

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2018-2019

University of Virginia
Department of Sociology

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WELCOME FROM THE DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Welcome to the Department of Sociology at the University of Virginia! We welcome you to a vibrant intellectual community that cherishes open dialogue and diverse pursuits.

One of the core aims of the Department is to “train outstanding graduate students for exceptional careers in teaching, research, industry, and public life.” To prepare students for scholarly and applied research as well as teaching, the program combines rigorous teaching in theory and methods with a broad exposure to various subfields and concerns of the discipline. The curriculum provides the foundation for sociological inquiry in which students are active participants. We encourage you to seek your passion and realize your vision for the future.

We believe that it takes both individual and communal endeavors to achieve one’s goals. Graduate study is an individual pursuit conducted within a broader community. In the Department, that community is welcoming, supportive, and focused on graduate student success. Your peers and faculty are an invaluable resource. Get to know not only your cohort but graduate students across the years. And get to know the faculty. Small seminars, research assistantships, independent study, and collaboration on research all provide opportunities for deep engagement and enriching experiences.

The Department is also embedded in a thriving University community, with remarkable resources and opportunities at your fingertips. Faculty have ties to many departments within the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, to other schools at the University (including the Curry School of Education, the Darden School, the Law School, and the Medical School), and to cross-university centers and initiatives, from the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture and the Carter Woodson Institute to the Center for Survey Research and Quantitative Collaborative. We invite you to take advantage of all that the Department and University have to offer.

We welcome you to our midst and wish you a successful and fulfilling Ph.D. journey!

Josipa Roksa
Director of Graduate Studies

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In the spring of 2014, the Faculty of the Sociology Department approved changes to the Department's degree requirements which apply to students who entered in the 2014-2015 and subsequent academic years. The old degree requirements will continue to apply to students who began graduate study in prior academic years. Old degree requirements are available upon request from the Director of Graduate Studies.

Moreover, procedures for obtaining an M.A. en route to the Ph.D. have changed, starting with the 2017-18 cohort. For students who entered the program before that time, old procedures apply, as specified in the handbook associated with the year of entry into the Ph.D. program.

It is students' responsibility as degree candidates to monitor and periodically verify changes to their academic status in SIS, where students will find their official academic record (based on degree requirements in effect from their entering year) which is used by the department, GSAS and UREG to keep track of their progress. If students have any questions, they should not hesitate to ask.

All degree candidates who continue to work substantively towards a degree are expected to enroll full-time (i.e., a minimum of 12 credits). *Failure to enroll results in cancellation in SIS.*

Degree Requirements

The Department offers a single program of study leading to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. Students are not required to earn a Master of Arts (M.A.) degree before working toward the Ph.D. However, students can obtain an M.A. degree en route to the Ph.D. if they have 1) met requirements for the first two years of study in the Dept. of Sociology; 2) met M.A. degree requirements established by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS), including completion of 30 credits of course work; 3) completed a research proposal during a directed reading course with their advisor in the Spring of their second year (see details below), which by **April 20th** they must submit to the advisor and Director of Graduate Study (DGS). The research proposal will be reviewed by a committee of two faculty (advisor and a member of the graduate affairs committee). Both faculty members have to approve and sign the final examination form, which has to be submitted to GSAS **by April 30th**.

Note: GSAS lists its requirements at the following URL:

http://records.ureg.virginia.edu/preview_entity.php?catoid=26&ent_oid=1673&returnto=657#mast_degr.

*The Sociology department does not require students to submit theses to the University Library. See GSAS website for further info on thesis & dissertation submission:
<http://graduate.as.virginia.edu/thesis-submission-and-graduation>*

International students are advised to consult with the International Studies Office concerning the visa implications of completing the M.A. degree.

The Sociology Ph.D. program entails five main elements: (1) coursework; (2) qualifying paper; (3) two comprehensive exams; (4) the dissertation proposal; and (5) the dissertation.

Students are expected to complete all pre-dissertation requirements, including coursework and two qualifying examinations, by the conclusion of their third year of study. Students may not defend a dissertation proposal until both comprehensive examinations have been passed.

Coursework

Required number of courses and credit hours:

Students must take 20 courses (including 15 graded substantive or methods courses and 5 semesters of the one-credit seminar on Sociological Issues) to be completed by the fifth semester (the fall semester of the third year)¹. Thus, they will ordinarily complete a total of 50 credit hours of coursework over five semesters. Note, to earn the Ph.D., GSAS requires students to complete a minimum of 72 hours total of graduate credit.

Specific required courses:

- *First year:*
In the fall, students are required to take Introduction to Statistics (SOC 5020), Classical Theory (SOC 5030) and the Pro-Seminar (SOC 8031).
In the spring, they must take Research Methods (SOC 5100), Contemporary Theory (SOC 5060), and Intermediate Statistics (SOC 5120).
Students must also enroll in the Department's seminar on Sociological Issues in both fall (SOC 8030) and spring (SOC 8040) semesters.
- *Second year:*
In the fall, students are required to take Qualitative Methods (SOC 5140).
In the spring, students must enroll in a directed reading course (SOC 9010) with their advisor in order to begin the work on their qualifying paper. For further information and expectations regarding this course, please see text under Qualifying Paper. Students must also enroll in the Department's seminar on Sociological Issues in both fall (SOC 8030) and spring (SOC 8040) semesters.
- *Third year*
In the fall, students must take the research and writing seminar (SOC 7980) focused on writing the final version of the qualifying research paper.
Students must also enroll in the Department's seminar on Sociological Issues in both fall (SOC 8030) and spring (SOC 8040) semesters, as long as they remain in coursework.

