

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2020-2021

**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. Another set of M.A. degree changes are being implemented starting with the 2019-20 academic year. These changes primarily re-organize courses that count toward the MA vs. the PhD and do not impact requirements or course progression for students in the PhD 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 for 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.*

PhD DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In the 2019-20 academic year, the department is admitting students into a single program of study leading to the Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree. However, students have an option of earning an M.A. degree en route to the Ph.D. (see section on 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.

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.

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 an Advanced Topics course with their advisor in order to begin the work on their qualifying paper. For further information and expectations regarding this course, please see the Qualifying Paper section. 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 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. Any additions requested by the faculty are reviewed by the Graduate Studies Committee. Students may not petition the Director of Graduate Studies to substitute other courses. The list currently includes the following:

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 at least 12 credit hours. 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.

Optional Tutorial Courses

Tutorial courses are intended to fill in gaps in the existing curriculum. A tutorial course 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 tutorial in a Core Course instead 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 DGS. Maximum enrollment in any tutorial course is 3 students. Students can count only one elective tutorial class toward their Ph.D. credit requirements.

Students interested in taking a tutorial course should discuss this with the DGS and the course instructor as soon as possible, and at least one month before the start of the semester in which they would like to take the course. Students will need to petition the DGS explaining why the tutorial course is important for the student’s program of study. In addition, depending on whether the course in question was offered before, it may need to go through the review/approval procedures (thus, the importance of starting the process at least one month in advance). This is a graded course and the readings and assignments need to be equivalent to a regular 3-credit course.

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. Moreover, students who transferred credits will need to make a particularly compelling case for taking courses outside of the Department. See <https://sociology.as.virginia.edu/graduate-petition-forms> 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 the Ph.D. degree. Moreover, transfer credits do not count toward the M.A. degree.

Petitions for credit transfer 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 <https://sociology.as.virginia.edu/graduate-petition-forms>; (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). When evaluating requests for credit transfer, the Director of Graduate studies will consider whether the course relates to a recognized subfield or topic area within the discipline and is substantially equivalent in scope and quality to courses offered by the Department. As needed, the DGS may consult with departmental faculty whose research areas are related to the course under consideration. 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.

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 (https://sociology.as.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.as.virginia.edu/files/GradPetitionWaiveReq_0.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) an Advanced Topics Seminar with the advisor in the Spring of the second year (SOC 95xx), and b) third-year research and writing seminar (SOC 7980), working with the instructor of the course as well as the 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.

Part I: Writing the Qualifying Paper Research Proposal – Advanced Topics Seminar (SOC 95xx)

The first step in completing the qualifying research paper is to write the proposal. The proposal will be written during the Advanced Topics Seminar that students take with their advisors in the Spring of the second year (SOC 95xx). During this course, 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 course.

Advanced Topics Seminars are typically created anew for each student, depending on specific areas of interest and topics for the qualifying papers. Each new Advanced Topics Seminar needs to be approved by the DGS and entered into SIS before students can enroll. A maximum of 3 students can enroll in an Advanced Topics Seminar at any given time.

Procedures for taking an Advanced Topics Seminar:

- a) In the fall of their second year, students should talk to faculty and identify an advisor for the Qualifying Paper; the QP advisor will serve as the instructor for the Advanced Topics Seminar
- b) If the faculty member agrees to serve as QP advisor, the student and the instructor should work on a syllabus for the Advanced Topics Seminar, which needs to include purpose/goals of the seminar, a reading list for each week, and a list of assignments throughout the course. This course is graded and the readings and assignments need to be equivalent to a 3-credit course. The syllabus also needs to note meeting times – the expectation is that the course will meet for at least 1 hour each week.
- c) The syllabus should be submitted to the DGS for approval at least two weeks before the start of classes.

The final paper for the course is the Qualifying Paper Research Proposal and must be submitted to the instructor and the DGS by **April 20th**. 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**.

If students wish to receive an M.A. degree en route to the Ph.D., the QP proposal will satisfy the final examination requirement for the M.A. See related discussion under M.A. Degree.

Incompletes in the Advanced Topic Seminars 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.

Part II: Completing the 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 QP advisor with expertise in their substantive area of interest and are expected to work with this advisor concerning the qualifying paper project. Evaluation of the final paper is carried out by the instructor of the writing seminar and the substantive advisor jointly and contributes to the final grade in the 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. To remain in good standing, students are expected to complete both comprehensive examinations by the end of the spring semester of the third year. If there are extenuating circumstances that may prevent students from meeting this deadline, they should talk to the DGS as soon as possible. Students may not defend their 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: [2020-2021 Comp Committees](#)

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 the intent form (available from the Department office or from the Department's Web site at https://sociology.as.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.as.virginia.edu/files/CompIntentForm_1.pdf) at least one month prior to their comprehensive examination dates. After completing the form, please submit to Academic Administrative Assistant who will send the form out to request signatures via DocuSign. 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.

