



DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Graduate Program Manual



I. Overview of the Graduate Program.....	2
Key Departmental Personal	3
Department Life and Activities	4
Graduate Student Classifications	4
International Student Services	5
Table 1: Recommended 5-Year Timeline	6
The Program at a Glance	7
Quick Reference: Exam Forms and Funding Links	7
II. Master's Requirements.....	8
Coursework Requirements for the MA.....	9
Waivers for Incoming Students	9
First-year Preliminary Exam.....	9
MA Committee and Thesis	10
MA Completion	10
Advancement to the Ph.D. Program	11
III. Ph.D Requirements	11
Additional Coursework Requirements for the PhD	12
Third Year Comprehensive Exams	12
Ph.D. Supervisory Committee and Dissertation	13
Ph.D. General Exam and Prospectus Defense	13
Ph.D. Final Exam and Dissertation Defense	14
Completing the Ph.D. Degree	14
IV. Funding, Research Support, and Awards.....	15
Salary Structure.....	16
Union Affiliation/Collective Bargaining Agreement	16
Offer Letter.....	16
Teaching Assistantships.....	16
Research Assistantships	16
Fellowships	16
Summer Teaching	17
Summer Collaborative Research Funding	17
Departmental Research Funds for Graduate Students	17
Departmental Travel Funds.....	17
Graduate Student Awards	17
V. Academic Progress	18
Annual Review.....	19
Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Progress	19
Incomplete Coursework.....	19
VI. Registration, Waivers, Leave of Absence, and Hardship Withdrawal.....	20
400/500 Courses	21
SOC 600, 700, 800 Registration	21
Leave of Absence	22
Hardship Withdrawal	22
How to Submit a Hardship Withdrawal	23
Documentation Requirements.....	23
VII. Concentrations, Certificates, and Training Initiatives	23
Concentration in Social Statistics.....	24
Qualitative Methods Concentration	24

Max Planck-CSDE-UW Training Initiative..... 25

Concurrent Degrees 25

VIII. Exiting the Program..... 25

IX. Resources for Graduate Students 26

 Quiet Room..... 27

 Departmental Resources..... 27

 International Students..... 28

 Resources for RAs and TAs..... 28

 Graduate School Policies 28

 Communities @ UW 28

 Health and Wellness..... 28

 Additional Resources..... 29

Appendix A: Approval of Previous MA 29

Appendix B: Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam Procedures for Students Who Entered before 2026 30

Appendix C: Approved Subfields for Third Year Comprehensive Exams 32

Appendix D: Additional Requirements for Students with Concurrent Degrees/Certifications 33

I. Overview of the Graduate Program

This manual should answer many of your questions related to graduate program requirements, procedures, and forms. The requirements provide you with the training to advance your scholarship, and the procedures and forms help you stay on track. It will also provide you with information about how to keep the graduate program coordinator (GPC), the graduate program advisor (GPA), and the Graduate School informed of your progress.

At each stage of the program, students are expected to familiarize themselves with [Graduate School](#) and Department policies. Each student is responsible for understanding all requirements for paperwork and deadlines, as well as expectations for academic standards, as they progress towards their degrees.

Key Departmental Personal

[Kyle Crowder](#) serves as the department chair. The department chair is the faculty member responsible for overseeing the running of the department. This includes, among many other tasks, assigning students to TA positions each quarter. Students are always welcome to reach out to the department chair with any questions or concerns about any aspect of the department, or for help or guidance while navigating through the program.

[Sarah Quinn](#) serves as the graduate program coordinator (GPC). The GPC is the faculty member responsible for overseeing the graduate program. This includes the management of admissions, orientation, annual reviews, progress through milestones, and registration for independent studies. The GPC is available to help graduate students troubleshoot problems and navigate the program.

[Tess McShane](#) is the graduate program advisor (GPA). The GPA is the staff member responsible for assisting the GPC run the graduate program. This is the staff member you will work most closely with as you move through the program, and they will work with you to get registered for classes, schedule exams, file paperwork with the university, generally troubleshoot problems, and help guide you through different policies and processes.

The Graduate Program Committee is the departmental committee responsible for overseeing the management of the graduate program. It is chaired by the graduate program coordinator, and its faculty members are appointed by the department chair.

Members of the committee also include the GPA and a graduate student representative (who is nominated by the graduate student association and then appointed by the department chair). The graduate program committee is responsible for selecting candidates for admission, overseeing the annual graduate student review process, and developing program proposals for the graduate program.