In addition, students must take **three** Core Courses. In order to enable graduate students to meet this requirement, the Department will endeavor to offer at least two Core courses every semester and to offer most Core Courses at least once every three years. The list of designated Core Courses is determined by the faculty, and students may not petition the Director of Graduate Studies to substitute other courses. The list currently includes the following:

¹ Students must enroll in Seminar on Sociological Issues (SOC 8030/8040) as long as they remain in coursework, even if they have met the minimum five semester requirement.

Core Courses:

SOC 5056 – Culture	SOC 8051 – Work
SOC 7470 – Sociology of Development	SOC 7480 – Sociology of Globalization
SOC 5057 – Family	SOC 8052 – Religion
SOC 5059 – Science	SOC 8053 – Education
SOC 5080 – Comp & Historical Sociology	SOC 8054 – Political Sociology
SOC 5086 – Media Sociology	SOC 8055 – Law
SOC 5320 – Sociology of Gender	SOC 8410 – Race & Ethnicity
SOC 5420 – Stratification	SOC 8470 – Knowledge
SOC 5900 – Economic Sociology	SOC 8710 – Organizations

Each semester, students must register for 12 credit hours per semester. In the first year, these credits consist primarily of coursework. For the rest of the time while students are in coursework, these hours will normally include 9 credit hours of substantive or methods courses, 1 credit hour of Sociological Issues, and 2 credit hours of non-topical research.

Dropping, Adding, and Withdrawing from Graduate Courses

Each semester, the College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences establishes deadlines for dropping, adding, and withdrawing from courses. Those deadlines are posted on the academic calendar available at <http://www.virginia.edu/registrar/calendar.html>. The same deadlines apply to undergraduate and graduate students. If a student “drops” a course, no record of the course is retained on the student’s transcript. If a student drops a course, it may be necessary to “add” another course in order to maintain the required minimum number of credit hours. After the deadline for dropping, a student may “withdraw” from a course, in which case the course is listed on the student’s transcript followed by the notation “W”. After the withdrawal deadline, a student must complete the course.

Directed Readings²

A directed reading (SOC 9010) is a graded independent study course, carried out under the supervision of a Sociology Department faculty member. Graduate students may count up to two directed readings (6 credit hours) toward the Department’s coursework requirement for the Ph.D. degree. The first directed reading, which all students should take during the Spring of the second year, is dedicated to the Qualifying Paper. Please see further information under Qualifying Paper below.

The optional directed reading requires approval of the Director of Graduate Studies. This directed reading is intended to fill in the gaps in the existing curriculum. This could be a course in a specialized area not taught in the Department or a Core Course that is not being taught regularly. Please note that a student CANNOT take a directed reading in a Core Course instead

² The faculty is currently reviewing DR procedures. It is possible that procedures for both the QP DR and optional DR will change this year. If such a change is made, the DGS will share the new expectations.

of taking a Departmental seminar, if such is offered during their time in coursework (i.e., first 2.5 years in the program). If a Core Course in the area of student's QP is not offered before the student will begin working on the QP, the student should discuss suitable options with the advisor and director of graduate studies. Maximum enrollment in any directed reading course is 3 students.

To obtain approval for the second directed reading course, a student must discuss the course with a faculty member and work with him/her to prepare a petition that includes the following: (1) a brief statement explaining why the second directed reading is important for the student's program of study, and (2) a copy of the planned reading list and assignments to be completed as part of the course. Please note that the readings and assignments for this course need to be equivalent to a regular 3-credit course. The petition for the optional DR course should be submitted to the DGS at least two weeks before the start of the semester.

Courses Offered in Other Departments of the University

Depending upon individual interests, courses offered in other Arts & Sciences departments or other Schools of the University may be useful additions to a student's graduate program. Graduate students may count up to two such external courses (6 credit hours) toward the Department's coursework requirement for the Ph.D. degree. However, ALL external courses must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies prior to enrollment. To obtain that approval, a student must submit a petition including: (1) a brief statement explaining why the external course is important for the student's program of study, and (2) a copy of the relevant syllabus (if the current syllabus is not yet available, the syllabus from the most recent offering of the course is acceptable). Students are expected to take all classes during the first year within the Department. See <http://sociology.virginia.edu/graduate/forms/petition> for waiver and petition forms.

Research Apprenticeships

A research apprenticeship (SOC 9050/9060) is a graded course aimed at giving students practical research experience through close collaboration with a faculty member on a project of mutual interest. Graduate students may count one research apprenticeship (3 credit hours) toward the Department's coursework requirement for the Ph.D. degree. These projects are expected to be limited in scope (i.e., able to be completed within a semester's time with some allowance for spillover) and clearly defined from the outset, either as a separate "stand-alone" inquiry or as a discrete part of a faculty member's larger research agenda. Student apprentices are expected to be, in effect, junior colleagues, involved in all phases of the project. Because this apprenticeship will typically grant the same credit as a graduate seminar, the total workload should be roughly comparable in most cases. This collaborative effort should result in a tangible scholarly product, most usually a co-authored paper suitable for publication. Faculty members will submit short project descriptions to the Director of Graduate Studies before the beginning of the Fall semester. All students will be apprised of these opportunities and eligible to apply directly to the faculty member sponsoring the apprenticeship. Faculty members have discretion in selecting apprentices and need not accept any of the applicants.

Transfers of Credit

Students who have completed coursework **in Sociology** in another graduate program with a grade of B- or better may petition the Director of Graduate Studies for transfer of up to 24 credit hours toward the Department's coursework requirement for the Ph.D. degree. (By University regulation, no more than 24 credit hours of work completed at another graduate school may be

counted toward the credit hours required for a Ph.D. degree.) Petitions must be submitted during the student's first semester in residence and must include: (1) the completed petition form, available from the Department Web site at <http://sociology.virginia.edu/graduate/forms/petition>; (2) a transcript from the student's previous graduate program; (3) for each course, either the relevant syllabus or a description that sets forth the information usually contained in a syllabus (e.g., author and title(s) of the principal readings, course requirements). Such petitions are ordinarily granted if, in the judgment of the Director of Graduate Studies, the student's prior graduate courses relate to a recognized subfield or topic area within the discipline and are substantially equivalent in scope and quality to courses offered by the Department. If the Director of Graduate Studies approves the petition, it will be forwarded to the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences for final approval.

