# Sociology Graduate Student Handbook (v. 09-15-2014)

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Welcome the Graduate Program in Sociology at UCR! Training graduate students for successful careers as scholars and teachers of sociology is a core part of the Department of Sociology’s mission. The graduate program at UCR is designed to grant the Ph.D. degree, with the Master’s degree awarded along the way as students meet requirements for admission to the Ph.D. program (unless students already hold an MA in Sociology from another university, in which case a second MA in Sociology will not be granted).

This document details the requirements and policies of the graduate program, and it is intended to serve as both a resource and guide for students and faculty. Students should read, review, and reference this graduate manual periodically as they move through the program to be familiar with expectations and policies at various stages of the program. In addition to the descriptive content in this document, you will find the full text of specific policies in the Appendix. If you have further questions, do not hesitate to ask the Graduate Affairs Assistant or Graduate Advisor.

Course Descriptions corresponding with the Course Numbers included in this document can be found in the UCR Course Catalogue at http://www.catalog.ucr.edu/.

Mentoring Program for Graduate Students in Sociology

Upon admission, each new graduate student is assigned a faculty research mentor prior to his or her arrival on campus. The assignment is made by the Graduate Affairs Committee (GAC). Whenever possible, the GAC will take the potential student's interests and preferences into account when assigning a faculty research mentor. A major objective of the faculty research mentorship program is to help new students get immersed into the culture of research and publication at the earliest possible stage of graduate training at the University of California Riverside. Mentors serve as guides who can assist students with planning their coursework, navigating specialization requirements (in conjunction with specialization Chairs), developing research agendas, professional socialization, and teaching issues. For the complete Mentoring Plan, please see the Appendix.

Mentor assignment and meeting frequency
(1) Each student will be assigned a mentor in the first year.
(2) Students are to initiate at least one meeting with their first year mentor in the first couple weeks of the first quarter, after which they can decide whether to choose a new mentor.
(3) Faculty mentors are to initiate at least two meetings with their first year mentee in the first year.
(4) Students may elect a different mentor at any time. Faculty may also change their mentee without explanation but should consider the timing of the student’s progress before doing so.
a. To change mentors, a student must complete a mentor change form and submit it to the Graduate Affairs Assistant.
b. The selection of a faculty member does not preclude a student from working with other faculty, which is encouraged.

(5) Only tenured faculty can serve as the primary mentor after a student advances to candidacy.

(6) Where possible, faculty should consider integrating mentees in ongoing research projects in the first year.

(7) Where applicable, mentors and mentees should continue regular meetings after the first year.

Your mentor, along with the Graduate Affairs Assistant and the Graduate Advisor, offer students guidance and advice to facilitate timely progress. Students should be sure to avail themselves of these advising resources, and they should also consult with the Chairs of their specialization areas regarding specialization exams.

GETTING THROUGH THE PROGRAM

The details below apply to students admitted for the fall of 2012 and earlier:
The graduate program at UCR is designed to grant the Ph.D. degree, with the Master’s degree awarded along the way as students meet requirements for admission to the Ph.D. program. The structure of the program is designed to give students a strong background in theory, methods, and statistics before pursuing two of the department’s eight areas of specialization: Criminology and Socio-Legal Studies, Evolutionary Sociology, Social Psychology, Gender Studies, Organizations and Institutions, Political Economy and Global Social Change, Race and Class Inequality, and Sociological Theory.

The program is divided into four distinct phases: (1) core program in theory and methods, (2) writing of the Exam-paper (E-paper), (3) admission to the Ph.D. program and the period of specialization, and (4) advancement to candidacy or dissertation phase of the Ph.D. Each of these is briefly outlined below:

**Phase 1: The Core Program**

During the first year, students will normally take required sequences of core courses in theory, research methods, and statistics. Students coming to the program with a Master’s degree are still required to take these three sequences of courses, although students can petition to test out of one or more of the courses if they have already had extensive training in the courses offered in the core program. Figure 1 outlines the normal sequencing of courses for first-year students. Coursework performance in the first year will figure prominently in the evaluation of all first-year students’ progress in the program. Thus, it is essential that students receive high grades in all core courses in the first year.
Phase 2: The Examination or E-Paper

This phase can begin in the first year, and students may consider using an existing paper from a graduate course or Master’s thesis from another university as the core of the exam or “E-paper” if appropriate. The paper is not intended to be a Master’s thesis; rather, the paper is to be journal length, written in a journal format, and potentially publishable in an academic journal or presentable at a professional meeting. Students who move rapidly through the program almost always start writing, or at the very least think about their paper and the three members of the faculty who can serve as advisors on the paper during their first year in the program. The best scenario is that the paper is written before the beginning of the second year because students may petition for exemption from Sociology 250, which is a required seminar devoted to helping students write their e-paper. Thus, from the very first days at UCR, students should seek out faculty whose areas of expertise will be helpful in writing their paper.

Three faculty members serve as a committee that will guide the student in writing the e-paper. To avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, when domestic partners or spouses are a majority of the faculty overseeing an examination, another faculty member will be added to that committee. At least two of the committee members must be members of the faculty in sociology at UCR; the third committee member may be from another department if appropriate. Once the paper is completed, a student will defend the e-paper in an oral examination (hence, the label E-paper or Exam-paper) conducted by the members of the E-paper committee. When students have passed this oral exam and have completed the coursework in the core program, they are then able to enter Phase 3 of the program.

Figure 2 delineates the sequence of requirements for students through Phases 1 and 2 of the program. When all of the requirements in the boxes are met, students then formally apply for admission to the Ph.D. program.
Phase 3: Period of Specialization
When students pass the oral examination of the E-paper, they submit a petition for official admittance to the Ph.D. program. This petition consists of stating the two areas of specialization that the student intends to pursue in the Ph.D. program. At this point, the faculty as a whole will meet to review a student’s progress and decide if a Master’s of Arts degree will be granted, unless the student already has one (The University of California does not duplicate degrees that students already have received within a particular
discipline). The faculty will review the student’s grades in the core program. If these meet minimal department standards of maintaining a 3.5 GPA or above, and if faculty in areas of specialization chosen by a student are willing to work with this student, then admission to the Ph.D. program is normally granted.