Department Life and Activities

Throughout the year, the Department hosts several events to provide networking opportunities between faculty and staff. Students are highly encouraged to attend these events. These include an annual picnic and seasonal receptions.

SocSEM is an annual speaker's series that invites academic experts in a variety of fields to share their research, students are encouraged to attend these events both for the opportunity to network, and as learning experiences—food and beverages are often served.

Graduate Student Classifications

The following classifications are assigned to graduate students and postdoctoral appointees based on advancement toward or completion of graduate degrees according to [UW Graduate School Policy 3.10](#):

- Premaster: A Premaster has been admitted to the Graduate School but has not yet completed a master's degree or the equivalent.
- Post-Master: A Post-master has completed a master's degree or equivalent but has not yet had a doctoral Supervisory Committee appointed.
- Precandidate: A Precandidate has had a doctoral Supervisory Committee appointed, which signifies admission into a doctoral program, but has not yet completed the Graduate School General Examinations (also known as the defense of the dissertation proposal or prospectus).
- Candidacy: A student in candidacy status has completed the General Examination but has not yet completed the dissertation and final examination (also known as the dissertation defense). It is common in academia to refer to people at this stage as ABD – All But Dissertation – status.
- Postdoctoral: A Postdoctoral appointee has completed a doctoral degree and is engaged in research or scholarly work at the University but is neither an enrolled student nor a faculty member.

When a student is first admitted to the Graduate School, the student is placed in the appropriate classification which recognizes the highest academic degree which the admitted student holds in the field of the proposed graduate work at the University of Washington. When a graduate student officially completes the master's degree, or has a doctoral Supervisory Committee appointed, or completes the General Examination, the classification is changed accordingly.

Every quarter each graduate program advisor reviews the graduate student list and informs the Graduate School of any changes needed.

International Student Services

The Department of Sociology is unable to advise international students on matters of visas and legal status, but [International Student Services](#) has a dedicated team of professional advisors to guide you through immigration regulations and University policies ensuring you have the support you need to thrive at UW.

Table 1: Recommended 5-Year Timeline

Milestones are in bold

Year	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer	Additional Professional Milestones and Accomplishments:
1	501 ProSem 504 Stats I 510 Theory I	501 ProSem 505 Stats II 508 Logic of Inquiry	501 ProSem 519 Qual Methods or 506 Stats III	First Year Preliminary Exam	• Apply for a grant using materials developed in 508 and 501 • Explore collaborative research projects • Take Soc502 (if this is a year it is offered) • Form the MA thesis committee
2	Elective(s) and/or MA prep	Elective(s) and/or MA prep	Elective(s) and/or MA prep MA Defense	<i>Revise the MA for publication. Begin reading for the area exams.</i>	• Finish & defend the MA paper • Take Soc 502 (if this is a year it is offered) • Apply for a conference presentation • Develop collaborative research projects
3	Elective(s) and/or 700	Elective(s) and/or 700	Elective(s) and/or 700 Third Year Comprehensive Exam	<i>Apply for grants</i>	• Submit the MA for publication • Apply for a research grant • Present at professional meetings
4	800 (diss)	800 (diss) General Exam (the prospectus defense)	800 (dis)	<i>Prepare job market materials</i>	• Submit an article from the dissertation for publication • Present at professional meetings
5+	800 (diss)	800 (diss)	800 (diss) Final Exam (the dissertation defense)		• Apply for jobs • Submit papers for publications • Present at professional meetings

* Link to UW policies: <https://grad.uw.edu/policies/1-1-graduate-degree-requirement>.

Note: This is a progression through the program in which a student graduates within the 5-year guaranteed funding window. Many things could extend this timeline, including: working on additional research collaborations; generating new datasets; health, family, other life events; major social/environmental upheaval; changing topics; different guidance from or access to advisors.