Note that transfer of credit hours **does not automatically entail waiver of any specific course requirements**. A separate petition is required for this purpose (see "Waivers of Program Requirements" below). However, if a transfer of credit is granted for a course that is substantially equivalent to a specifically required course (for example, Classical Theory or Intermediate Statistics), then a petition for waiver of the requirement will ordinarily be approved.

The transfer of nine credits or more will advance the student's year of study by one term (semester), and the transfer of 21 credits or more will advance the student's year of study by two terms.

Students who wish to obtain a Master of Arts degree should note that by University regulation, no transferred credits may be counted toward a University of Virginia M.A. degree.

Waivers of Course Requirements

Graduate students who seek exemption from a specific graduate program requirement must petition the Graduate Studies Committee for a waiver of that requirement. Such petitions will only be granted if the student can produce persuasive evidence that she or he has previously done equivalent work in a similar graduate program elsewhere and has earned a grade of B- or better. Petitions must be submitted during the student's first semester in residence and must include: (1) the completed petition form, available from the Department Web site (<http://sociology.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.virginia.edu/files/GradPetitionWaiveReq.pdf>); (2) a transcript from the student's previous graduate program; (3) for each course, either the relevant syllabus or a description that sets forth the information usually contained in a syllabus (e.g., author and title(s) of the principal readings, course requirements). Petitions will be considered by the entire Graduate Studies Committee and, if appropriate, by a faculty member with expertise in the relevant area.

Note that the **waiver of a required course does not reduce the number of graded credit hours** that the student must complete, unless a separate petition for transfer of credit is also approved (see "Transfers of Credit" above).

Qualifying Research Paper

Students must complete a Qualifying Research Paper with the aim of producing a publishable journal article. This requirement is met through completion of two courses: a) directed reading course (SOC 9010) with the advisor in the Spring of the second year, and b) third-year research and writing seminar (SOC 7980), also in consultation with a faculty advisor in the substantive area of interest. The quality and sophistication of the paper should be at the level of a publishable journal article.

Directed Reading (SOC 9010)

In the spring of their second year, students will take a directed reading course with their advisor. During directed reading, students will read extensively in their research area and write a **full research proposal**, which will include at a minimum a specification of the research question(s), a comprehensive literature review, and a clear plan for data collection and analysis that will guide students' research over the summer. If required for the project, students should also submit IRB approval as well as gain access to participants and/or research sites as part of the directed reading course.

The QP research proposal will also serve as the basis for the M.A., should students wish to earn an M.A. en route to the Ph.D. See related discussion under M.A. Degree.

Incompletes in the Qualifying Paper Directed Reading (9010) should be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Before an incomplete is granted in this course, the student is required to provide a written plan for completing the research proposal that has to be approved by both the advisor and the DGS. An incomplete in this course has to be converted into a letter grade at the latest by August 1 or the student will not be allowed to register for the Qualifying Paper Writing Seminar (7980) and will no longer be in good standing. Exceptions will be made in unique circumstances, such as medical leave, and need to be approved by DGS.

Qualifying Paper Writing Seminar (7980)

Students will complete their qualifying paper within the framework of the third-year research and writing seminar. In order to accomplish the goals of the seminar, students are expected to complete all of their data collection over the summer, along with preliminary data analysis. They should thus enter the course with a QP proposal (written in the spring semester under the direction of their advisor) and having completed a preliminary analysis of their data.

The emphasis in the seminar is on developing students' individual research projects, rather than on teaching new substantive or methodological content. The course provides a structure for the research experience which enables students to maximize learning and skill development from that experience. Specifically, the course aims to do three things:

- *Impose a realistic and effective timetable* on students' projects, so that they are able to complete a high-quality project their third year. This plan is accomplished by requiring frequent drafts and student presentations of work in progress.
- *Provide useful feedback* on student work as it evolves. This goal is accomplished by (a) the instructor's comments on drafts and (b) in-class presentations of individual students' work followed by discussion.
- *Teach a limited amount of content* relating to the "art" of carrying out a research project, writing it up for publication, and navigating through the review process.

Students will retain their second-year advisor with expertise in their substantive area of interest and are expected to consult this advisor concerning the qualifying paper project. Evaluation of the final paper is carried out by the instructor and the substantive advisor jointly and results in a letter grade in the research and writing seminar.

Students are expected to present their QP project to faculty and graduate students at a colloquium held early in the Spring of their third year. Note that this is not a requirement for gaining the MA, rather, it is an expectation meant to help students refine the paper in its final stages before it is sent out for review for publication.

Comprehensive Examinations

Students are required to take two comprehensive examinations in subfields of sociology. Ordinarily, students are expected to complete both comprehensive examinations by the end of the spring semester of the third year. In extreme situations, they can take their exams by the first week of their fourth year. Students may not defend a dissertation proposal until both comprehensive examinations have been passed.

Topics and Committees

The Department maintains standing comprehensive examination committees in most major subfields. Comprehensive examination committees are updated annually (typically in April/May) and posted on the Department Web site: <http://sociology.virginia.edu/graduate/comprehensive-exams>

Graduate students with a serious interest in an area of research not covered by our current list of standing examination committees may petition the Director of Graduate Studies for permission to take a comprehensive exam in that area. Reasonable requests will be accommodated if at least two faculty members are willing and able to serve as an ad hoc examination committee.

