GUIDE TO GRADUATE STUDIES

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

PhD Program

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI

2015-2016
GRADUATE STUDY
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

While all Sociology departments agree on many features of training that reflect the fundamentals of the discipline, each chooses certain specialties for emphasis, and each reflects the particular traditions of its university. The Department issues this guide to help prospective students understand the structure and procedures that guide graduate studies in Sociology at the University of Cincinnati.

This Guide is divided into five sections that describe, respectively, the:
1) application and admission;
2) financial aid;
3) requirements for completion of the PhD;
4) procedures for probation, dismissal, and reinstatement;
5) department graduate faculty and their interests.

Graduate degrees are conferred by the Graduate Division of the University of Cincinnati on the recommendation of our Department. Therefore, in addition to the departmental requirements below, the student should be familiar with Graduate Division Requirements, as set forth in the latest Graduate Handbook, (which can be accessed through the Graduate website www.grad.uc.edu) published by the Graduate Division.

1: Application to the PhD Program

Although many of our graduate students come to us with a background in sociology, the department encourages students with academic backgrounds other than sociology to apply to the program as well. The Graduate Program Committee (GPC) reserves the right to require, upon admission, additional coursework that it deems necessary to make up any deficiencies in sociology.

Completed applications for admission and for financial aid should be received by January 15th for admission to graduate study for the following Autumn Semester, although the department will consider applications after that date if space is available. Applications requesting financial aid must be complete by the January 15 deadline. The application fee for graduate study at the University of Cincinnati is currently $65.00. Complete an on-line application at www.grad.uc.edu. Just click on the graduate application link, fill in your information and submit.

1.1 Application materials
To be considered for admission, all Students must submit the first four items; international students must submit all five items.
1.1.1 Transcripts. Students must submit transcripts from all undergraduate work and, if applicable, transcripts from M.A. or M.S. degree program(s).

1.1.2 Letters of Recommendation. Students should submit three (3) letters from individuals familiar with their ability to carry out graduate level academic work.

1.1.3 Statement of Purpose. In this document students should explain why they have decided to pursue graduate education in sociology and also address how their interests fit with those of department faculty.

1.1.4 GRE Scores. Students must submit the Graduate Record Examination scores for the verbal, quantitative, and analytical aptitude tests. GRE scores cannot be older than five years.

1.1.5 Evidence of English Competence. The University of Cincinnati requires evidence of competence in the English language for students applying from countries where English is not a national language. The University requires scores made on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or similar test. The minimum TOEFL scores required on the paper test is 600, on the computerized test 250, and on the internet based test 100.

1.2 Filing Application Materials
All application materials should be submitted on line as part of the online application (www.grad.uc.edu). However, official transcripts should be sent directly to Annulla Linders, Director of Graduate Studies, Department of Sociology, P.O. Box 210378, University of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0378.

1.3 For Further Information
Contact the Director of Graduate Studies (Annulla Linders, 513-556-4710, annulla.linders@uc.edu), Department of Sociology, University of Cincinnati, Box 210378, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0378 regarding entrance into the Doctoral program in Sociology.

2: Financial Aid

2.1 Types of Aid
The Department provides financial aid for most of its PhD students in the form of Fellowships, Graduate Assistantships (GA) or University Graduate Scholarships. Fellowships and Assistantships include a full tuition scholarship plus a monthly stipend. All financial aid offers are contingent upon the availability of funds.
2.1.1 Financial aid amount and duration. Amounts can vary depending on the funding source, but the current regular stipend is $15,000 for the academic year and $2,000 for the summer, for a total of $17,000. Students can expect at least four years of funding.

2.1.2 Duties. Assistantships require departmental duties of up to 20 hours per week. Students either teach their own courses or work as teaching or research assistants for faculty members in the department. Fellowships do not require departmental duties. Duties are assigned based on a number of considerations, including departmental obligations, student experience and qualifications, faculty needs, and student preferences.

2.1.3. Graduate Assistantships. Students who are funded as regular graduate assistants (GA) must, per university rules, contribute to the teaching mission of the university as teaching assistants (TA) or instructors. Under normal circumstances, graduate assistants serve as teaching assistants for their first 1 or 2 years. In order to teach their own classes, students must have completed their MA, two years of PhD studies, have completed the Teaching Sociology class, a Teaching Practicum, and/or have documented prior teaching experience.