The Program at a Glance

Below is a quick overview of the main program milestones

The MA Coursework Required coursework for the MA degree is 42 credits and is generally completed in the first two years of the program. For the PhD, there are 90 required coursework credits which are completed before year five. These include four sociology electives (electives taken for the MA can count towards this). The First-Year Exam (for cohorts starting after 2025) This exam is administered in the summer following the first year. Students will complete a take-home exam on the major theoretical traditions and methodological approaches of the field using a list provided by the graduate program committee. Note that in lieu of this requirement, cohorts starting before 2026 have a third required topic for their comprehensive exam. MA Thesis and Defense Requires students to build a committee, who can provide complimentary substantive and methodological guidance for the MA, and an original research paper of publishable quality. Generally completed in years 2-3 (expected to be completed by the end of Fall of the third year). Students who enter the program with an MA may submit their previous thesis for approval to waive this specific requirement. This must be done by the Fall of the first year. MA Form	The PhD Comprehensive Exam Allows students a chance to gain expertise in additional subfields. The exact structure of this exam depends on the year you entered the program. This should be complete by the end of Winter of the third year). To start the process, fill out the Comprehensive Exam Form. Dissertation Prospectus - General Exam The prospectus serves as a roadmap to the dissertation plan including the research motivations, objective, theoretical framework, data and methods, and a chapter outline. Students will work together with a committee of three Sociology faculty members and one non-departmental UW reviewer to develop the prospectus and prepare for the defense. Successfully defend the dissertation prospectus between years 3-4 (expected to be completed by the end of Fall of the fourth year). General Form Dissertation - Final Exam The dissertation represents a culmination of a graduate career in which students conduct original research addressing a substantive gap in the literature and provide a meaningful contribution to the discipline. With the guidance of their committee, chapters of the dissertation are often published in academic journals, converted into book proposals, and/or used in job talks. Successfully defend the dissertation between years 5-6. For a checklist of requirements, go here.
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Quick Reference: Exam Forms and Funding Links

Below students can find links and additional information about important departmental and graduate school forms and processes. *Prior to filing out exam forms, students should schedule a meeting with the GPA, Tess McShane at tmcsha@uw.edu, to go over the proper process.*

General Forms

[Sociology Independent Study Registration](#) for SOC 600,700,800
[Appoint or Change an Advisor or Committee Member - UW Sociology Grad Program](#)

MA Exam Process

Before you fill out this form, please contact the GPA, Tess McShane, tmcsha@uw.edu
[MA Defense Request Form](#)

Comprehensive Exam Process

Before you fill out this form, please contact the GPA, Tess McShane, tmcsha@uw.edu
[Comprehensive Exam Request Form](#)

General Exam (Proposal Defense) Process

Before you fill out this form, please contact the GPA, Tess McShane, tmcsha@uw.edu
[General Exam \(Proposal Defense\) Request Form](#)

Final Exam (Dissertation Defense) Process

UW Guidance on the [Dissertation Defense](#) and [UW Graduation Requirement Checklist Form for Website Submission of Keywords](#)

Travel and Research Fund Requests

[Travel Request Form](#)

[Graduate Student Research Fund Request](#)

Graduate School Links

[Graduate School Policies](#)

[Graduate Degree Requirements](#)

[Graduate Faculty Locator](#)

II. Master’s Requirements

For incoming students, the first phase of the program involves completing an MA. This phase includes required coursework, passing a Preliminary Exam at the end of the first year (for students who started in 2026), the formation of a MA thesis committee, and the completion and defense of a master’s thesis that is submitted to the graduate school.

Coursework Requirements for the MA

Students will take a total of 42 credits that will consist of the following:

- **Required first year sequence (6 courses, 23 credits):** Logic of Social Inquiry (5 credits), Social Statistics I (5 credits), Social Statistics II (5 credits), Sociological Theory I (5 credits), and the Proseminar (53 credits).
- **An additional advanced methods course (1 course, 5 credits):** This can be Social Statistics III (506) or Fieldwork (519), or an alternative course, with permission from your advisor and the Graduate Program Committee.
- **Pedagogical training (1 courses, 5 credits):** The Teaching Sociology course, or an alternative course with permission of the Graduate Program Committee, must be completed within the first two years of the program.
- **Master's Thesis Credits (9 credits):** SOC 700 (Master's Thesis). The graduate school requires that students take a minimum of 9 credits of SOC 700 in preparation for the MA thesis. Students may take more than 9 SOC 700 credits, but additional credits will not count towards the degree.

Waivers for Incoming Students

Students who receive waivers for required classes must take additional graded credits to fulfill the same number of credits from 500-level (or approved 400-level) courses. Students who enter the program with an MA may request a formal faculty review of their thesis (see *Appendix A*). Students whose MA is approved via this process are not required to complete a second MA degree in the UW sociology department. However, they must take the required first-year courses and the first-year preliminary exam.