Each committee will prepare, or update as necessary, (1) a sample reading list; and (2) a set of sample examination questions. These materials will be posted on the Collab web site at <https://collab.itc.virginia.edu/portal> under the “Sociology Comp Exams” tab. All students are “members” of this Collab site.

Preparation for the Examination

A student who intends to take a particular comprehensive examination should complete and submit an examination form (available from the Department office or from the Department’s Web site at <http://sociology.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.virginia.edu/files/CompIntentForm.pdf>) at least one month prior to their comprehensive examination dates. The student should also contact the committee chair for that examination. The committee chair will work with one additional faculty member on the comp committee to write questions and evaluate the student’s examination. Typically, these graders will draft four or more questions for the exam (giving the students a choice of two or more questions) that touch on core issues related to the subfield.

Where appropriate, each student can provide a supplemental list of readings to their graders that covers their specific interests for their specialty. The committee chair shall make sure that this list is sufficiently general to cover an important dimension of the specialty, and is not too parochial. Their two graders shall draft two questions covering these readings, and the graduate

student will have the choice of selecting one of these questions. Overall, then, the exam will typically have six questions and the students will choose to answer three of those questions.

Students are strongly encouraged to allocate sufficient time in their schedules for examination preparation. For examinations to be taken later in the spring of the third year, students should register for either a directed reading or non-topical research hours supervised by the chair of the examination committee. If additional time is needed, students should utilize the summer break between the third and fourth years to prepare for an examination early in the fourth year.

Finally, students shall have 32 hours to complete their comprehensive exam. Each exam shall not exceed 21 pages, double-spaced, standard format (not including bibliography).

Evaluation of the Examination

There are three possible evaluations of comprehensive exams: Pass with Distinction, Pass, and Fail. Both examination readers must agree on the evaluation. In the case of disagreement between the two examination readers, a third committee member will be called in to evaluate the examination.

A student who fails a comprehensive exam may retake an exam in the same field only once. Repeated failures may result in the student being dropped from the program.

At the completion of the exam, the examination committee members will note the results on the comprehensive examination form, sign the form, and file it with the Graduate Administrative Assistant.

Dissertation Proposal

Under the supervision of a dissertation advisor and committee, students must prepare a written dissertation proposal and conduct a successful oral defense of that proposal. This requirement is expected to be met by the end of the fall of the fourth year.

Dissertation Committee

At the outset of the dissertation phase of a student's program, the student should identify a committee chair/advisor and two additional committee members from among the Department's faculty. Although it is not required, the student may wish to identify an external reader at the proposal stage (see "The Dissertation" below), as some external readers appreciate the opportunity for early involvement.

The committee approval form is available from the Department office or on the Department Web site at: <http://sociology.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.virginia.edu/files/PhD.CommApprovalForm-Proposal%20Dissertation.pdf>

This form will list (and be signed by) the dissertation advisor and committee members of the student. The form should be reviewed and signed by the Director of Graduate Studies by the end of the sixth semester (i.e., spring of the 3rd year). This form has two objectives:

1. To encourage students to work actively towards the formation of a dissertation committee at the beginning of the sixth semester, so that they can have the form ready for everyone's approval by the end-of-semester deadline.

2. To facilitate students' planning for the preliminary summer research that will allow them to successfully complete and to defend their dissertation proposal in the seventh term.

After constituting a dissertation committee and submitting the committee approval form, students will be considered to have advanced to candidacy by the Department.

Dissertation Proposal

Although the length and form of the dissertation proposal will vary according to the preferences of the student and his or her dissertation advisor and committee, an acceptable dissertation proposal should contain the following elements: (a) a thorough and thoughtful review of the research literature on the relevant topic; (b) a clear statement of one or more research questions and an explanation of why and how the dissertation will make a contribution to the literature by answering those questions; and (c) a clear and detailed plan for carrying out empirical research to address the research questions, including a description of data sources and analytical methods. In addition, if the project aims to test hypotheses, the proposal should include a section developing a theoretical framework and deriving the relevant hypotheses.

Because research projects inevitably evolve during the process of empirical data collection and analysis, the proposal is not intended to be a binding "contract" which must be carried out exactly as specified. At the same time, the proposal should not be vague and inchoate. The proposal should be developed and detailed sufficiently to convince readers of the project's value, while still allowing flexibility for the shifts in direction and emphasis that are likely to emerge as the research proceeds.

When the committee determines that the proposal is ready, a date will be scheduled for the oral defense of the dissertation proposal. At least one week in advance, the student should provide a paper copy of the proposal to the Administrative Assistant for public announcement and circulation. On the day of the proposal defense, the student and committee members should complete the dissertation proposal defense form, available from the on the Department Web site at:

<http://sociology.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.virginia.edu/files/DissProposalReviewREVSP2015.pdf> and file it with the Administrative Assistant.

Progress Reports

At the end of each term after the defense of a dissertation proposal (beginning with the term in which the proposal is defended), the student must submit a two-paragraph progress report to the Director of Graduate Studies detailing his/her research activities and, the relevance of these activities to the course of research and dissertation writing.

The dissertation advisor will similarly be required to submit a one-paragraph summary of his/her assessment of the student's work over the term, indicating whether he/she is making satisfactory progress towards completion. The reports will constitute the basis for the student's evaluation at the department annual graduate review.

The Dissertation

Students are required to write a doctoral dissertation, which should be a substantial contribution to the existing body of knowledge in the discipline. The work should be of publishable quality, either as a book or as several journal articles. In addition, students must conduct a successful oral defense of that dissertation. Ordinarily, students are expected to complete the dissertation within one to two years after defense of the proposal (that is, between the end of the 5th year and the end of the 6th year), depending upon the nature of the data and analysis involved.