2.1.4. Research Assistantships. Funding for research assistantships (RA) are provided through faculty grants. Faculty members who have secured funding typically get to choose their RAs.

2.1.5. Fellowships. Three types of competitive university fellowships are available: Yates Scholar (a one-year university-wide fellowship available to outstanding minority graduate students at the beginning of their graduate career); Taft Dissertation Fellowship (a one-year fellowship offered to the top PhD candidate in the department); University Dissertation Completion Fellowship (a one-year university-wide fellowship). In addition, the department encourages students to pursue external Fellowships.

2.1.6. Other Funding Sources. The department also works to secure additional funding opportunities as needed (for fifth year students especially). Examples of such opportunities are Teaching Fellowships at UC Blue Ash, adjunct teaching, and GA or RA-ship at other university units (e.g., Institute for Policy Research).

2.2 Normal Progress and Eligibility for Financial Assistance
Funding is always dependent on the student making normal progress toward the degree. Normal progress is defined as meeting basic program requirements at a steady pace (see below). Basic program requirements include the completion of required course work, the completion of an MA paper or equivalent, the completion of two preliminary exams, and the completion of a dissertation proposal.
Students can expect four years of funding, but may become eligible for one additional year if funding is available. Funding decisions for students beyond their first four years are based on faculty assessments of student progress and accomplishments. Students normally would not be considered for university-based support beyond their fifth year.

2.3 Conditions of Financial Awards

2.3.1 Limitations on Additional Employment: Because duties as full-time student and as a Graduate Assistant in the Department are a demanding load, students holding Graduate Assistantships may not hold concurrent appointments on or off campus or work in a part-time positions on or off campus that interfere with their program responsibilities, or in any way limit their ability to fulfill the duties of their Graduate Assistantships as determined by their faculty advisors.

2.4 Assessment of Performance

The Graduate Program Committee will, during the spring semester of each academic year, interview all faculty members for an assessment of all enrolled graduate students. Evaluation of graduate students and decisions concerning funding, academic awards, and other matters will be based on that assessment in addition to classroom performance, progress toward the degree, and student-generated reports of progress and achievements. The Graduate Program Committee will prepare a summary of each student’s assessment and the DGS will meet (in person or via email) with the student and discuss the student’s progress in the program.

2.5 Procedures for Completing Requirements

2.5.1 Advising. When a student first enters the program, s/he will be assigned a faculty advisor. Students are expected to meet with their faculty advisor at least once a semester. The purpose of these meetings is to draft a course plan for that year, and to discuss the timing of passing departmental hurdles for the degree. Students may keep their assigned advisors throughout their residence in the department; those who wish to change advisors should submit the signed Advisor Change/Confirmation form to the DGS. Faculty advisors can be changed at any time.

2.5.2 Minimum Enrollment. Full-time graduate students with funding are required to sign up for 12 hours of graduate credit each term.

2.5.3 Auditing. Graduate students may audit courses with the permission of the instructor. Audited courses do not count toward the credit hours required to maintain full-time status, but they do count toward the credit hours limit per term, as defined by the University.
2.5.4 Pass/Fail Grading. Graduate students may not register for graduate courses in Sociology on a pass/fail basis. Instructors may choose to use the satisfactory/unsatisfactory grade alternative.

2.5.5 Limitations on Individual Work Courses. Graduate students are not permitted to enroll in Individual Work courses to meet the program’s required courses. In addition, students may not take an independent study course which duplicates a seminar offered at least once every two years; students are limited to signing up for independent study courses to no more than nine hours during an academic year during the first two years of residence in our program.

2.5.6 Waiver of Requirements. Students who enter the program with an MA in Sociology (or equivalent) may request a waiver of the course requirements that duplicate work they have already completed (MA paper and/or courses). If special circumstances warrant waiver of other requirements, the student must get formal, written approval of his or her advisor and then must petition the Graduate Program Committee for the requirement's waiver.

3: Requirements

As preparation for academic and other high-level professional careers, the successful completion of the Ph.D. assumes that the student will develop competencies, based in, but extending well beyond, what is covered in course work. These competencies include: 1) broad knowledge of sociological theory and perspectives; 2) in-depth knowledge about specific substantive areas with sociology; 3) detailed skills that will enable the candidate to design, execute, defend, and publish his/her independently conducted research; 4) the ability to update one’s competencies over the course of one’s career; and 5) the ability to effectively convey this information and these skills to students of sociology.