First-year Preliminary Exam

Starting in 2026, students will complete a preliminary exam at the close of the summer quarter in the first academic year. The goal for this exam is for students to establish and demonstrate a general theoretical and methodological foundation in the discipline of sociology as a base for their further studies, and in preparation for the completion of the MA paper. The exam will be a take-home written test consisting of 4 questions, distributed to students two weeks before the exam is due, which will always be the last day before Autumn break. Results will be reported to students before the end of the second week of the autumn quarter of the second year.

The Graduate Program Committee will evaluate exams on the following bases: (1) depth and breadth of coverage, (2) synthesis and theory-methods integration, (3) command of contemporary debates included in the materials on the list, (4) clarity. Exams may receive an “accept” or “revise & resubmit.” Exams that receive a “revise & resubmit” must be submitted for a second round of reviews by the last day of classes of the fall quarter. Students failing to receive an "accept" grade after the second exam will be dismissed from the program in accordance with graduate school [policy 3.7.5](#).

Table 2: Summary of MA Requirements

Course Title		Credits
Required Courses and Training	SOC 501: Proseminar (Autumn, Winter, Spring)	3
	SOC 502: Teaching Sociology	5
	SOC 504: Social Statistics (or alternative if waived)	5 (must be graded)
	SOC 505: Social Statistics II (or alternative if waived)	5 (must be graded)
	Third Methods Course	5 (must be graded)
	SOC 508: Logic of Social Inquiry	5 (must be graded)
	SOC 510: Sociological Theory	5 (must be graded)
	SOC 700 (MA thesis credits). <i>You need a minimum of 9 credits of SOC 700. You may take more credits, but additional credits will not count towards the degree.</i>	9
	UW's TA online training (held annually in September)	-
	Total credits required for the UW MA degree	42
Additional requirements for the MA	• GPA of 3.3 • Passing of the Preliminary Exam (for cohorts entering after 2026) • Successful thesis defense • Submission of thesis to the Graduate School and department	

* Up to 3 credits of a repeated, same content, Special Topics course (SOC 581 through SOC 590) can apply toward the degree. Multiple Special Topics courses may apply to graduation when course topics/titles are different.

** The graduate school requires 18 credits of graded coursework at the 500-level or approved 400-level courses. Students will automatically meet these requirements with the completion of the required first year coursework.

MA Committee and Thesis

The aim of the MA thesis is to demonstrate that the student has developed the skills necessary to produce a graduate-level research paper. These include the ability to articulate a substantive question, situate that question within the literature and theoretical debates of a subfield, develop an analytic strategy to address the question, and present the results in a clear and compelling manner. The MA paper is typically the length of an article in a peer-reviewed journal.

Before the end of the fall quarter of the second year, the student will submit the [MA Defense Request Form](#) to inform the department about the chosen topic and committee members. In the winter and spring quarters, the student will undertake research and draft the MA thesis. The culmination of this work is the MA thesis defense, which will be completed in the spring quarter of the second year. This meeting with the full committee serves as a forum for formal review of the thesis and provides an opportunity for the committee to discuss a future plan of study and research.

The MA Committee

The MA committee consists of at least two (and no more than four) faculty members. The MA chair is the primary academic advisor during the program's MA phase. The chair will discuss the research topic and design, provide advice on analyses, and read and provide feedback on drafts. The chair must hold an appointment in sociology. The second member (sometimes called a *reader*) provides additional guidance on the MA thesis and may be an adjunct member of the department faculty. Both the chair and reader must be members of the graduate faculty (this can be checked [here](#)). Additional committee member(s) can be from outside the Sociology department but require approval from the committee chair. Students who want to appoint a non-UW Faculty member to their committee should first familiarize themselves with the Graduate School policies (see The Master's Supervisory Committee) and consult with the committee chair. If your committee changes, please reach out to the Graduate Program Advisor so they can change this information in your files.

MA Thesis Defense

The culmination of your work is the MA thesis defense. This meeting with the full committee serves as a forum for formal review of the thesis and provides an opportunity for the committee to discuss a future plan of study and research.

When you are ready to defend your MA Thesis, you will decide on a day, time, and modality (i.e., in-person/remote/hybrid) for your defense with your entire committee, and schedule a room (you can email zoeydo@uw.edu and she will be happy to help with this). You must also request a degree audit from the [GPA](#), Tess McShane, and complete the [MA Defense Request Form](#).

After your defense, you must inform the [GPA](#) that the defense is complete, and you must email your Thesis and Abstract to the GPA. The deadline for completing these tasks is the last day of the quarter. If you plan to walk at the Sociology Department graduation in Spring, you should inform [Susanna Hansson](#), who organizes graduation each year.