Ordinarily, a student will retain the same dissertation advisor and committee as he or she moves from the proposal stage to the research and writing of the dissertation itself. However, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences requires that a tenured or tenure-track faculty member from another Arts and Sciences department (or, but only with the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School, a faculty member from another school of the University) participate in examining the student at the dissertation defense. Therefore, if the student has not already done so at the proposal stage, it is advisable for the student to select this external reader shortly after the proposal defense and to seek his or her input as appropriate during the development of the dissertation project. Preferably as soon as the composition of the dissertation committee is finalized, but certainly prior to scheduling their dissertation defense, students should fill out and submit to the Graduate Administrative Assistant a [Final Title & Committee Form](http://sociology.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.virginia.edu/files/PhD.Final%20Dissertation%20Committee%20Approval%20Form.pdf) (<http://sociology.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.virginia.edu/files/PhD.Final%20Dissertation%20Committee%20Approval%20Form.pdf>). Signatures of all committee members are required (an email confirmation will suffice in lieu of signature). Students will not be allowed to defend a dissertation until this form is completed with all signatures. The title submitted here can no longer be changed prior to graduation.

The dissertation should be a substantial contribution to an existing body of knowledge in the discipline. Although the length and form of the dissertation will vary according to the preferences of the student and his or her dissertation advisor and committee, the work should be of publishable quality. Depending upon the nature of their projects, students should plan to publish their dissertation research either as a book or as two or more high-quality journal articles. When the committee determines that the dissertation is ready, a date will be scheduled for the oral defense of the dissertation. The student should contact the Administrative Assistant well in advance if he or she wishes to reserve a special room for the defense (e.g., in the Rotunda). At least one week in advance, the student should provide a paper copy of the dissertation to the Administrative Assistant for public announcement and circulation. On the day of the defense, the student and committee members should complete the dissertation defense (“Final Examination”) form, available from the Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Web site at <http://graduate.as.virginia.edu/thesis-submission-and-graduation>). These forms should then be filed with the Administrative Assistant, who will obtain the signature of the Department Chair and then submit these forms to the GSAS Registrar by the appropriate deadline.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES FOR DEGREE CANDIDATES

Degree Applications are due in SIS:

no later than September 30 if the degree is to be conferred in December
 no later than January 31 if the degree is to be conferred in May.
 no later than June 30 if the degree is to be conferred in August.

Theses/Dissertations are due:

no later than November 30 if the degree is to be conferred in December
 no later than April 30 if the degree is to be conferred in May.
 no later than July 31 if the degree is to be conferred in August.

Title pages are due (to the Academic Administrative Assistant):

no later than November 30 if the degree is to be conferred in December
 no later than March 15 if the degree is to be conferred in May
 no later than July 31 if the degree is to be conferred in August

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT PROGRESS

CANDIDACY PROGRESS – RECOMMENDED TIMELINE AND DEADLINES (Years 1-2)			
	Fall	Spring	Summer
1st year: Timeline	Course work: 1. Intro to Stats (5020) 2. Classical Theory (5030) 3. Core course or elective 4. Pro-Seminar (8031) 5. Sociological Issues (8030)	Course work: 1. Intermediate Statistics (5120) 2. Research Methods (5100) 3. Contemporary Theory (5060) 4. Core or Elective course 5. Sociological Issues (8040)	Prepare for the qualifying paper.
Deadlines: None			
2nd year: Timeline	Course work: 1. Qualitative methods (5140) 2. Core course or elective 3. Core course or elective 4. Sociological Issues (8030) 5. Non topical (8998) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits	Course work: 1. Qualifying paper directed reading (9010)* 2. Core course or elective 3. Core course or elective 4. Sociological Issues (8040) 5. Non topical (8998) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credit Prepare for first comprehensive exam.	First draft of the qualifying paper recommended by the end of the summer.
Deadlines (optional-MA degree)		* Submit qualifying paper research proposal to apply for MA degree	

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE AND DEADLINES (Years 3-4)			
	Fall	Spring	Summer
<p>3rd year: Timeline</p> <p>Deadlines (must be met for advancement to candidacy):</p>	<p>Course work: 1. Qualifying paper writing seminar (7980) 2. Sociological Issues (8030) 3. Non topical (8999) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits</p> <p>1. Take first comprehensive exam at the beginning of the term. 2. Prepare for 2nd comprehensive exam. 3. Make progress on assembling dissertation thesis committee. 4. Revise qualifying paper in light of writing seminar feedback.</p>	<p>Registration: Non topical (8999) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits (Course requirements are completed by the start of this term)</p> <p>1. Take second comprehensive exam at the beginning of the term. 2. Make final revisions to qualifying paper and submit for publication. 3. Submit dissertation committee approval form to DGS. 4. Explore funding opportunities for dissertation research.</p> <p>1. Both comprehensive exams must be completed by the end of this term. 2. The student must have secured a dissertation committee and submitted the approval form by the end of the term.</p>	<p>If applicable, revise qualifying paper in light of journal reviews. Otherwise, submit the paper to a different journal.</p> <p>Work on dissertation proposal (conduct pilot studies, preliminary archival research, preliminary data analysis, etc.)</p>
<p>4th year: Timeline</p> <p>Deadlines:</p>	<p>Registration: Non topical (9998) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits</p> <p>Dissertation Proposal Defense. Dissertation Research.</p> <p>The Dissertation Proposal should be defended by the end of the term.</p> <p>First dissertation progress report due to the DGS by the end of the term.</p>	<p>Registration: Non topical (9998) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits</p> <p>Dissertation Research/Writing.</p> <p>Second dissertation progress report due to the DGS at the end of the term.</p>	<p>Dissertation Research/Writing.</p>

RECOMMENDED TIMELINE AND DEADLINES (Year 5)			
	Fall	Spring	Summer
5th year:	Registration: Non topical (9999) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits	Registration: Non topical (9999) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits	
	Dissertation Writing.	Dissertation Writing.	
Deadlines:	Third dissertation progress report due to the DGS by the end of the term.	Dissertation defense. Dissertation projects requiring additional time will be evaluated term by term through dissertation progress reports (signed by the advisor and the student).	