3.1 Requirements for Admission to the Ph.D. Program
Students with either an MA (or equivalent) or BA degree are eligible to apply. Students entering with a BA as their highest degree must apply to the MA program and will earn an MA degree while progressing towards the PhD (see below). The requirements for Ph.D. students entering in August 2012 and beyond are:

3.2 Requirements for Attaining the Ph.D. Degree
The requirements described below apply to all students entering the doctoral program on or after August 1, 2012.
3.2.1 Credit Hour Requirements. Completion of a minimum of 90 hours of graduate credit (beyond the baccalaureate degree) or 60 hours beyond the M.A. degree with an overall B average is required by the Graduate Division. For students with previous graduate study, the department’s Graduate Program Committee determines the number of graduate hours from the previous program that is applicable to this requirement.

3.2.2 Course Work. Students will take a mixture of required and elective courses as part of the program. Students who have already done graduate work at another institution or discipline may request, via a petition to the Graduate Program Committee, that some of that work be counted towards the PhD degree.

3.2.2.1 Required Courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Degree</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC7005</td>
<td>Intermediate Graduate Statistics [MA, PhD]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC7010</td>
<td>Introduction to Social Inequality [MA, PhD]</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC7011</td>
<td>Logic of Inquiry [MA, PhD]</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC8040</td>
<td>Qualitative Sociology [MA, PhD]</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC8075</td>
<td>Classical Sociological Theory [MA, PhD]</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC8076</td>
<td>Contemporary Sociological Theory [PhD]</td>
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Two advanced methods courses to be selected among the following [PhD]:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC7013</td>
<td>Intermediate Quantitative Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC7042</td>
<td>Demographic Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC8041</td>
<td>Ethnographic Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC8042</td>
<td>Comparative and Historical Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC9010</td>
<td>Advanced Regression Techniques</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teaching Preparation Requirement, which can be satisfied in one of the following ways:

1. SOC8006 Teaching Sociology or
2. SOC8007 Teaching Practicum or
3. Documented teaching experience at the college level, as approved by the Graduate Program Committee. Such documentation should include syllabi, evidence of teaching effectiveness (e.g., student evaluations or peer reviews), and a statement outlining the student’s approach to teaching.

3.2.2.2 Elective Courses. Students must take at least 6 elective courses at the 7000 level or above. No more than 2 of these courses can be taken outside of the department and they must be approved beforehand by the...
Graduate Program Committee. Independent work does not count as elective courses.

3.2.2.3 Independent Work. Students have several opportunities to work independently with faculty supervision throughout the program. The student and the faculty member will decide jointly about the work to be done during the term. Students are required to get explicit faculty permission before signing up for these classes and should meet with the faculty member the first week of classes to devise a work plan for the term:

- SOC7003 Independent Study
- SOC8002 Prelim Preparation
- SOC8007 Teaching Practicum

Students who are actively working on their theses or dissertations should sign up with their advisor (or a committee member if the advisor is on leave):

- SOC7006 Thesis Research
- SOC9030 Dissertation Research

3.2.4 Transfer of credits. Graduate students entering the Ph.D. program with graduate work in other programs or departments may receive a transfer of hours to count toward Ph.D. level work in the department. Students must petition the Graduate Program Committee requesting the transfer of credit and provide supporting documentation.

3.2.3 Master’s paper. All students in the PhD program must have completed an original research paper prior to beginning work on the dissertation. Students entering with a BA will do this work as part of the MA requirements. Students entering with an MA in sociology (or equivalent) who did a thesis or Master’s paper as part of the MA program may request that the thesis or Master’s paper satisfy this requirement. Students entering with an MA who did not do a research paper are required to do an original research paper equivalent to an MA paper prior to beginning work on the dissertation.

3.2.4 Master’s in Sociology. Students entering the program with a BA are eligible to receive an MA in Sociology when the following requirements are completed: (1) the completion of at least 30 credit hours; (2) the completion of required courses designated with [MA] above; and (3) the successful completion of a Master’s paper. Students entering the program with an MA or equivalent in a discipline unrelated to sociology (e.g., physics), who can transfer neither credits
nor a research paper, will receive an MA in Sociology when the above requirements are completed. Students entering the program with an MA in a discipline related to sociology (e.g., anthropology), who can transfer credits and/or a research paper, will not receive an MA in Sociology unless otherwise arranged with the Director of Graduate Studies and the above requirements are fulfilled.

