AND PROCEDURES

Graduate employees at FSU are represented by the [United Faculty of Florida-Florida State University-Graduate Assistants United \(UFF-FSU-GAU\)](#).

Graduate Assistantships

Graduate assistants are normally appointed for 20 hours a week and are assigned to work as Research Assistants (RA), Teaching Assistants (TA), online mentors, instructors of record, or a combination. Research assistants help a faculty member with research projects. RAs assist faculty with ongoing research projects and program development. Face-to-face TAs assist faculty members with large undergraduate classes or with statistics or research methods courses at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Online mentors assist faculty members or graduate instructors of record with online courses. Students holding Master's degrees may be assigned an undergraduate course to teach on their own. Space and equipment sufficient to carry out assignments are made available to graduate assistants. Students normally have a desk and chair, shelf space, a mailbox, and office supplies, and they have access to computers, copiers, and basic IT support. Those teaching independently are normally assigned private or semi-private office space that allows them to meet with their students during office hours. Notice of appointments for graduate assistantships is given by the Director of Graduate Studies before the start of each academic term.

Teaching Assistants, online mentors, instructors of record. Teaching assistants, online mentors, and graduate instructors have access to a faculty member who serves as the Supervisor of Graduate Teaching Assistants. Students should consult with this person on a regular basis, particularly if they teach a course on their own. The Supervisor of Graduate Teaching Assistants may make classroom visitations

as part of the Department's program of peer review of teaching process; if so, they will give the TA advance notice of the visitation. Teaching assistants teaching their own classes are *required* to administer FSU teaching evaluations, as instructed by the University.

All graduate students in their first year who will be a TA, online mentor or instructor of record must attend the two-day teaching conference offered by the FSU Program for Instructional Excellence (PIE) during the week prior to the start of the fall semester. At the conclusion of the conference, attendees must obtain the general PIE Teaching Training Recognition. In addition, all TAs must attend any required in-department PIE workshops, and they are recommended to attend at least four teaching-related workshops per year (sponsored by PIE, the Department of Sociology, or other campus organization).

TAs, online mentors, and graduate instructors have access to the services available to faculty in support of instructional duties and, where appropriate, may use other teaching resources and evaluation services of FSU's Center for the Advancement of Teaching and the Program for Instructional Excellence.

Research Assistants. Research Assistants work under the direction of the faculty member to whom they are assigned on a research project of the faculty member's choosing. Faculty members with external grants may employ a student as a research assistant for a particular project. When this occurs, students are obliged to fulfill the obligations of the grant in accordance with the faculty supervisor's instructions.

Agreement with faculty on duties and evaluation. In the first week of the assignment period, graduate assistants and their faculty supervisors must agree on the duties, obligations, time commitments, and "products" (if any) of the student for the term. A signed and dated copy of the agreement must be turned in to the Director of Graduate Studies for the student's official file. Students will be evaluated against the tasks and standards specified in the agreement, and so they should take an active role in defining the job. For example, they should express their goals early in the term and work with the supervisor to achieve them. The assistant is responsible for making the most of the assistantship experience and, in consultation with a faculty supervisor, should assess the work experience on a continuing basis.

Evaluation. Evaluation, a crucial part of the assistantship experience, is an ongoing process of communication between graduate assistants and faculty members; it should be supportive and help the assistant identify strengths and weaknesses and improve skills. Students should be aware that the faculty member will report their assessment of the assistant's performance to the Director of Graduate Studies during the annual evaluation process. Graduate assistants are obligated to respect the standards of academic honesty and integrity and to report any violations to the faculty supervisor, Director of Graduate Studies, or Department Chair. *If problems arise in the work assignment, the graduate assistant should seek help from the Supervisor of Graduate Teaching Assistants. If those efforts fail, the student should consult the Director of Graduate Studies or the Chair.*

Records. The graduate assistant should keep records of his/her work assignments so that progress and problems can be documented. Recognizing that the assistantship is temporary, the graduate assistant should leave records sufficiently detailed so that decisions can be traced, results verified and incomplete work finished after the assistant has left the position.

Reappointment Procedures

Overview of Annual Evaluation. The intent of the annual review is to assure that each student takes advantage of opportunities for scholarly engagement and continues to make timely progress toward completion of the degree. Scholarly engagement can include participation in courses; attending seminars, symposia, and conferences; engaging in collaborative study and research beyond the university campus; and utilizing the library and other facilities provided by the university.

Annual Evaluation Procedure. The first step in the evaluation process is for the student to meet with their major professor to go over the Annual Progress Form that the student will receive from the Academic Program Specialist. This meeting should be used to review the student's current progress, discuss plans for the coming year, and address any issues that may be slowing the student's progress. The expectation is that this meeting is more than perfunctory.

Each spring, the Director of Graduate Studies sends a request to all faculty members to evaluate every student with whom they have had contact since the last evaluation period. (They could have taught a student, supervised a teaching assistant, supervised a research assistant, served on a Master's Paper committee, seen the student present a paper at a professional meeting, have worked on a research project with the student, or served on a departmental committee with a student, etc.) With the help of the Academic Program Specialist, the Director of Graduate Studies compiles the results and takes them to the faculty members of the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee. The Committee reviews the material, rates each student's overall performance during the preceding year, and makes a recommendation for each student regarding future funding (High, Medium, Low, or No priority for funding). Ratings are compiled and acted upon by the Director of Graduate Studies in awarding funding for the following year.