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

First-year students will be advised by a faculty member who will be assigned by the DGS based on shared interests. In subsequent years, students should choose their academic advisor from among the members of the sociology faculty, with his or her consent. For students working on a Qualifying Research Paper, the advisor will also be the student’s substantive advisor on that paper. For students working on a dissertation proposal or dissertation, the advisor will also chair the student’s dissertation committee.

MAINTAINING “GOOD STANDING”

Graduate students must remain in good standing at all times. Students who do not maintain good standing may be required to withdraw from the graduate program.³ In addition, students who are receiving financial aid through the Department (as a teaching or research assistant or in the form of a fellowship) must remain in good standing in order to continue receiving that aid. Good standing requires:

1. Earning no grade lower than B- (the lowest grade for which the University will award graduate credit).
2. Maintaining an overall GPA of 3.3 (B+) in graduate courses in the Department.
3. Completing at least five graded courses (15 hours) by the end of the second semester.
4. Completing all coursework by the end of the fifth semester.
5. Completing a Qualifying Research Paper by fall of third year and presenting that paper at the annual colloquium.
6. Completing comprehensive exams by the end of the third year.
7. Defending a Ph.D. proposal by the end of the ninth semester.
8. Completing and defending the Ph.D. dissertation within two years after defending the proposal.
9. Completing all requirements for the Ph.D. degree within seven years from the date of enrollment in the graduate program. (This requirement is mandated by the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and can only be waived with GSAS permission.) This seven-year time period continues to run when a student has taken continuous enrollment or off-grounds status, and even when a student formally withdraws from the graduate program, if she or he later applies for reinstatement.

³ International students should consult with the International Studies Office regarding the implications of not maintaining good standing. <https://iso.virginia.edu/>

DOCTORAL COMPLETION STATUS vs. OFF-GROUNDS ENROLLMENT AND WITHDRAWAL

The Graduate School offers the use of Doctoral Completion/Affiliated Status to accommodate ABD students who are actively completing a dissertation or who have essentially completed their degree programs and need to remain enrolled for administrative purposes in order to graduate.

See GSAS website for the Doctoral Completion Status Petition Form:

<http://graduate.as.virginia.edu/sites/graduate.as.virginia.edu/files/DoctoralandThesisCompletion-2017.pdf>

Doctoral Completion (AKA “Affiliated status”) does not allow students to access University of Virginia facilities, to hold assistantships, and requires payment of only a reduced fee rather than tuition. Affiliated status does not accrue credit, and will not allow for the deferral of student loans. Once approved for Doctoral Completion Status, students may not return to full-time study in their degree program. **International Students** who plan to remain in or return to the United States cannot enroll with affiliated status and keep their student visa status.

An advanced student who remains enrolled full-time but who will reside outside of the Albemarle-Charlottesville area for a period may petition to utilize off-Grounds status and, if approved, be charged tuition plus a reduced off-Grounds fee. Though a student who enrolls in this status is eligible for library privileges and University insurance or health services, the student would not be eligible for the use of other University resources (like recreational facilities), or to hold an assistantship. Students must submit a new petition each year. See GSAS website for the Off-Grounds Enrollment Form:

<http://graduate.as.virginia.edu/sites/graduate.as.virginia.edu/files/GSASOffGroundsRequest-2017.pdf>

Make sure the Departmental Graduate Administrator has a copy of the Doctoral Completion Petition or Off-Grounds Enrollment form prior to submission to GSAS.

A student who has fulfilled all formal GSAS and departmental degree requirements except the dissertation may elect to withdraw voluntarily and seek reinstatement in order to graduate. The Graduate School will not police the relationship between the department and non-enrolled students so as to prevent the latter from being advised. However, the reinstatement process is subject to a petition reviewed by the DGS and the Graduate School, and the circumstances for reinstatement will be considered carefully. The Graduate School will not permit students to move fluidly between enrollment and non-enrollment. Students who withdraw are likely to be reinstated only after there is evidence of their scheduled defense. Further, reinstatement is available for two years following withdrawal, after which the student would need to complete a new application for admission unless the department and Graduate School agree to waive that requirement. Reinstatement policy requires that the student apply to be reinstated at least 60 days before the start of the term in which they seek to be reinstated (i.e., by June 15 for fall, November 15 for spring, and April 15 for summer).

See the GSAS website for the Request for Reinstatement Form:

<http://graduate.as.virginia.edu/sites/graduate.as.virginia.edu/files/GSASReinstatementRequest-2017.pdf>

Occasionally students experience serious health or family situations that require them to suspend progress toward their degrees for some period of time. Students facing such situations may opt to formally withdraw from the graduate program with the intention of seeking reinstatement later. To return to the graduate program, students need not reapply through the regular admissions process, but may petition the Department and the Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences for reinstatement. Under specific circumstances, students experiencing child-birth may invoke the following provost policy:

Financial Childbirth Accommodations for Graduate Students on Assistantship

Provost Policy PROV-028 <http://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/PROV-028> provides six weeks of financial accommodations for recovery from childbirth to all students on a graduate assistantship (Graduate Teaching Assistants, and Graduate Research Assistants). Funding for six weeks of replacement wages, or for hiring a temporary replacement, is provided in equal share by the school in which the student is enrolled, and the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Affairs. Please see the full policy at the link above for details.

Neither affiliated status nor formal withdrawal suspends the seven-year deadline for degree completion. Students who have had to suspend progress due to serious health or family issues must still petition for extension of the deadline, but the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences ordinarily grants such petitions. In particular, the following provost policy may be invoked:

Academic Accommodation for Graduate and Professional Students Who Experience Significant Life Events

Provost Policy PROV-027 <http://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/PROV-027> allows students who experience a significant life event while enrolled full time and in good standing in any graduate or professional degree program to petition for a one-semester extension to the normative time limitations associated with his/her graduate degree program.