MA Completion

Finishing your MA degree is a coordinated effort involving you, the GPA, your committee, the sociology department, and the Graduate School. In addition to meeting the requirements set by the Sociology Department discussed above, you must also register your plans to complete your MA with the Graduate School before the last day of the quarter. Before you do this, you should familiarize yourself with the minimum Graduate School requirements for [The Master's Degree](#).

The Graduate school has an extensive [graduation page](#) that you will need to examine carefully and often. The page has a detailed [graduation checklist](#) highlighting 14 steps that each MA student needs to complete before graduating. The 14 steps that take you through informing the graduate school of your plans to graduate, confirming necessary information, and filing necessary paperwork.

After completing your MA, your committee will make a recommendation regarding your advancement to the Ph.D. If approved, the committee will make a recommendation about your advancement to the Ph.D.

If you have completed a concurrent degree, you will need to take extra steps as part of your graduation process. Please see Appendix D for details.

Advancement to the Ph.D. Program

At the time of the MA Thesis defense, each member of the MA committee will provide a summary evaluation of the MA thesis and make a recommendation about advancement to the Ph.D. program. These recommendations will be forwarded

to the Graduate Program Committee. If all members of the committee make positive recommendations, the student will advance.

If the MA committee makes a mixed or negative recommendation, the student can appeal the decision within one quarter. Successful appeals require written letters of support - including a commitment to chair or serve on the Ph.D. committee - from at least two faculty members and may require the student to address other contingencies. Specific instructions will be provided when this occurs.

III. Ph.D Requirements

The PhD program consists of three main components: Coursework, the General Examination (which is the defense of a dissertation proposal, and the Dissertation (which includes writing the dissertation, revising it based on faculty input, and defending it in the final exam. Together, these components prepare students to make contributions to scientific knowledge through rigorous sociological research, and to communicate effectively with others about that research and its impacts.

The graduate school provides a full list of [UW Graduate School requirements for PhDs](#) that all students should review.

Additional Coursework Requirements for the PhD

The University of Washington requires that students have 90 credits (with a minimum 3.3 GPA) when they graduate with a PhD. Of these, 27 credits must be at the 800-level, to reflect time spent working on the dissertation.

The sociology department requires students to take 4 sociology electives courses at 500-level. This is to further develop students' understanding of the discipline. This requirement may be met through classes taken as electives for the MA but excludes first year required coursework. Students may request approval for courses at the 400-level, or for 500-level courses taken in other departments.

Third Year Comprehensive Exams

These exams are intended to deepen students' mastery of sociology by providing students with a comprehensive understanding of two subfields in the field of sociology.

The exam structure listed below was approved by the faculty in Spring 2026. Students who matriculated before 2026 have the option of taking the exam structure in place when they accepted their offer of admissions. See Appendix B for more details on the previous exam requirements.

In the quarter after defending the MA Thesis, the student will select two subfields for the exam from the list provided by the faculty (see Appendix C) and submit the [Comprehensive Exam Request Form](#) to the department. Following the submission of the form, the GPC will assign faculty members to oversee the preparation and administration of the exam. This will include one faculty member from each subject area, and a departmental representative.

To prepare for the exam, students are expected to read all the materials on the lists, and to understand the relationships among the readings. This includes the identification of common methods of analysis, important theoretical perspectives, and major points of convergence and disagreement. The goal is for the student to gain a mastery of the field's theory, methods and empirics at a level that enables the student to situate their future research in an established disciplinary conversation and to teach courses on that topic. Students are expected to take the exam no later than the end of spring quarter of their third year in the program.

Taking the Exam

Students may select between an oral defense or written exam. In both cases, committees evaluate: (1) depth and breadth of coverage, (2) synthesis and theory-methods integration, (3) command of contemporary debates, (4) clarity.

Oral exam. For this option, students will prepare for and take a 2-hour oral exam, that must be taken in person, and not over zoom, during the last two weeks of the quarter. To assist in preparation and ensure readiness, students will prepare six memos for each reading list, which all must be submitted by the end of day on the Friday of week 5 of the quarter in which they were taking the exam. The oral exam will be graded by the faculty immediately following the exam in an executive session, and the student will be informed of the outcome that day.

Written exam. For this option, students will take a 6-hour exam that covers both subject areas. This exam must be taken in-person, and on a computer disconnected from the internet, to ensure that AI is not used in the writing of the answers. Faculty will have two weeks to grade the exam and inform the student of the outcome.