Where appropriate, students 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.

The exam will typically have six questions, and students will choose to answer three of those questions.

- Four or five of those questions will be based on the core issues related to the subfield (with students answering 2 of them).
- One or two additional questions will be based on the supplemental list covering students' particular specialty (and students will answer 1 of them).

Students are strongly encouraged to allocate sufficient time in their schedules for examination preparation. If students have not taken a substantive course in the comp area, they may wish to take a tutorial course in that area. For exams taken in the spring semester, students may consider registering for 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.

The 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 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 student should fill out the committee approval form available from the Department office or on the Department Web site at: https://sociology.as.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.as.virginia.edu/files/PhD.ApprovalofDissertationCommittee.ref_0.pdf. After completing the form, please submit to Academic Administrative Assistant who will send the form out to request signatures via DocuSign.

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 in the fall of the 4th year, and at least 30 days before the dissertation proposal defense. The committee must be approved before the dissertation proposal defense can be scheduled.

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:

<https://sociology.as.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.as.virginia.edu/files/PhD.ReviewofDissertationProposal%20%281%29.pdf>.

Once the form is filled out, please submit to Academic Administrative Assistant who will send the form out to request signatures via DocuSign.

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 at https://sociology.as.virginia.edu/sites/sociology.as.virginia.edu/files/PhDFinalDissertation_0.pdf. Once the form is filled out, please submit to Academic Administrative Assistant who will send the form out to request signatures via DocuSign.

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>). This form should then be sent to 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.

In addition to the Final Exam form, the student is responsible for completing all other dissertation applications and materials by the appropriate deadlines (eg., applying for graduation in SIS & survey of earned doctorates & upload to digital repository). See GSAS website for more info. <http://graduate.as.virginia.edu/thesis-submission-and-graduation>

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENT PROGRESS – PhD PROGRAM

	Fall	Spring	Summer
1st year	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			

<p>2nd year</p> <p>Deadlines QP Proposal Optional MA</p>	<p>Course work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<p>Course work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qualifying paper Advanced Topic Seminar (95xx)* 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 <p>Prepare for first comprehensive exam.</p> <p>* Submit qualifying paper research proposal to advisor and DGS by April 20th</p>	<p>First draft of the qualifying paper recommended by the end of the summer.</p>
<p>3rd year</p> <p>Deadlines</p>	<p>Course work:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Qualifying paper writing seminar (7980) 2. Sociological Issues (8030) 3. Non topical (8999) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take first comprehensive exam at the beginning of the term. 2. Prepare for 2nd comprehensive exam. 3. Revise qualifying paper in light of writing seminar feedback. 	<p>Registration:</p> <p>Non topical (8999) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits (Course requirements are completed by the start of this term)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take second comprehensive exam at the beginning of the term. 2. Present qualifying paper at a colloquium 3. Make final revisions to qualifying paper and submit for publication. 3. Identify dissertation chair 4. Explore funding opportunities for dissertation research. <p>Both comprehensive exams must be completed by the end of this 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</p> <p>Deadlines:</p>	<p>Registration:</p> <p>Non topical (9998) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits</p> <p>Dissertation Proposal Defense.</p> <p>The Dissertation Proposal should be defended by the end of the term.</p>	<p>Registration:</p> <p>Non topical (9998) – as needed to reach minimum of 12 credits</p> <p>Dissertation Research/Writing.</p>	<p>Dissertation Research/Writing.</p>

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>

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

ACADEMIC ADVISORS

First-year students will be advised by a faculty member who will be assigned by the DGS and Director of Admissions 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.² 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 the fall of the third year and presenting that paper at the annual colloquium in the spring of the third year.
6. Completing comprehensive exams by the end of the third year.
7. Defending a Ph.D. proposal by the end of the ninth semester.

² International students should consult with the International Studies Office regarding the implications of not maintaining good standing. <https://iso.virginia.edu/>

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.

Students are considered to have advanced to candidacy after they have completed: a) all coursework, b) the Qualifying Paper (starting with the proposal and followed by writing the full paper), and c) both comprehensive exams. Students are thus expected to advance to candidacy in the spring of their 3rd year.