WORKING AS A GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT

Most students will, at some point during their graduate careers, serve as a Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) in a course taught by a faculty member. In addition to offering a source of funding, service as a GTA is intended to provide students with training and experience in teaching. As most students will eventually seek teaching positions in colleges or universities, their GTA experience is an important part of their graduate education. At the same time, of course, their work as a GTA is a substantial impact on the quality of education for undergraduate students. The Department is committed to maintaining that quality at a high level. As a result, students who exhibit serious deficiencies in teaching and an inability or unwillingness to remedy them may lose their GTA-based funding and face possible termination from the graduate program.

TA Assignments

TA assignments are made by the Director of Graduate Studies. The TA assignments are not a reflection of student's performance in the program but instead are a result of a complex matching procedure aiming to ensure that all courses are adequately covered. While there is no magical way for assigning students to courses, Josipa Roksa, the current director of graduate studies, considers these factors:

- a. First-time TA's should not TA alone (i.e., classes with just one TA)
- b. Classes with multiple TA's should not include only new TA's (ideally, there should be a balance between new and experienced TA's)
- c. Whenever possible, try not to assign students to the same classes they have TA's the previous semester
- d. Matching principle: greatest good for the greatest number, within the constraints specified in a-c; aim to create the most optimal outcomes by matching students and faculty preferences in ways that give students their first or second choice
- e. At the end of the matching process, flag students who do not get one of their top 3 choices in a given semester and aim to ensure that they do so the following semester.

These points reflect guiding principles, not rules. Not all of them can be met in a given semester depending on the combination of courses and TA's available.

If you have any questions about your TA assignment in any given semester, please do not hesitate to see the director of graduate studies.

GTA Job Description

(Approved by the faculty of the Department of Sociology on February 3, 2000)

By assisting in large lecture courses, TAs enhance the quality of undergraduate education by providing undergraduate students with more personalized teaching attention, opportunities for academic discussion, and clarification of information related to courses. In their capacity as teaching assistants, graduate students have the opportunity to be mentored by experienced teachers and to gain valuable teaching experience. In working with course instructors, TAs can observe a variety of teaching styles, ask questions about teaching, gain insight into constructing undergraduate courses, and contribute comments or suggestions for improving courses. In order to perform effectively, TAs need to know both what kinds of duties will be expected of them and what kind of support they can expect to receive from supervising instructors.

Because the courses to which TAs are assigned vary, TA duties can vary considerably. However, in most courses, TAs are typically expected to:

- Prepare for and lead discussion sections
- Schedule and hold at least two (2) office hours per week
- Meet with the instructor and other TAs on a weekly or bi-weekly basis
- Grade exams and papers
- Conduct a midterm evaluation of sections (or arrange for teaching assessment poll through the Teaching Resource Center) and go over the results with the instructor
- Attend lectures
- Assist with giving exams

In addition, instructors sometimes ask that TAs perform some of the following tasks that add to the quality of courses and/or help TAs to develop teaching skills:

- Give input on or help to create student assignments
- Contribute to or give input for exams
- Give all or part of a lecture to gain experience
- Schedule additional review sessions for students
- Set up and/or maintain a course Web site

- Arrange for A/V equipment as needed for lectures
- Put course items on reserve at the library

As learning teachers, TAs should expect the support and direction of their supervising instructors. In general, TAs should expect that the course instructor will:

- Meet with TAs before classes begin to give an overview of the course, provide TAs with copies of the syllabus and desk copies of books and reading packets, and clarify the instructor's expectations of TAs for the particular course
- Ensure that discussion section enrollments stay within reasonable limits (typically 18-20 students per section)
- Make available any readings to be placed on reserve
- Meet with TAs on a weekly or bi-weekly basis to ensure a consistent learning experience across sections and rigorous discussion of class materials and to communicate the logic and design of courses so that graduate students learn to develop and teach their own classes.
- Discuss grading criteria and desired grade distribution with TAs
- Decide whether exams are to be proctored
- Have the final say in matters regarding grades, exam content, and course content
- Write an evaluation of the TA: "Faculty shall be responsible for a brief written statement on each TA's performance. This statement shall be based on faculty interactions with the students and faculty review of semester-end student evaluations of the TA, as well as either (1) faculty observation of at least one section meeting conducted by each TA, or (2) an interim student evaluation of each TA with feedback/consultation from faculty. The faculty member will discuss this evaluation with each TA and place it in the student's department file." TAs may arrange with the TRC to have a section videotaped.)

Although the general expectations outlined above do not preclude that TAs may perform additional voluntary tasks not included in this job description, there are limits to what TAs can be required to do. A course instructor should not ask or expect TAs to have sole responsibility for performing duties that clearly are the instructor's own, such as syllabus preparation, exam writing, or lecturing. Nor should instructors expect TAs to do personal errands not related to the course or other work not related to the course. Finally, instructors must not be involved in any relationship with TAs that would constitute violation of the University's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Lab Instructor Position

Some low-enrollment courses include work in a lab for hands-on learning (e.g. using a statistical software) in addition to attending lecture. In such cases, Lab Instructors will be appointed and funded to supervise lab work. Lab instructors will not be expected to prepare new material for the lab, but rather to assist students with technical questions that may arise as they work on assignments prepared by the faculty. By like token, lab instructors are not expected to attend lectures or grade assignments or exams. They are expected, however, to hold regular office hours. The typical workload for a lab instructor will be between 3-5 hours per week, as specified by their letter of employment.