Outcome

Exam outcomes include: Pass with Distinction, Pass, Retake, or Fail.

A result of Retake means that all or part of the exam must be repeated. Faculty will provide feedback on how the student may improve their performance. Students who must redo the exam will be put on warning status and can retake the exam in the next quarter. Students who do not pass the exam a second time will be dismissed from the program in accordance with [graduate school policy 3.7.5](#).

Ph.D. Supervisory Committee and Dissertation

Following the completion of the comprehensive exams, students will begin work on the Ph.D. dissertation. The dissertation is a substantial piece of original research that reflects your ability to select an important problem for investigation and address it using appropriate research techniques. The Ph.D. Supervisory Committee guides you through all phases of the dissertation process and provides advice and feedback on the design and writing of the dissertation.

PhD Supervisory Committee Composition

The Sociology department requires that the supervisory committee consist of four faculty members: The committee chair, who must be a member of the graduate faculty in Sociology, plus two additional sociology faculty members (at least one of whom must be a member of the graduate faculty), and a Graduate School Representative. You have the option of including additional faculty members from outside of the department or university.

The chair of the Ph.D. supervisory committee is your primary academic advisor for your dissertation. This faculty member works with you to develop a dissertation project and helps you identify additional members of the committee. We suggest choosing your chair soon after completing your comprehensive exam.

The primary duties of the **Graduate School Representative (GSR)** are to protect you against unfair treatment and to promote quality control in awarding the Ph.D. degree. The student selects the GSR in consultation with the chair. The GSR must be outside the home department and have a graduate faculty endorsement. You can use the [graduate faculty locator](#) to check faculty appointments.

In general, Ph.D. Supervisory Committees are composed of UW Sociology graduate faculty. In some cases, it may be appropriate to include a non-UW faculty member, or a UW faculty member from another department, on a supervisory committee. Such appointments are routinely approved if the non-UW faculty member or non-Sociology UW faculty member will bring something unique to the committee, and if the chair of the committee approves.

Appointing the Committee

To appoint your full committee, complete the [Petition for Appointment of the Ph.D. Committee](#). Collecting your committee's signatures via email is an efficient way to approach this process. When reaching out, consider the following template and be sure to cc the GPA and GPC in the email.

"I would like to thank you once again for agreeing to be on my MA committee and providing me with support through this academic process. To make this official through the department, could you please sign the following forms attached below at your nearest convenience. Thank you."

You are not considered a doctoral student by the graduate school until the establishment of your full supervisory committee. The graduate school recommends that you establish the committee four months before your general exam (prospectus defense).

Graduate School Links

[The Doctoral Supervisory Committee other than Practice Doctorates](#)

[The Role of the Graduate School Representative \(GSR\)](#)

Ph.D. General Exam and Prospectus Defense

Passing the General Examination is a major milestone in your academic career and results in a promotion to Ph.D. candidate status (also known as 'All but Dissertation' or ABD). During this exam, you will defend a dissertation prospectus that outlines a plan for the full dissertation. You will develop the prospectus by working closely with your Supervisory Committee Chair and (usually) your entire committee. You can learn more about the General Exam requirements on the [General Examination](#) page of the Graduate School website.

Before you schedule your exam, it is important to:

- Request a degree audit from the GPA for your Sociology Degree, the GPA will run an audit through MyGrad to ensure that you have met all departmental and university requirements
- If you are pursuing a certificate, concentration, or joint degree, see the instructions for graduating with concurrent degrees in Appendix D
- Register for credits in the quarter of the exam (you need to be registered for at least 2 credits in the quarter you plan on taking the exam.)

Scheduling

- Have your advisor or chair of your committee confirm with the GPA that you are ready to take the exam
- Coordinate a day/time/modality (in-person/remote/hybrid) with your entire committee.
- [Schedule a room](#) (This can be frustrating. [Zoey](#) in the main office can help you with this!)
- Notify the GPA of day/time/modality
- [Schedule the General Exam in MyGrad](#)

The Exam

At least four members of the supervisory committee (including Chair and GSR) must be present at the General Examination. If you plan to have a remote or hybrid exam, review the graduate school requirements for [virtual doctoral examinations](#).

After a successful exam, email a copy of your prospectus to the GPA.

Ph.D. Final Exam and Dissertation Defense

The Final Examination (dissertation defense) is the culmination of the graduate program. The final exam typically includes a short presentation of the dissertation, followed by questions from the Supervisory committee and audience members. The end of the exam includes an executive (closed) session of the Supervisory Committee. If you pass the exam, the committee recommends to the Graduate School that the Ph.D. degree be awarded.