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 many students will benefit from teaching experience when going on the job market, the GTA experience is an important part of graduate education. Students' work as a GTA has a substantial impact on the quality of education for undergraduate students. The Department is

committed to maintaining that quality at a high level. Students who exhibit serious deficiencies in performing their duties (e.g., failure to perform core duties outlined below such as leading discussion sections, holding office hours, meeting with course instructor, grading, etc.) will be asked to meet with the DGS. If they do not promptly remedy the deficiencies they 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 students' 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. Endeavor to create diversity in TA assignments for each student such that students do not TA the same courses repeatedly
- 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 student 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 April 2, 2020)

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 assignments, exams and papers

- Attend lectures
- Proctor 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 create student assignments
- Contribute to or give input for exams
- Give all or part of one lecture to gain experience
- Schedule exam review sessions (and do so in lieu of office hours)
- Set up and/or maintain a course Web site
- Copy/scan documents to be placed on the course Web site or for course handouts/exams
- Put course items on reserve at the library
- Enter grades in SIS and save them for final review and approval by the course instructor

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 reading packets, and clarify the instructor's expectations of TAs for the particular course
- Order desk copies for TAs in a timely manner (i.e., before the start of classes)
- 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/how exams are to be proctored
- Have the final say in matters regarding grades, exam content, and course content

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 asked 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. While GTAs may support exam writing (craft a few questions, take practice exams, give feedback), they cannot be responsible for writing entire exams. Nor should instructors expect TAs to do personal errands not related to the course or other work not related to the course (including work for other courses taught by the instructor). Finally, instructors must not be involved in any relationship with TAs and both instructors and TAs must not be involved in any relationship with students they are teaching that would constitute a violation of the University's Conflict of Interest Policy.

Professional Development

Being a TA is a learning experience. We thus encourage TAs to conduct midterm course evaluations and/or arrange for a teaching assessment poll through the Center for Teaching Excellence, and discuss any valuable insights with the instructor.

Similarly, we expect that instructors will visit at least one section taught by each TA during the course of the semester and provide either a verbal or a written summary of feedback. The Department also requires that the instructor observes and provides verbal or written feedback to all first time TAs. DGS will email faculty with new TAs at the start of the fall semester with a reminder about this requirement. In addition to helping students learn and improve as teachers, observing students' teaching becomes useful when nominating TAs for teaching awards.

*Time Commitment*³

Per the appointment letter, GTAs are expected to be available to faculty for course-related matters from the start of the first GTA pay period to the end of the last GTA pay period (specific dates are provided in the appointment letter). Moreover, the Department expects all GTAs to be available for an in-person meeting with course instructors at least 72 business hours before the first day of classes and through the end of the exam period. Hard copy official final exams must be graded on Grounds and given to the course instructor, who must keep them for a year per the state records policy. Please make travel arrangements with those expectations in mind.

The GTA appointment lasts for 20 weeks each semester, and is paid out in 10 bi-weekly pay periods. Over the duration of the appointment, a three-section GTA appointment is considered to be 10 hours a week and a four-section GTA appointment is considered to be 13.3 hours per week. Although the appointment lasts 20 weeks, the majority of the work occurs during the 15.5 weeks of a given semester. The hours will thus vary from low/none (e.g., before/after end of classes) to medium (e.g. over the course of the semester) and high (e.g., exam week, midterms). Time commitments will also vary depending on a variety of factors such as GTA experience as well as the course structure (e.g., more frequent smaller assignments vs. a smaller number of bigger exams). Overall, faculty should plan courses such that the work matches, as closely as is possible and allowing for expected variation, the expectation that the three section GTAs work 200 hours (and four section GTAs work 266 hours) over the course of the semester.

We urge faculty and students to keep in mind that this is not an hourly assignment, which means that students do not enter weekly hours worked on a timecard, and that work is highly variable across the duration of the appointment. We encourage GTAs and faculty to discuss workload distribution at the first meeting of the semester, along with course structure, grading expectations, this description, mentoring opportunities, and all other matters related to building a constructive working relationship.

Students and faculty with concerns about tasks, availability, and time commitments are encouraged to contact the Director of Graduate Studies.

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

³ Please note that full-time students are limited to working a combined maximum of 20 hours per week across all assignments at UVA, and GTAs are responsible for notifying prospective employers of all other work commitments. Working more than 20 hours per week requires written approval from the GSAS Dean before the commitment is made. Exception may not be possible for foreign national students, depending on visa regulations.

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. Moreover, please UVA computing accounts in a professional manner as they are subject to FOIA (Freedom of Information Act).

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 Advanced Topic Seminars associated with the Qualifying Paper Proposal (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.