DEPARTMENTAL OFFICES AND FACILITIES

Office space:

If you are a TA and have an assigned office space, please remember that conditions are rather crowded. We ask that you bring as few personal items as possible to the TA offices. Please keep your space clean, neat, and adhere to all safety measures. **Do not leave your office space unsecured when you leave it** (even for a trip down the hall), as thefts are occasionally reported. Make sure that confidential course-related materials (such as examination questions or students' work) are secure at all times.

Graduate Lounge:

We have a graduate lounge in our department for graduate student use only. A computer and a printer are available for students to use. Students obtain a key to the lounge so they can access the lounge at night or on weekends. It must be kept locked at all times. Undergraduates should not be invited in to use those computers.

Printing:

Please use the printer in the graduate lounge **sparingly**. Graduate students will be allotted 10 boxes of paper and 5 toner cartridges for the Fall semester. Once those supplies are gone, no more will be furnished until the new quota is allotted at the beginning of the Spring semester. If supplies are left over from fall or spring semester, they may be carried over to the next semester in addition to the quota allotted for that semester. However, at the end of the summer semester, all remaining supplies will be returned to the department. Each new fall semester will start out with the original quota of supplies. See Appendix for further details.

Use of copy machine in main office:

The copy machine is for department business only. TAs may copy course materials only if the instructor of the class for which they are assisting has requested it. Course web sites on UVa Collab should be used to post readings which students may print for themselves. Students may not copy materials for the classes in which they are enrolled. Copy machines for student use are located in the libraries and elsewhere on Grounds.

Mailboxes:

You have been assigned a mailbox located in the mailroom (Randall Hall 101). You may receive U.S. Mail at the Department address. You may mail your personal **stamped** mail from this office. Please do not let mail pile up for long periods of time.

E-mail:

You have been assigned an e-mail address. Be aware that most of our communication within the department is done by e-mail. You will need to check it often so that you don't miss the latest information and deadline dates.

MISCELLANEOUS

Travel and other professional expenses:

The department aims to support your professional pursuits by providing support for travel to present at professional conferences and other professional expenses. The specifics depend on available funding, number of applications, and other needs of the graduate program. Policies and procedures regarding funding for travel and other professional expenses are updated every July and posted in the graduate lounge as well as shared with all graduate students in July and January.

Presenting at conferences is an important part of professional development. When presenting at national and international meetings, keep in mind that you are representing not only yourself, but also your advisor and the department. We thus strongly urge you to talk to your advisor as you prepare and submit conference presentations. Apart from conference presentations, it is in general a good idea to stay in close communication with your advisor regarding your plans and activities.

Whenever funds are available in the DGS discretionary budget at the end of the fiscal year, the funds will be used to support graduate student research, especially but not exclusively in the early stages of the program (qualifying paper and/or dissertation proposal). The DGS will send an email in April to students notifying them if funding is available, the application procedures, and the terms for applying for funding in a given year. The terms and amounts of the awards are at the discretion of the DGS and will vary across years based on available funding and existing needs. The availability of these funds is not guaranteed.

Get to know the faculty:

The most important thing you can do to help yourself through the experience of graduate school is to get to know the faculty, especially those who share your intellectual interests. Very early in your graduate career, develop the habit of dropping in during faculty office hours or engaging faculty at department events. It is incumbent on you to initiate these relationships. In graduate school, your progress and your academic achievements are your responsibility. Building strong relationships with faculty will be very important to you at multiple points in your graduate career, from seeking teaching assistantships, to forming thesis or dissertation committees, to obtaining help with job searches.

Incompletes:

Taking an incomplete is sometimes helpful or necessary in order to finish a course paper following the end of a semester. However, you should use this option only sparingly and with care. University regulations stipulate that grades of IN (Incomplete) must be converted to the appropriate letter grade within one semester of the date on which the IN was registered. After 200 days from the original grade due date, the IN grade automatically reverts to an F, which will appear on the transcript. A grade of F, like any other grade below B-, is considered to be an unsatisfactory grade. Receipt of such a grade is grounds for dismissal from the graduate program. Once a grade of F is recorded, the grade may only be changed with the approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies, and the acceptable reasons for the Dean to authorize such a grade change are limited to cases “when an instructor certifies that, because of an error in calculation or transcription, an incorrect grade has been submitted.”

The Department has stricter requirements for an incomplete in the Qualifying Paper Directed Reading course (see associated discussion on p. 7).

Fellow students:

Your fellow graduate students are the best resource you have here. Ask them questions, engage in conversation with them, interact with them, attend the Graduate Student Association meetings held in the department. Sociology is a small department and most graduate students are more than willing to be helpful.

Problems or concerns:

If a problem or concern arises relating to your studies or your teaching, please discuss it as soon as possible with your faculty advisor, the Director of Graduate Studies, or the Graduate Administrative Assistant. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality, consistent with University policies.

APPENDIX: Sociology Grad Lounge Policy

For each semester, the department will furnish a set number of toner cartridges and boxes of copy paper. Once those supplies have been used, the graduate students will be responsible for furnishing their own supplies. Any supplies purchased by graduate students for the lab must be compatible with the equipment and needs to be approved by the Sociology Department. If supplies are left over from fall or spring semester, they may be carried over to the next semester in addition to the quota allotted for that semester. Hence, at the end of the summer semester, all remaining supplies will be returned to the department. Each new fall semester will start out with the original quota of supplies. See the following breakdown for lab supplies:

Summer: 3 boxes of toner & 5 boxes of paper
Fall: 5 boxes of toner & 10 boxes of paper
Spring: 5 boxes of toner & 10 boxes of paper

The Konica-Minolta Scanner-Printer should be used sparingly, and only as a backup for the lab printer. Supplies will be purchased as needed, but usage will be monitored.

Faculty please note that this new policy will affect the printing of readings from Collab. The department encourages you to use course packets instead of posting all readings online.