Standards for Reappointment. Priority for reappointment is given to graduate students who make expected progress toward completion of the degree, receive positive evaluations for their assistantship duties, and show evidence of developing sociological knowledge and skills appropriate to their stage in the program. Assessments are made by faculty on the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee using the following criteria:

- (1) Cumulative G.P.A. and G.P.A. for the current academic year
- (2) Evaluation by faculty members who supervised the work of the assistant
- (3) Evaluations by other faculty of progress and performance
- (4) Length of time in assistantship
- (5) Length of time in degree program
- (6) Satisfying requirements for the Master's degree/core by the end of Spring term of the second year
- (7) Passing preliminary exam and required courses on schedule
- (8) Earning grades of B or higher in theory and methods/statistics
- (9) Existence of "incomplete" grades and length of time incompletes are outstanding

Reappointment is not automatic. Rather, final decisions are based on departmental needs, financial resources, and an effort to provide as many students with assistantship opportunities as possible. Students who were not funded in one year are nonetheless eligible for funding in a succeeding year.

Students who are in good standing and are making timely progress are eligible to be considered for departmental funding for up to five years. Support from non-departmental sources within the first five years of study does not mean that the department is obligated for funding for later years (that is, non-departmental funding is considered to have substituted for departmental funding). Students beyond their fifth year may teach as adjunct instructors at FSU, FAMU or TCC, receive funding through grants such as those provided by NSF, work as graduate assistants on faculty research grants, or find employment with the State of Florida. The Director of Graduate Studies maintains a list of potential funding sources.

Procedures for Dismissal from the Graduate Program

During the annual performance review, faculty on the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee advise the Director of Graduate Studies of any student who should be dismissed because of inadequate progress or unsatisfactory performance in meeting program requirements. The basis for a recommendation of dismissal may include one or more of the following: (1) failure to maintain a GPA above 3.0, (2) inability to pass the Major Preliminary Examination after two attempts, (3) a pattern of incomplete (I) or inadequate (B- or lower) grades, (4) falling one year or more behind the normal time for completion of program requirements, (5) two or more negative annual performance evaluations (low or no priority for funding), or (6) violation of the Academic Honor Code of FSU or the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association.

A recommendation of dismissal requires a majority vote of the faculty on the GAFAC. The Director of Graduate Studies will immediately inform the student, the student's major professor, and the Department Chair of the recommendation. The student will have two weeks to respond in writing and/or at a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies. After considering the committee recommendation, the student's response, and any other relevant information, the Director of Graduate Studies will (1) dismiss the student from the graduate program or (2) retain the student in the program on a one-year probationary status. In the latter instance, the Director of Graduate Studies, the student, and the student's major professor must prepare a plan to overcome the deficiencies in the student's performance within one year of the decision. If, in a subsequent annual performance review, the faculty on the GAFAC determines that the student is not meeting the expectations of this plan, the student will be dismissed from the program by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students who have been dismissed will have the opportunity to appeal this decision at the departmental or university levels.

Grievance Procedures

Graduate students have a right to initiate a grievance or appeal a decision through the following channels. First, the student should attempt, where appropriate, to rectify the matter by negotiation with the other party or parties involved. If this does not resolve the matter, the student should report the grievance or register the appeal with the Director of Graduate Studies, who will attempt resolution. If this attempt fails, the student should report the grievances or register the appeal with the Department Chair. Appeal beyond this point must follow University procedures as described in the [FSU Bulletin](#). At every step in the appeal process the student has the right to a fair and impartial hearing. Every attempt will be made by the administrator hearing the appeal to resolve the grievance in accordance with sound academic policy and the welfare of all involved.

If a graduate student is academically dismissed by the university, any appeals must follow the University procedures as described in the Graduate Academic Integrity and Grievances "Procedures for Resolving

Cases” section of the Florida State University Graduate Bulletin, available at <https://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/graduate/information/integrity/>.

Graduate students should be notified of any complaints received by a faculty supervisor, or, in the case of a teaching assistant, any students in their classes, concerning the performance of duties. The graduate student has the right to respond to such complaints and present evidence in defense, if appropriate. The burden of proof rests with the person making the complaint. University policies regarding issues such as sexual harassment are strictly followed.

Policy & Procedures on Exemption

Students who enter the Sociology graduate program with a Master’s degree in sociology from an accredited graduate program may request exemption from some courses or requirements.

Waiving courses. A student may petition the Theory or Methods committees for exemption from one or more core courses. Ordinarily such requests are made by students who enter with a Master’s degree in sociology and who have had substantial graduate course work in theory and/or research methodology; however, any student may present a petition. The petition must show substantial evidence of preparation and competency in the content of the courses for which exemption is requested. This evidence should include syllabi, texts, exams, and any written work for the course thought to be equivalent to the course being replaced. Such materials should be presented to the committee in the summer term before fall entry, if possible, but submission at a later date is acceptable.