3.2.4.1 Master’s Paper Committee. The paper is directed by a two-person faculty committee composed either of two sociology faculty or of one sociology faculty member and one affiliated sociology faculty member. The chair of the committee must be a member of the sociology faculty. Students formally establish the committee by notifying the Graduate Program Committee in writing, using the MA paper committee confirmation form.

3.2.4.2 Master’s Paper Defense. The paper must be defended during a meeting with the two committee members. The committee members must have a copy of the paper at least two weeks before the defense. Both of the committee members must approve the paper.

3.2.4.3 Time Limits. Students have five (5) years from the date of entry into the program to complete all of the requirements for the M.A. degree. Students who need more time may ask the Director of Graduate Studies to petition the Graduate School for an extension of the time limit. These petitions are considered individually and are not universally approved.

3.2.5 Preliminary Examinations. Students are required to pass two preliminary exams. One of these exams is a General Prelim and the other a Specialty Prelim. Prior to taking any preliminary exam, students must give the Director of Graduate Studies written notice of their intent to take the exam.

3.2.5.1 The General Preliminary Examination. The general examination is a three-day, take-home exam, scheduled in the early fall each year, which addresses basic, foundational aspects of sociology. Students are expected to take the exam in their 3rd year. The reading list, compiled by the General Prelim Committee, consists in a list of “core” sociology readings, with attention to inequality as a basic social dynamic. See the General Prelim Guidelines for more detailed information; these guidelines are posted on the website.

3.2.5.2 The Specialty Preliminary Examination. The specialty examination is focused within the student’s area of concentration. Each student secures two faculty members who are willing to serve on the specialty prelim committee. Under the supervision of these two faculty members, the student writes a paper that critically reviews the literature
agreed upon with the committee. In this paper, which must be done no later than a year after passing the General Prelim, students are expected to review a relatively wide body of literature that sets the broader intellectual context for the dissertation proposal. The two-member faculty committee grades the exam. See the Specialty Prelim Guidelines for more detailed information; these guidelines are posted on the website.

3.3 Dissertation

3.3.1 Forming the Dissertation Advisory Committee. Graduate students must, before the end of the term in which they complete their doctoral examinations, form a dissertation advisory committee. The Committee shall be composed of at least three persons who have agreed to direct the student’s dissertation research. The Director of Graduate Studies should be notified in writing by the student of the composition of the Committee, using the dissertation committee confirmation form.

3.3.2 Committee Composition. The dissertation committee must have at least 3 members from the department. The Chair of the committee must be a member of the graduate faculty of the sociology department. Affiliate faculty members can co-chair dissertation committees and serve as inside members of the committee. One or more additional members of the committee may be from other departments and/or institutions. Committee members who leave or retire can continue serving on the committee but can no longer chair it. Officially, the members of the dissertation committee are appointed by the Graduate Division. See the *Handbook of the Division of Graduate Education and Research* (www.grad.uc.edu, click on Graduate Handbook) for more information.

3.3.3 Dissertation Topics. The selection of a dissertation topic is made by the student in consultation with a dissertation chairperson and the dissertation committee.

3.3.4 Dissertation Proposal. Students will write a dissertation proposal that is to be defended in a meeting with the dissertation committee. The dissertation proposal should (1) clearly describe, with the help of a literature review, the sociological problem to be addressed in the dissertation; (2) introduce the particular research site chosen to investigate the problem; and (3) provide a detailed description of the methodology to be used.

3.3.5 Dissertation Defense. Upon satisfactory completion of the dissertation, the candidate presents a public lecture, as required by the Graduate School, and is orally examined on the dissertation by the members of the dissertation committee. The committee members must be given at least 14 calendar days between receipt of the final manuscript and the defense date.
In addition, the student must provide an electronic copy of an abstract of the dissertation at least one week in advance of the oral examination. That abstract will then be circulated to the department faculty members. Approval of the dissertation requires an affirmative vote by at least three-quarters of the examining committee.

3.3.6 Required Dissertation Copies. The student is required to submit:
1) an electronic copy to the Chair of the dissertation committee and to other committee members if they request it;
2) an electronic copy of the dissertation to the Graduate Program Coordinator;
3) an electronic copy to the University Dean’s office in accordance with the *Instructions for Preparation and Depositing of Master’s Theses and Doctoral Dissertations* available from the Division of Graduate Education and Research. See [www.grad.uc.edu](http://www.grad.uc.edu), click on Theses & Dissertations.