Some people chose to invite family and friends to the defense.

Before you schedule your exam, it is important to:

- Email the GPA to request a degree audit
- Make sure that any changes in your committee are reported to the GPA, who will update this information in MyGrad. Note that the University distinguishes between a supervisory committee and a “reading committee,” which is a subset of your Supervisory Committee selected to read and approve your dissertation). In practice, most students have three department members on their supervisory committee, who then form the entirety of the reading committee.

Scheduling

To schedule your exam, first confirm with your Chair that you are ready to take the exam. Coordinate a day/time/modality (in-person/remote/hybrid) with your entire committee and then notify the GPA of the plan. You will need to schedule a room (the GPA can help with this) and also [register the Final Exam in MyGrad](#). The last day you can defend a dissertation in an academic year is a week (seven days) before the end of the summer quarter.

The Final Examination

At least four members of the supervisory committee (including Chair and GSR) must be present at the Final Examination. If you plan to have a remote or hybrid exam, review the graduate school requirements for [virtual doctoral examinations](#).

UW Graduate School Final Exam Information

[Graduate School policies for the Final Exam](#)

[Reading Committee Timeline and Composition](#)

Completing the Ph.D. Degree

Finishing your PhD degree is a coordinated effort involving you, the GPA, your committee, the sociology department, and the Graduate School. In addition to meeting the requirements set by the Sociology Department discussed above, you must also register your plans to complete your PhD with the Graduate School before the last day of the quarter. Before you do this, you should familiarize yourself with the minimum Graduate School [requirements for PhD on the UW Graduate School website](#).

Finishing your PhD includes many academic and administrative steps. You can find information about the academic steps in the [Final Exam \(Dissertation Defense\) page](#). The hard deadline for completing all of these tasks is the last day of the quarter. A slow and steady approach will save you stress at the end of the quarter.

Students who have completed their final exam must submit their dissertation, abstract, and [Keyword Form](#) the GPA.

Prepare to Graduate

The Graduate school has an extensive [graduation page](#) that you will need to examine carefully and often. The page provides a detailed graduation checklist highlighting 16 steps that each doctoral student needs to complete before graduating.

You must submit an Electronic Thesis/Dissertation (ETD) to the Graduate School. This is how you share your research with the academic community. The links below include guidelines and resources about the process.

[Thesis/Dissertation Information Page](#)

[Writing Your Thesis or Dissertation](#) > go to ETD Resources

Accessibility Requirements

Beginning in April 2027, the University of Washington must comply with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), new [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1 Level AA](#) to ensure web and mobile content is more accessible.

This includes Electronic Theses & Dissertations (ETDs) submitted after the requirement becomes law. It is the responsibility of the student and their committee to ensure ETDs submitted as part of the requirements to earn a graduate degree are accessible and compliant with [WCAG 2.1 Level AA](#).

ETDs are uploaded to UW Libraries as a PDF (Portable Document Format) as part of the graduation process. The UW Office of Accessible Technology provides [resources to help ensure documents meet accessibility standards](#).

UW provides [accessibility tools](#) for this purpose

IV. Funding, Research Support, and Awards

The Department of Sociology [guarantees funding for the five consecutive years following your acceptance into the program](#). This is outlined in your offer letter. This funding covers tuition and most student fees, and a monthly stipend over nine consecutive months (September-June). It also covers health insurance for the entire year.

- We guarantee funding in the form of teaching assistantships. More advanced students may have opportunities to develop and lead their own classes.
- Student funding can also come from research assistantships, fellowships, or departmental awards. More information on these is available below.
- As academic student employees, all students are covered by a collective bargaining agreement that specifies that students will work a maximum of 220 hours per quarter.
- All funding is contingent on good standing in the program and satisfactory performance of assigned employee duties

After the fifth year in the program, funding is not guaranteed but may be possible for students in good standing based on the availability of department funds and student progress through the program.

Salary Structure

The University of Washington operates on a tiered salary structure that increases when students receive their master's degree and again when they advance to candidacy. Monthly compensation amounts for each level are posted on the University's [TA/RA Salaries](#) page.

Union Affiliation/Collective Bargaining Agreement

All Academic Student Employees (ASEs) are covered by a collective bargaining agreement between the University of Washington and UAW Local 4121, which is found [here](#). Both ASEs and the University of Washington are bound by the terms of this contract, so it is important for students to familiarize themselves with its provisions.