Students may have already begun taking courses in their intended areas of specialization before they complete the requirements for the E-paper. Except for the specialization in sociological theory, for which Sociology 202A and 202B count as the core course(s), students are required to take the core course, plus two additional seminars in their chosen areas of specialization.

Each specialization area requires a written qualifying examination to complete the specialization. Please see the section below on “Rules Governing the PhD Qualifying Examination,” as well as the Appendix, for more details on the specialization exams and the policies governing them. Students are encouraged to communicate as early as possible with the Chairs of the specializations regarding appropriate preparation and planning for these exams.

All students are expected to gain the equivalent of at least one academic quarter of supervised research experience through enrollment in Sociology 297 and/or through working as a Research Assistant. The equivalent of at least one academic quarter of experience in classroom teaching at the college level is also required. Teaching Assistants must participate in the TA training program offered by the Graduate Division, and enroll in Sociology 301 for the first quarter they are employed as a TA. SOC 301 provides students an opportunity to learn about pedagogical issues in sociology. Each student takes the initiative in arranging for teaching and research experience with the assistance of his or her faculty mentor and the Graduate Advisor.

**Phase 4: Ph.D. Candidacy**

Students are expected to have passed their two specialization-area examinations, formed a committee from members of the department for their dissertation prospectus, completed the prospectus in consultation with members of their committee, and taken the oral examination on the prospectus absolutely no later than the end of the 4th year in the program. The examining committee will consist of a total of five committee members—three of whom (or more, if a student chooses) will be members of the prospectus committee, another from the department who will read and sit in on the oral examination on the prospectus, and finally, a fifth person who comes from outside the department. Thus, four members of the committee must be sociologists from the department, along with one outside member.

The prospectus itself is a document that denotes the research problem, summarizes the existing literature on this problem, and outlines a plan for conducting the research. Dissertations inevitably vary in the problems being addressed, the literatures that are relevant, and the methodologies employed, but in all cases, students should actively consult with members of their committee to be sure that they are on the right track in developing their prospectus. The goal of the prospectus and examination on this document is to make
sure that the dissertation is focused on an important problem and, equally significant, that it is “doable” within a reasonable amount of time. The goal is to finish the dissertation in a timely manner so that the student can receive the Ph.D. and move onto the job market (see discussion below on prospectus examination).

When students pass the oral qualifying examination, they are now considered to be ABD. At the end of the fifth year, the department’s formal commitments for financial support end, although we work very hard to find ways to support students as they write their dissertations; students enrolled in the 7th year or beyond are ineligible for departmental support. Because formal obligations of the department to support students expire at the end of the fifth year, it is always better to have completed the dissertation prospectus and taken the oral exam on this prospectus much earlier, preferably at the end of the third year or at the beginning of the fourth year. In this way, the department will be able to continue to support students as they begin their research and writing on the dissertation.

For each year after the end of the fifth year, the Graduate Division begins to monitor a student’s progress with increasing intensity, and the longer a student goes without finishing the dissertation beyond the sixth year, the greater is the pressure put on this student to meet timetables. If a student takes too long with the dissertation, both the department and Graduate Division will consider termination of the student. Thus, it is essential that students begin to identify their ideas for a dissertation topic and begin literature reviews on this topic during the third year in the program, even as they are still taking courses and studying for their specialization examinations.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION WITHIN THE DEPARTMENT

As noted above, students should begin to consider two areas of specialization that they wish to pursue by the end of their second year, if not before. The Department’s areas of specialization are as follows:

Criminology and Socio-Legal Studies
The Department of Sociology offers a specialization in Criminology and Socio-Legal Studies. It focuses on the causes, manifestations, consequences, and control of crime, ranging from youth and adult street crime to domestic violence, corporate crime, white-collar crime, and crimes committed by the government or its agents. An understanding of crime and its prevention requires multidisciplinary research. While this is recognized, the specialization emphasizes sociological approaches involving the structural and cultural factors producing crime and violence, such as structural transformations of the urban landscape and the connections between race, disadvantage, and violent victimization. The specialization also emphasizes theories of law and their application to the legal system and its relation to other social institutions and social phenomena. This emphasis extends to how these factors shape conceptions of crime and influence the legal system. Basic research knowledge about crime and the legal issues is central to this specialization, but applying that knowledge to inform legal policies and practices is also emphasized.
Key faculty: Augustine J. Kposowa, Alfredo Mirande, Tanya Nieri, and Robert Nash Parker

Affiliated Units: Some faculty affiliate with the Presley Center for Crime and Justice Studies. The Presley Center emphasizes basic and evaluation research on the prevention and control of crime in the State of California.

Course requirements: Sociology 249 (core course), plus at least two of the following: 264F (cross-listed with Gender), 268 (cross-listed with Gender and Race & Class), 278, 279, 280E, 280F, 280G, 280I, 280J (cross-listed with Organizations and Institutions), 280K, 280M, 280S.

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

Evolutionary Sociology
The Evolutionary Sociology specialization examines theories and research on evolutionary processes, broadly conceived. Evolutionary thinking has existed since the founding of sociology and now permeates, often implicitly, much sociological analysis in diverse fields. The specialization examines long-term cycles and stages of societal and inter-societal development, the rise and demise of world-systems, neurosociology, evolutionary psychology, cross-species comparisons and analysis of human behavior and organization, the biological bases of human behavior, interaction, and social organization and both sociocultural evolution and human biological evolution. The specialty is also developing cross-disciplinary collaborations with other social sciences as well as with the natural sciences.

Key faculty: Christopher Chase-Dunn, Alexandra Maryanski, Jonathan H. Turner, as well as Stephen K. Sanderson who is a visiting scholar in the department.