3.3.7 Admission to Candidacy & Time Limits
Admission to candidacy requires maintaining a GPA of at least 3.0 for all graduate coursework and is granted upon satisfactory completion of all required coursework, preliminary examinations, and the defense of the dissertation proposal.

3.3.7.1 Student must complete all the requirements for candidacy within five years of full-time study after receiving the master’s degree. Once students attain candidacy, they have four years to complete the PhD. Thus, in the normal situation, students will have a maximum of nine (9) years to complete all of the requirements for receiving the Ph.D. degree.

3.4 Petitions to the Graduate Program Committee
If special circumstances warrant consideration of waiver of any requirements, the student should petition the Graduate Program Committee. The petitions should include supporting materials and letter of support from the student’s advisor.

3.5 Exit Survey
The Division of Research and Advanced Studies will conduct a required exit survey on the doctoral experience of all graduating doctoral students.

4: Probation, Dismissal, and Reinstatement
The process described below pertains to actions that may be taken by the department against students who fail to perform as expected academically.

4.1 Probation & Dismissal

4.1.1 Criteria for Probation
Faculty who assign a grade of “C” or lower to a student will notify the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) of this action. The DGS will examine the student’s transcript to determine the GPA for that quarter. If the student’s GPA is below 3.0, the DGS will notify the student in writing that s/he has been placed on probation and suggest needed improvements in the student’s performance.

4.1.2 Probationary Periods
The probationary period will last for one subsequent semester in which the student is enrolled full-time.

4.1.3 Continuation while on Probation
While on probation the student may continue in the program. A student would be dismissed from the program if s/he received an average GPA below 3.0 while on probation.

4.1.4 Evaluation at End of Probation
At the end of the probationary period, the student’s overall GPA will be recalculated by the DGS. A student would face dismissal from the program if his/her overall GPA was below 3.0.

4.1.5 Criteria for Dismissal

4.1.5.1. A student can face immediate dismissal with no probationary period in one of two cases: receiving a GPA below 2.0 (excluding incompletes) for any specific grading period; or 2) receiving an “F” in any two courses, either concurrently or in different semesters.

4.1.5.2. A student may be dismissed for repeated (i.e., twice) failure of the preliminary examinations.

4.1.5.3. In addition, the Sociology Department retains the right to seek dismissal of students whose actions are in violation of the student code of conduct, which includes academic (e.g., cheating, plagiarism, fabrication) as well as non-academic (e.g., sexual harassment, destruction of property) misconduct. For details, see www.uc.edu/conduct/Code_of_Conduct.html.

4.1.5.4. Faculty must report all forms of misconduct by students to the Graduate Program Committee. The Graduate Program Committee will investigate the incidents and place its findings and recommendations in
the students’ files. The Graduate Program Committee may also notify the full Sociology faculty and/or the Graduate School about any misconduct.

4.2 Readmission

4.2.1 Petition for Immediate Readmission after Dismissal. A student dismissed from the graduate program may file a written petition with the DGS for readmission. In making a decision regarding readmission, the Graduate Program Committee may consider extenuating circumstances surrounding the unsatisfactory grades, and the probability the student can successfully complete the program with at least the 3.0 GPA required to graduate. If the petition is denied, the student has a right to petition the department so that the full faculty can consider his/her readmission.

4.2.1.2 Petition for Subsequent Readmission after Dismissal. If a dismissed student wishes to be considered for readmission in the subsequent quarter, a petition must be filed within three working days of receipt of the written dismissal notice.

4.2.1.3 Maintenance of Previous Grades if Dismissed. If a dismissed student is readmitted, all previously earned grades will remain on the permanent records and will be computed in the overall grade point average.

4.2.2 Petition for Readmission after an Absence. Students who have either exceeded the amount of time allowed by the Graduate School to complete their degree, or have not been registered for three consecutive years may, consistent with Graduate School policy, be readmitted to the program. To be considered for re-admittance, students should file a written petition with the Graduate Program Committee. The GPC, in determining whether the individual should be readmitted, shall also determine whether course work and/or preliminary examinations would have to be retaken and, if relevant, whether the proposed dissertation project is still viable given the current make-up of the faculty.

4.3 Notification & Right to Appeals

Students will be kept fully informed of all decisions affecting their status in the program and have the right of appeal under grievance procedures drawn up the Graduate Division of the University (available in the Office the University Dean).