The committee will review the materials and make a recommendation to the Director of Graduate Studies, who rules on the formal petition and notifies the student. If the petition is weak, the committee may require an exam to demonstrate competence in the area prior to making a recommendation. If the petition is approved, notation that the course has been waived will be entered in the student’s official record. Waived courses do not carry any credit hours and will not appear on transcripts. Course waivers may apply to major area requirements as well as the core.

Students should consult with their major professor and Director of Graduate Studies before deciding to petition. The department generally discourages the waiving of courses. We like students to move through the program in cohorts and have found that Master’s students who take our core theory and methods courses are strengthened by the experience rather than delayed.

Transferring courses. Transfer of courses not counted toward a previous degree is limited to 6 semester hours. Courses counted toward a previous degree cannot be transferred.

PART V: FINAL-TERM ACTIVITIES FOR DOCTORAL STUDENTS

The [Graduate School](#) provides a document entitled “[Guidelines and Requirements](#).” Before you begin writing your dissertation, you should read this document carefully. Responsibility for meeting formatting requirements rests solely with you.

Responsibility for meeting the final clearance requirements also rests solely with you. Early in the writing stage, each student should become familiar with the Manuscript Clearance (MC) Portal, accessible through your my.fsu.edu portal and with the:

1. Graduate School defense announcement deadlines
2. Manuscript and clearance information, including deadlines for applying for the degree and submitting required materials.
3. Required manuscript forms
4. Required exit surveys

Before the dissertation defense:

1. Consult the [Bulletin](#) or the Academic Program Specialist about how to register for the dissertation defense (SYA 8985, zero credit hours).
2. A student should apply for graduation online at <https://my.fsu.edu/> (under the “Academics” tab) DURING THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER the student anticipates completing the degree. If the graduation is postponed, the *student must reapply* during the appropriate period of the following semester (or the semester of graduation) and pay a diploma fee.
3. Pay close attention to all [University mandated deadlines](#).
4. All theses, dissertations, and treatises must be electronically submitted to The Graduate School via the ProQuest ETD Administrator Website; hard copies or submissions via e-mail or any other electronic method will not be accepted. Students should submit their manuscript to The Graduate School at the same time that the manuscript is submitted to the committee prior to the defense.

After the defense: Please refer to the [Manuscript Clearance \(MC\) Portal](#) for detailed information or contact the Manuscript Clearance Advisor (clearance@fsu.edu) for any questions regarding the clearance process.

PART VI: SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT UNION (SGSU)

The graduate students in sociology at Florida State University have an organization, the Sociology Graduate Student Union (SGSU), which promotes students’ welfare and helps them work with faculty on departmental governance issues. In addition to its representational function, SGSU facilitates the introduction and integration of graduate students into the daily life of the Department. New students are encouraged to take advantage of SGSU assistance in becoming established residentially and as a new member of the University, College, and department. More information is available on the SGSU Facebook page (search Sociology Graduate Student Union –SGSU).

All full-time sociology graduate students are eligible for nomination to appropriate departmental committees and meetings as stipulated in the [By-laws](#) of the department.

APPENDIX A: Program Requirements and Suggested Schedule (credit hours in parentheses)

	Fall	Spring	Summer
Year 1	SYA 5018 Social Theory (3) SYA 5305 Intro to Research Methods (3) SYA 5625 Proseminar in Sociology (1) Choice of Elective (3)	SYA 5315 Intro to Qualitative Methods (3) SYA 5406 Multivariate Analysis (3) SYA 5625 Proseminar in Sociology (1) Choice of Elective (3) Choose an advisor for MS paper	SYA 5357 Dev Sociological Research (3) Choice of Elective (3) Choose a committee for MS paper
Year 2	SYA 5407 Advanced Quant Methods (3) SYA 5515 Soc Research Practicum (1) Choice of Elective (3) Choice of Elective (3)	SYA 5516 Reporting Social Research (1-3) Choice of Electives (3-6) or Master's Hours (3-6) Complete MS paper	SYA 6660 Teaching Sociology (3) Choice of Elective (3) or SYA 8967 Prelim Prep (3-6) Study for Preliminary Exams
Year 3	SYA 5969 Prospectus Seminar (1-3) Any additional electives, as needed Take Preliminary Exams, SYA 8962 (0) Submit MS for publication Work on Prospectus	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Any additional electives, as needed Take Prelims (if haven't already) Work on Prospectus Choose advisor for dissertation Possibly teach own course	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Defend Prospectus Teach own course
Year 4	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Defend Prospectus (if haven't already) Work on additional research project Teach own course	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Work on Dissertation Work on additional research project Teach own course	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Defend Dissertation if ready Work on additional research project Teach own course
Year 5	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Defend Dissertation if ready Work on additional research project Teach own course	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Defend Dissertation if ready Work on additional research project Teach own course	SYA 6980 Dissertation Hours (1-9) Defend Dissertation Work on additional research project Teach own course