Course requirements: Sociology 222 (core course) and at least two of the following: Sociology 242E, 242M (cross-listed with Theory and Organizations and Institutions), 243E, 244, 251, 257 (E-Z), 281.

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

Gender Studies
The Gender Studies specialization focuses on gender inequality in the United States and in comparative and global perspective, with an emphasis on intersections of gender, class, and race/ethnicity. Gender Studies draws on sociological and feminist theories in examining gender inequality at the micro, meso, and macro levels. Faculty research interests include the construction of masculinities and femininities, intersectional theory, gender and the self, feminist politics and movements, gender and social change, and law.
For those interested in research on gender and the self, identity, and interaction, the Social Psychology Research Laboratory is a state-of-the-art experimental laboratory that is available for conducting gender research. For more information, go to www.sociology.ucr.edu/spyrl/index.html.

Affiliated units: The Department of Women’s Studies (www.womensstudies.ucr.edu) and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Intersexual, and Transgender (LGBIT) program (http://www.lgbitstudies.ucr.edu/) offer a range of interdisciplinary undergraduate courses on gender, sexualities, and queer studies. Students might inquire with these departments about teaching assistant opportunities.

Key faculty: Katja M. Guenther, Alfredo Mirande, Karen D. Pyke, Ellen Reese, and Jan E. Stets.

Course requirements: Sociology 262 (core course; correction: cross-listed with Theory), plus at least two of the following: Sociology 240, 256, 258, 262, 263 (cross-listed with PEGSC and Organizations and Institutions), 264E, 264F (cross-listed with Criminology and Socio-legal Studies), 264G, 264M (cross-listed with PEGSC), 264P (cross-listed with PEGSC), 264T, 268 (cross-listed with Race and Class Inequality), 285N (cross-listed with Social Psychology).

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

Organizations and Institutions
The Organizations and Institutions specialization examines the evolution and contemporary structure of organizations and the institutional systems (e.g. economy, polity, law, education, kinship, religion, etc.) in which they are embedded. Theories of organizations and institutions are explored as are empirical regularities in organizations and particular institutional systems. Special emphasis is placed on the evolutionary history and dynamics of institutional systems during long-term societal development as well as the interaction among institutional systems and the organizations within them.

Key faculty: Adalberto Aguirre, Steven Brint, Christopher Chase-Dunn, Robert Hanneman, Matthew Mahutga, Alexandra Maryanski, Raymond Russell, Scott Savage, and Jonathan H. Turner.

Course requirements: Students should take either Sociology 244 (core course emphasizing institutional analysis) or Sociology 245 (core for those emphasizing organizational analysis) plus at least two of the following courses: Sociology 242M (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology and Theory), 243R, 252 (cross-listed with PEGSC), 253, 255I, 255L, 255M (cross-listed with PEGSC), 255N (cross-listed with PEGSC), 255O, 257E (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology and PEGSC), 257F (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology), 257G (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology), 257J (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology and PEGSC), 263 (cross-
listed with Gender and PEGSC) and 280J (cross-listed with Criminology and Socio-legal Studies).

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

**Political Economy and Global Social Change (PEGSC)**
This specialization brings together a number of sub specialties, including social movements, historical, political, economic and macro-comparative sociology. We build on classical political economy, including the works of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim, and Karl Polanyi, as well as more recent theories of political economy. This specialization brings together empirical examinations of world cities, demographic and ecological dynamics, the welfare state, large scale social networks, income inequality, social movements, class and gender dynamics, the evolving intersocietal division of labor, ethnic entrepreneurship, global democracy, and the political, economic, social, demographic and health implications of North-South international migration for sending and receiving areas. Our faculty expertise encompasses the full range of methodological diversity in the study of political economy, including econometrics, network analysis, demographic methods, qualitative and ethnographic approaches, and comparative-historical analysis in both its qualitative and quantitative forms.

**Affiliated Units: The Institute for Research on World Systems (IROWS)** organizes collaborative research among social and natural scientists on long-term, large-scale change, with special attention to ecological, demographic, and institutional causes and effects of world historical social change. IROWS is currently directed by Christopher Chase-Dunn and Matthew C Mahutga in the Department of Sociology. For more information, go to [www.irows.ucr.edu](http://www.irows.ucr.edu)

**Program on Global Studies (PoGS)** is an interdisciplinary research and education initiative—the humanities, natural sciences and social sciences—in the study of global issues, with the intent of increasing the amount of interdisciplinary research on campus as well as the educational mission of the university on important contemporary issues. PoGS is the UC-Riverside branch of the UC systemwide Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation. The PoGS co-Directors are Juliann Allison (Political Science) and Christopher Chase-Dunn (Sociology). For more information, see: [www.irows.ucr.edu/pogs/pogs.htm](http://www.irows.ucr.edu/pogs/pogs.htm)

PEGSC also collaborates with the Comparative Ancient Civilizations Program, the Center for Women in Coalition, the UCR Public Policy Initiative ([http://www.ppi.ucr.edu/](http://www.ppi.ucr.edu/)) and the Edward J. Blakely Center for Sustainable Suburban Development.

**Key faculty:** Steven Brint, Christopher Chase-Dunn, Katja M. Guenther, Robert Hanneman, Augustine J. Kposowa, Matthew C Mahutga, Ellen Reese, and Raymond Russell.

**Course requirements:** Sociology 281 (the core course), plus at least two of the following 4-unit courses: 243J, 243K, 243S, 251, 252 (cross-listed with Organizations and
Institutions), 255M (cross-listed with Organizations and Institutions), 257E (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology and Organizations and Institutions), 255N (cross-listed with Organizations and Institutions), 257J (cross-listed with Organizations and Institutions), 261, 263 (cross-listed with Gender and Organizations and Institutions), 264M (cross-listed with Gender), 264P (cross-listed with Gender), 264T(cross-listed with Gender), 265J (Cross-listed with Race and Class Inequality), 272E, 275H and 282 (cross-listed with Race and Class Inequality). Two 2-unit courses (Soc 259 or Soc 260) that are being developed can be substituted for one of the 4-unit courses listed above.

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

**Race & Class Inequality**

The Department of Sociology at the University of California, Riverside offers a specialization in Race and Class Inequality. Research in this specialization focuses on the social, economic, political, and health consequences of race/ethnicity and inequality both nationally and globally. Students in the specialization study social, economic and political disparities, including both class and race as the bases of inequality. They examine theories and studies of racial and class oppression and exploitation. The specialization investigates the meaning of race/ethnicity, theories of race and inequality, causes and manifestations of racism, prejudice, and discrimination, and the effects of these phenomena on individuals, groups, nations, and international relations. Research in the specialization uses both qualitative and quantitative approaches and employs variegated theoretical frameworks. In addition to the above, students are free and encouraged to develop their own unique research interests in consultation with the faculty. Originality and excellence in thought, theorizing, and research are stressed.

Race and Class Inequality combines two of the core sub-areas of the discipline of Sociology. The structuring of U.S. society (and the world) along race and class lines, and the limitations to equal opportunity that this poses, pervades almost all other aspects of Sociology and other social science disciplines.

**Affiliated units:** The topic of race and class links to other specializations within the Sociology department as well as to other departments and institutes on campus. Within the department, there are overlaps with Social Theory, with Organizations and Institutions, with Gender Studies, with Criminology and Socio-legal Studies, and with Political Economy. All of these areas incorporate issues of Race and Class Inequality into their subject matters. In terms of the campus, the Race/Class Specialization has synergies with Ethnic Studies, Women’s Studies, History, Religious Studies, Political Science, and a number of other departments. Relevant institutes include UC Mexus, and the Center for Study of the Americas. The Specialization also has connections with the UC Center for New Racial Studies, UC-wide Pacific Rim program, and the UC Institute for Labor and Employment.
**Key faculty:** Adalberto Aguirre Jr., Vanesa Estrada-Correa, Katja M. Guenther, Augustine J. Kposowa, Matthew Mahutga, Alfredo Mirande, Tanya Nieri, Karen D. Pyke, and Ellen Reese.

**Course requirements:** Soc 246 (Core course), plus at least two of the following: 265F, 265I, 265J (cross-listed with PEGSC), 265R, 266, 267, 268 (cross-listed with Criminology and Sociological Studies), 282 (cross-listed with PEGSC), ETST 221 (when taught by Dr. Mirande) and ETST 245 (when taught by Dr. Mirande).

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

**Social Psychology**
The specialization in Social Psychology focuses on micro-level theories and research on the relationships between individuals, on the one side, and social structures and culture, on the other. Emphasis is on: (1) individual-level processes such as identities and emotions; (2) interactive processes that emerge between individuals and within groups; and (3) the effects of micro-social processes on meso-level and macro-level structures, and vice versa.

**Affiliated units:** The Social Psychology Research Laboratory is a state-of-the-art experimental laboratory for conducting research on self, identity, interaction, and groups. Personnel associated with it include co-directors Peter J. Burke and Jan E. Stets, and affiliate Scott V. Savage. For more information see [www.sociology.ucr.edu/spyrl/index.html](http://www.sociology.ucr.edu/spyrl/index.html)

**Key Faculty:** Adalberto Aguirre, Peter J. Burke, Scott V. Savage, Jan E. Stets, and Jonathan H. Turner.

**Course requirements:** Sociology 248 (the core course), plus at least two of the following: Sociology 285E, 285G, 285I, 285J, 285K, 285N and 285S.

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

**Sociological Theory**
Since the founding of the department at UCR in the 1950s, theory has been a strong area. While theory can be very eclectic, most of those working in theory are committed to the epistemology of science and to using general models and principles to explain basic properties and processes of the social universe. This emphasis is at the core of what the department teaches, but at the same time the department does offer courses in the history of sociological ideas and in critical theoretical approaches to understanding the social world. Still, the specialty is built around scientific explanation more than alternative approaches. Students who specialize in theory will be expected to have a firm grasp of the classical theorists in sociology—particularly Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx, Max Weber, Georg Simmel, Emile Durkheim, and George Herbert Mead but, potentially, others as well.
This base is to be supplemented by a thorough knowledge of contemporary theoretical perspectives and key figures working within these perspectives. Each year at least one and often more, seminars are offered on a broad array of topics in theory with the goal of the program in theory to produce very broadly trained theorists who know the entire range of theoretical sociology, particularly across its scientific wing. Also included are more critical theorists and those less committed to the epistemology of science. Moreover, seminars in other areas of specialization outside of theory are often used to meet requirements for the theory specialization. There are, for example, courses in the Social Psychology, Political Economy and Global Social Change, and Gender Studies specialties that can be taken by students preparing for examinations in theory.

**Key faculty:** Adalberto Aguirre, Steven G. Brint, Peter J. Burke, Christopher Chase-Dunn, Robert A. Hanneman, Alexandra Maryanski, Karen Pyke, Raymond L. Russell, Jan E. Stets, and Jonathan H. Turner.

**Course requirements:** Sociology 202A, 202B, and at least two of the following courses: Sociology 242E, 242F, 242G, 242M (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology and Organizations and Institutions), and potentially, courses in other specializations, including 222 (cross-listed with Evolutionary Sociology), 285E (cross-listed with Social Psychology), 255I (cross-listed with Organizations and Institutions), and 262 (cross-listed with Gender).

To fulfill the requirements of the specialization, students must pass an examination in accordance with the standardized procedure.

**THE WRITTEN QUALIFYING EXAMINATIONS**

All students must complete a written Ph.D. qualifying examination in each of their two areas of specialization. The written exam should be completed by the end of the third year or, at the absolute latest, at the beginning of the fourth year of graduate study. Standardized procedures for the written Ph.D. qualifying examinations are as follows; the complete language of the Qualifying Examination Procedures can be found in the Appendix:

(a) Written examinations are administered during the instructional periods of Fall, Winter, or Spring quarters, although each specialization sets its own time schedule for taking the examinations. Each specialization must offer its examination twice per year. Some allow for taking the examination in the summer, but most do not. Students should consult with the Chair of the specialization committee about the examination schedule well in advance of when they hope to take the exam. It is up to the student to keep up with changes in the committee composition and rules governing the specialization exams. Students have the right to petition the exam committee to take a specialization exam at a time other than when it is regularly offered. The committee must unanimously
approve the petition for the exam to be offered at a time other than the two regular exam times.

(b) Requests to take a written examination should be filled out the quarter before the academic quarter in which the student wishes to take the examination.

(c) Standing committees appointed by the Department Chair prepare and evaluate the qualifying examinations in the department’s areas of specialization. A student may petition for appointment of additional members to the committee if work was done with other faculty in the field.

(d) The exam is administered during a 72-hour period and consists of 3-4 essay questions which students must respond to during the 72-hour period. The suggested length of the exam is 15 pages maximum per question, or 45 pages maximum for the entire exam. Specialization areas will provide students with instructions on the distribution and submission of the examination.

(e) Examinations are independently evaluated by committee members. No more than two weeks following receipt of the exam from the student (or within two weeks of the beginning of the academic quarter if an exam is administered during a break period), the committee submits their final, overall evaluation, together with their individual written evaluations to the Graduate Affairs Assistant. All members of the committee must give written comments on the exam responses.

(f) Examinations are evaluated on the basis “With distinction,” “Excellent,” “Good,” “Marginal,” or “Failing.” All members of the committee must judge the exam to pass “With distinction” for the exam to be passed as such.

(g) If there is a difference of opinion on failing or passing the exam, the committee should meet to discuss it (in person or via conference call). If there is still a difference of opinion after such a meeting and one person fails the exam, a fourth reader will be assigned by the Department Chair to evaluate the exam to decide if it passes or fails.

(h) If students fail the exam, they can re-take the entire exam once by the end of the following quarter. If they fail the exam twice or fail the exams in any two specialization areas, the Department will recommend to Graduate Division that the student be terminated from the program.

(i) The committee Chair informs the student of the final evaluation of the examination no more than three weeks following submission of the typed copies to the Graduate Assistant. The Chair of the examination committee is required to meet with the student following the exam to discuss the results and committee members’ feedback on the exam.
THE ORAL QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

The rationale for the written prospectus and oral qualifying examination is for students to use the exam as a means of getting constructive criticism from faculty on their plan for the dissertation. The committee is composed of four sociology faculty and one faculty member who must be a voting member of the UC academic Senate, but who does not hold an appointment in the student's academic unit or graduate group. The written prospectus with feedback from committee members encourages students to focus their research problem and develop a viable plan to address the problem. The oral qualifying exam assesses how well students can defend their work and their knowledge of relevant literatures, while at the same time allowing committee members to interact with each other and the candidate in making further criticisms and suggestions for improving the prospectus and, ultimately, the dissertation. The oral qualifying examination must be completed absolutely no later than by the end of the 14th quarter in the program in order for a student to be considered to be making acceptable progress.

When a student has written a prospectus for their dissertation and has received feedback from all committee members, including the outside member, an oral qualifying examination is then scheduled.

Students should schedule the oral as soon as they think that each member of the committee has received, read, and not voiced any large reservations about the prospectus. The exam usually takes two hours. In the examination, the student must:

a) Justify the research problem and methodology introduced in the prospectus;
b) Explain the literature reviewed and how it frames the research problem;
c) Defend the prospectus, but at the same time, address any concerns, criticisms, and questions that members of the committee have about the proposed research;
d) Demonstrate proficiency in the students’ areas of specialization and in the relevant theories and methods, to the satisfaction of the committee members present;
e) Recognize that the committee may require significant changes in the prospectus before allowing a student to proceed with the dissertation.

The purpose of the prospectus and oral qualifying examination is to make sure that the student is on the right track and that the dissertation is “doable” within the limited time frame imposed by the program. If a student fails the oral, then they must re-work the prospectus and re-take the oral examination. Often, the committee will pass the student on the oral with the proviso that they must revise the prospectus in light of criticism. It is very important that an approved prospectus, signed by the members of the dissertation committee, be placed on record with the Graduate Affairs Assistant.

FINAL EXAMINATION AND APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

The Doctoral Committee supervises a final oral examination, the focus of which is the content of the doctoral dissertation. The Dissertation Committee is usually composed of
three members of the Sociology Department. A fourth member from outside the Department may also be included on the Doctoral Committee. To avoid conflicts of interest or the appearance of a conflict of interest, when domestic partners or spouses are a majority of the faculty overseeing a final examination, another faculty member will be added to that committee.

Under unusual circumstances, the exam may be waived with the unanimous consent of the committee and the approval of the Graduate Dean.

The final examination may be given either just prior to the completion of the dissertation and while the student is in residence during a regular academic session or after the acceptance of the dissertation, and will be open to all members of the academic community. The dissertation must be filed electronically with the Graduate Division, using the formatting guidelines available on the Graduate Division web site.

GRADUATE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Two important organizations that deal with graduate student interests are the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and the Sociology Graduate Student Association (SGSA).

The Graduate Student Association (GSA)
GSA is a campus-wide organization that works as both the legislative and executive body of all graduate students. It appoints graduate students to various Academic Senate and administrative committees, both on campus and system-wide. It offers small grants to students for participating in professional meetings. Perhaps most importantly, it is a watchdog organization that represents the interests of graduate students on campus. Its members are elected by graduate students of each graduate program and the officers of its council are also the officers of the GSA. Regular meetings are held at announced times and places and these meetings are open to the public. The GSA office is located at 203 Highlander Union Building (HUB).

Sociology Graduate Student Association (SGSA)
SGSA is the departmental graduate student organization. All graduate students are automatically members and are encouraged to participate in its meetings and, most importantly, in the election of the SGSA President and other officers, including representatives to the campus-wide Graduate Student Association. The goal of the SGSA is to represent the interests and concerns of graduate students in departmental decisions relevant to the graduate program. The SGSA sends representatives to attend faculty meetings, although these representatives cannot be present when specific graduate student cases are discussed or when faculty merits and promotions are discussed. The SGSA often takes a position on issues in the department, with students presenting the position of SGSA in a faculty meeting or with the president of SGSA writing a memo to the faculty on the position and concerns of graduate students on a particular issue. The SGSA also holds social events and nominates students who participate in several Sociology Department Committees, including the Colloquium Committee.
IMPORTANT ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

The Annual Faculty Evaluation of Graduate Student Progress

In June of each academic year, the faculty evaluates the progress of all graduate students. The Graduate Assistant assembles the records of all students, including their course work, exams taken or not taken, and number of years in the program. Students are also required to complete and submit a self-report of their activities and plans for the following academic year. All information is considered in the faculty’s evaluation of a student, and those faculty familiar with a student and this student’s progress are asked to render their judgments. At this meeting, the faculty has the option in all cases of terminating students whose grades have fallen below the 3.5 minimum, who have incompletes in two or more courses, and/or who have fallen behind normative time in completing any phase of the program. Even if a student is not terminated for a low GPA and/or slow progress through the program, the faculty reserves the right to terminate its initial offer of fellowship and TA support to this student.

Based upon the faculty’s evaluation of a student’s performance and progress in the program, the Graduate Advisor is charged with writing a letter to each student informing him or her of the faculty’s assessment. The letters fall into a series of categories: (1) a letter informing the student of satisfactory or even exceptional performance and progress, (2) a letter outlining specific concerns (e.g., an ‘I’ grade, low GPA, failure to take exams, etc.) and setting specific targets and times for eliminating these concerns which, if not met, could lead to termination; (3) a letter outlining serious concerns and a mandated timetable for eliminating these concerns which, if not met, will require termination from the program; and (4) a letter notifying a student that he or she has been recommended to the Graduate Division for immediate termination from the program. For most students, categories (1) and (2) are typical, but any student who receives a category (3) letter should be very concerned.

It is important for students to assess their own progress through the program and see where they stand and how they are likely to be evaluated at the end-of-the-year evaluation by the faculty. Any student who is below a 3.5 GPA in graduate course work, and is more than one quarter behind normative time in completing their E-paper, E-paper exam, passing grades on their specialty examinations, dissertation prospectus, exam on the dissertation prospectus, or the dissertation itself will receive, at a minimum, a letter in category (2) above and in category (3) if GPA is far below 3.5 and they are far behind normative time in the any of the four phases of the program. A student who has failed to meet the mandates in letters of category (2) and (3) within the time specified is almost certain to receive a letter in category (4). All students should assess where they stand at the end of each quarter in meeting the requirements of the department. If they have concerns, they should immediately consult with the Graduate Advisor, but in all cases, the burden is on students to monitor their work and progress during the course of any year. The faculty will not accept an explanation that the student “did not know” that their status was problematic and in trouble because all students, in their normal activities as a student, can easily determine
their GPA, whether or not they have taken necessary course work, whether or not they have
done so within normative time frames, and whether or not they have completed their e-
paper, prospectus, exams, or dissertation in the normative times outlined above. If the
student perceives that there are problems, this student should immediately consult with the
Graduate Advisor. The Graduate Advisor will always try to help students meet the
requirements of the program.

**Academic Appeals Procedure**
Graduate students are examined at a number of points by faculty and faculty committees.
Occasionally misunderstandings or disagreements may arise. Students have the right to
review and appeal academic decisions.

Students are strongly encouraged to pursue informal resolution of disputes over academic
decisions before resorting to a formal appeal. Informal resolution usually involves further
communication among the affected parties (e.g., a student and the chair of his/her exam
committee), perhaps in the presence of a third party if desired.

To protect all parties’ rights in the informal or formal appeals resolution process, the
following procedures must be observed per campus policy:
http://graduate.ucr.edu/academic_affairs.html

**Academic Leaves and Withdrawals**
Once accepted and enrolled in the program, it is assumed that students will continue in the
program to its completion. For any exception to this assumption, a student must petition
the Graduate Adviser for an approved leave, with the final approval determined by the
Graduate Division. At times there are circumstances that make a leave necessary and
perhaps even desirable, but it is the clear policy of the department to grant leaves only
under extraordinary circumstances. If a student fails to register for classes and does not
make prior arrangements to go on leave, the student will automatically forfeit graduate
status and the obligation of the department to supply support from that point forward. If a
student seeks to return to the program, it is necessary to formally reapply for admission to
the graduate program.

Under special circumstances students may enroll in the graduate program on a part-time
basis. Part-time enrollment is discouraged because it increases the amount of time
necessary to complete the degree in a timely manner, and yet, it is possible—under special
conditions—for students to become enrolled at less than a full load of coursework. Please
note that to be employed by the University (as a TA or GSR), a student must be enrolled
full time.

**Acceptable Progress**
Students should finish the core phase of the program in the first year and be admitted to
the Ph.D. program (after completing the E-paper) no later than the end of the second year.
If students must use the fall quarter of the third year to complete and defend the E-paper,
they will be determined to be falling behind. An informal “grace” period may be extended,
but it is important to recognize that students may face withdrawal of financial support and/or termination from the program.

By the end of the third year and no later than the end of the winter quarter of the fourth year, all students should have taken their specialization examinations and should have begun work on their dissertation prospectus.

By the end of the fourth year, and no later than the end of the fall quarter of the fifth year, students should have taken and passed the oral qualifying examination, filed their dissertation prospectus with the Graduate Affairs Assistant, and become ABD.

The normative period for completing the Ph.D. is six years. Thus, students should have finished their dissertation, taken their oral examination on the dissertation, and filed the dissertation with the Graduate Division by the end of the sixth year.

Students are expected to maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher throughout the program. If a student’s GPA falls below a 3.5, if a student falls behind normative time at any point in the program, or if a student has more than two incomplete grades, that student faces loss of funding and dismissal from the program.

Adding and Dropping Classes
Students adding classes later in the quarter or dropping a class during the quarter must file a petition with the Graduate Assistant. On rare occasions, a student may petition a retroactive drop for a course due to special circumstances. Students should consult with the Graduate Assistant regarding all retroactive drops.

Course Loads
The normal course load for a full-time student is at least twelve units of graduate course work per quarter.

Course Substitution
Students may be able to receive credit for courses taken in other graduate programs, both at UCR or other universities, towards their PhD in sociology at UCR. To request such credit, students should consult the Policy on Graduate Course Substitutions (see Appendix) and follow the procedures detailed there. If a student would like to enroll in a course that would require approval and would only take the course if approved, they should request course substitution prior to enrolling in the course. Students should allow ample time for approval, particularly during break periods.

Incompletes (I)
An incomplete grade (I) is only given when there is a clear need for extra time to complete course requirements. An incomplete can only be given with the instructor’s approval and only when work completed thus far in the course is of passing quality. Students should never assume that an incomplete grade is possible in any course. If an (I) grade is allowed, the student has one quarter to complete the work to remove this grade. If the (I) grade is not removed at the end of the following quarter, it automatically reverts to an (F) in graded
courses and an (NC) in ungraded courses. Since an (F) lowers a student’s GPA, often below the 3.5 minimal level, it is recommended that students seek an (I) grade only special situations and only when the student is sure that the work can be completed within one quarter.

On very rare occasions, extension of an (I) grade can be made, but the student must petition the Graduate Advisor and Dean of the Graduate Division to do so. Students with eight or more units of (I) grades cannot petition for any more, and most importantly, they become ineligible for appointments as either Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants (GSRs) or for fellowship funding. To remove an (I) grade, see the Graduate Assistant for a petition form.

*Grades and Grading*

Any student whose GPA falls below a 3.0 is placed on informal probation by the department and Graduate Division. At the end-of-the year meeting of the entire faculty, when all students are evaluated (see next section), a student below a 3.0 is subject to termination and is likely to be terminated from the program. Students whose GPA falls below 3.5 are also subject to termination, especially if the GPA stays below 3.5 in the second year. As a reminder, then, a 3.5 GPA is the minimum; and all students who fall below this minimum are subject to dismissal from the program by the faculty or a loss of their support from the department.

A grade of (B) in any graduate course is considered marginal. A grade of (B-) indicates that the performance of a student is unacceptabe to the department. A grade of (B-) in a graduate course is considered to be failing and is a cause for immediate faculty attention at its next meeting. Students receiving a B- or less will be reviewed for possible termination. If they are allowed to continue in the program, they will be required to re-take the class for a letter grade as a Soc 290 course. If the student does not raise the grade when retaking the course, automatic termination from the program will ensue.

**FINANCIAL AID**

The department generally provides some degree of financial aid to all students for the first several years of their graduate work. This aid can vary and is subject to the financial situation of the state and university. Both fellowships and a guaranteed number of quarters of employment as a Teaching Assistant (TA) may be offered. GPA and GRE scores are particularly important in determining the level of support offered by the Graduate Division. In years two through five of the program, the department typically offers Teaching Assistantships to all students in good standing, which includes a partial fee remission, medical insurance through the health center, and living costs for a student lifestyle. The department will generally make a five year commitment of support through a combination of fellowship and/or TAship. This support is contingent upon students making acceptable progress through the program and maintaining a GPA of 3.5 or higher. Students who fail to make acceptable progress, who fall behind in their course work, or who fall below a 3.5 GPA may have their financial aid reduced or terminated. Thus, the department’s obligation
to students for financial support is qualified by the performance of students in the program. The department ranks students to TAs based on a number of factors, including GPA, quarters of prior TA support, and teaching evaluations. See the appendix for specific policies and procedures in ranking students for TAs. The department does not guarantee continued support to students who fall behind and/or fail to meet the program requirements.

Other potential avenues of support are Readerships for larger classes without Teaching Assistants, TAships in other departments and programs, employment as Research Assistants on faculty member’s grants, and various fellowships that are often available from outside agencies, such as the National Science Foundation. Students are encouraged to apply for fellowships and faculty will assist in the preparation of fellowship applications.

**SEEKING ASSISTANCE**

If you have any questions about the contents of this pamphlet or about any aspect of the graduate program, please contact the Graduate Assistant or Graduate Advisor. Students are encouraged to consult with their faculty mentor at least quarterly to check in regarding course work planning, progress in the program, and questions or issues that may arise, such as forming committees, preparing for qualifying exams, etc.

The Teaching Assistant Development Program (TADP) helps students hone their pedagogical skills with trainings and other services. For more information on TADP, please see [http://www.tadp.ucr.edu/](http://www.tadp.ucr.edu/).

The Graduate Division also has a range of services available to graduate students through the GradSuccess program. Please consult the Graduate Division website for information at [http://graduate.ucr.edu/](http://graduate.ucr.edu/).
APPENDIX A: POLICIES OF RECORD

Policy on Graduate Course Substitutions

1. Newly-admitted or current students may request credit for core (theory, methods: insert new course numbers here when finalized) courses completed at other institutions by submitting a copy of the syllabus for the course they completed, including a copy of prompts for any written assignments, along with a brief explanation of their request, to the Graduate Affairs Assistant. The Graduate Affairs Assistant will forward the request to the current or most recent instructor of the course, who will be asked to review the course content and comment on its appropriateness for transfer credit. The request and the comment will then be forwarded to the Graduate Affairs Committee, who will vote on the request.

2. Newly-admitted and current students may request credit for graduate courses they have taken in sociology as substitutions for courses in their specialization areas by submitting a copy of the syllabus for the course they completed, including a copy of prompts for any written assignments, along with a brief explanation of their request, to the Graduate Affairs Assistant. The Graduate Affairs Assistant will forward the request to the current or most recent instructor of the course, who will be asked to review the course content and comment on its appropriateness for transfer credit. The request and the comment will then be forwarded to the Graduate Affairs Committee, who will vote on the request.

3. Newly-admitted and current students may request credit for graduate courses they have taken in fields outside of sociology, or in sociology departments outside of UCR, as substitutions for course credit required for courses outside of their specializations by submitting a copy of the syllabus for the course they completed, including a copy of prompts for any written assignments, along with a brief explanation of their request, to the Graduate Affairs Assistant. If the course has been taught at UCR by a current member of the faculty within the last three years, the Graduate Affairs Assistant will forward the request to the current or most recent instructor of the course, who will be asked to review the course content and comment on its appropriateness for transfer credit. The request and the comment will then be forwarded to the Graduate Affairs Committee, who will vote on the request. If the course has not been offered in the department in the last three years, the request will go directly to the Graduate Affairs Committee to vote on the request.

Standardized Policies for Specialization Exams

1. Students are not allowed to complete paper(s) instead of an exam to complete the specialization requirements.

2. Exam Format & Timing

   a. number of questions: 3-4 for major specializations; (2-3 for minor specializations, or one less question than is expected if the student chose it as a major specialization; applicable to members of the 2014 cohort and later only)
b. suggested length of essays: 15 pages maximum per question and 45 pages maximum for the whole exam.
c. time given to complete the exam: 72 hours
d. specialization exams will be offered twice per academic year. Students have the right to petition the exam committee to take a specialization exam at a time other than when it is regularly offered. The committee must unanimously approve the petition for the exam to be offered at a time other than the two regular exam times.
3. Prior exam questions will be made available on file in the Graduate Affairs Assistant’s office for students so that they will know what to prepare for the exam.

4. A reading list for at least one general topic should be developed by all affiliated faculty in the specialization and made available to students; other bibliographies can be tailored to the student’s interest in consultation with the faculty serving on the exam committee.

5. Evaluation of exams

a. All exams will be evaluated on this basis: “With distinction,” "Excellent," "Good," "Marginal," or "Failing." All members of the committee must judge the exam to ‘pass with distinction’ for the exam to be passed as such.

b. All committee members must give written comments on the exam responses. The committee must evaluate the exam within 2 weeks of the exam.

c. If there is a difference of opinion on failing or passing the exam, the committee should meet to discuss it (in person or via conference call). If there is still a difference of opinion after such a meeting and one person fails the exam, a fourth reader will be assigned by the Department Chair to evaluate the exam to decide if it passes or fails.

6. Post-examination meeting with students: The Chair of the examination committee is required to meet with the student following the exam to discuss the results and committee members’ feedback on the exam.

7. If students fail the exam, they can re-take the entire exam once by the end of the following quarter. If they fail the exam twice or fail the exams in any two specialization areas, the Department will recommend to Graduate Division that the student be terminated from the program.
X. Appointment, Assignment, and Oversight of TAs, Readers, and Research Assistants

A. Final departmental authority and responsibility for the appointment, assignment, and oversight of teaching assistants lies with the Chair, as specified in APM. Numerous policies at the University, Graduate Division, and College levels govern many details of these matters. Procedures for appealing decisions are detailed in University policies.

B. Appointment of TAs

1. A very large proportion of all TA appointments are constrained by recruitment contracts between the University and individual graduate students. The Chair allocates TA appointments to meet these contractual obligations before any other considerations. Most financial aid contracts specify that students must be making normal degree progress, including having a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or better. If these conditions are not met, the Chair (with the advice of Graduate Affairs) may choose not to appoint or re-appoint a TA, following relevant rules and procedures.

2. TA appointments that are not contractually required are made by the Chair, in consultation with the Graduate Affairs Committee, taking into account the factors listed below in the following order.

   a. The request of the graduate student to be considered for appointment. For TA positions that are not contractually required, the Chair usually surveys all enrolled and newly matriculating graduate students regarding their desire for appointment as TA, and their preferences for appointments in particular courses.

   b. The progress of the student in the program (usually as summarized in the annual graduate student evaluation), or prior credentials (for newly matriculating students).

   c. Students who have obtained fellowship or GSR funding in addition to that specified in their initial financial aid offers will receive preference for appointment for additional TA appointment. Students must be in good standing and making expected progress toward the degree; they may receive preferences for only three additional quarters of support.

   d. The number of quarters of prior TA experience at UCR, with preference given to applicants who have less experience.

   e. Applicants at or beyond the 21st quarter of enrollment will be ranked behind all other applicants.

   f. The evaluated quality of the past teaching performance of the candidate, if any. Candidates will be asked to provide the Graduate Affairs Assistant copies of past TA evaluations from the past 3 quarters.
3. Appointments that are not contractually required may vary in term from a single quarter to multiple quarters. The Chair endeavors to make appointments as early as possible, and to notify the Graduate Advisor of appointments as soon as they are made.

C. Assignment of TAs to Classes

The assignment of TAs to particular courses is done by the Chair, who will consider the following factors:

a. The areas of academic specialization and prior teaching experience of each candidate, relative to the needs of the curriculum plan.

b. Any informal recommendations of faculty, the Graduate Advisor, and Undergraduate Advisor regarding individual candidates.
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<tr>
<th>Course number &amp; title</th>
<th>Specialization 1</th>
<th>Specialization 2</th>
<th>Specialization 3</th>
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<td>Soc 262: Feminist Theory</td>
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*Please note that students may NOT count the same course towards two different specializations.*