Offer Letter

All students receive an offer letter when accepted into the program, see this as a working contract with the university. That offer letter specifies each student's funding package and is the best point of reference for questions about individual funding offers. What is listed in each student's specific offer letter supersedes any information listed here.

Teaching Assistantships

Teaching assistants (TAs) work with faculty instructors to support undergraduate (and select graduate) courses. This includes leading sections, grading papers, and answering student questions.

Research Assistantships

Some students are funded through research assistantships with faculty members of the sociology department or other departments on campus. Research assistants (RAs) may perform literature reviews, collect data, clean data, analyze data, write-up findings, or otherwise participate in the research process.

Research Assistantships are most typically funded through grants to faculty undertaking research, which means that they are not organized centrally through the department. Students may apply for one of these positions or be asked by faculty to serve as an RA. Students may seek out RA positions through [Handshake](#) (the University's job search website) or through the [Graduate Funding Information Service](#) (GFIS), which maintains a blog that posts RA positions. The department distributes announcements about RA positions when informed of them.

Fellowships

Some students may qualify for fellowships that partially or fully cover tuition and stipends without additional work requirements. To learn more information about the different awards and fellows offered to graduate students by the Department of Sociology, visit the [Departmental Awards and Fellowships](#) page. The department of sociology has also created a [Fellowships Page](#) to provide additional information regarding the numerous fellowship opportunities available to graduate students. The Graduate Funding Information Service helps graduate students identify and locate funding opportunities including tuition, research, and travel. Check [Graduate Funding Information Service](#) regularly for opportunities. Please also see the Resources section in this guide for more information on opportunities for fellowship funding outside of the department.

Sometimes outside fellowships (like those provided by the American Sociological Association) ask for departments to cover tuition. When you apply for these, please meet with the department chair to confirm that the department has the funds to cover any funding shortfall.

Summer Teaching

For students with an MA, a common way of securing funding during the summers is through teaching. Students are eligible to teach summer courses if they have their MA, have completed Soc502: Seminar in Teaching Sociology, and are in good

academic standing. We follow the practice of honoring all reasonable requests to teach by eligible graduate students with the proviso that any courses with fewer than 10 students may be canceled. Details about summer teaching opportunities are circulated by the department chair during the academic year.

Summer Collaborative Research Funding

These grants provide funding for hourly employment to work with faculty on a collaborative research project over the summer quarter. In the years when funding is available for this, the department chair will typically announce that the application is open in Spring quarter.

Departmental Research Funds for Graduate Students

The Department of Sociology often has endowed funds and other sources to support costs associated with graduate student research, such as costs associated with collecting and/or processing data.

We encourage students at all stages of the program to apply. The first step is to fill out a [Graduate Research Request](#). These applications are due on the 3rd Monday of Autumn and Spring quarters. The form will ask you for: a proposal (3 pages total); a brief description of the research project and its significance (2 page max); and explanation of how funding will enhance the project; a discussion of other funding sources available for this work, if any; evidence of the impact of any prior departmental award funding; a timeline for completion; and your curriculum vitae (CV).

Allowable expenses include travel to research sites (transportation, lodging, etc.), the purchase of data, and costs associated with fielding a survey or experiment and paying subjects. No funds from this award shall be used to pay stipends or wages to graduate students. [Travel Requests](#) to attend professional conferences should be submitted as outlined in [the graduate student travel policy](#).

Recommendations for funding will be made by the department's executive committee. The total amount of available funding will vary from year to year, and final funding awards will be made by the chair. The selection criteria are scientific merit of the proposed research; student's track record of completing coursework and research projects; Evidence that the funds will have a discernible impact on the quality of the research.

We will tell you your application status by the sixth week of the quarter.

Departmental Travel Funds

Students accepted to present at a conference may be eligible to receive up to \$500 in funds to help cover travel costs. To apply, fill out the [travel request form](#).

In order to receive conference/reimbursement funds, you must be registered for courses in the quarter you request the funds. For summer conference fund requested, you must registered for courses in Summer or early registration Fall Quarter.

Graduate Student Awards

The Sociology Departmental gives a set of awards to graduate students each year. These include:

Best Performance of the MA. This recognizes the best MA paper written between Spring the previous year and present. The prize is a plaque and public announcement. *A call for nominations is typically be sent out in early Spring Quarter with a deadline for submissions around April 1. Self-nominations are encouraged.*

Herbert Costner Award. This recognizes the best single authored paper by a graduate student and awards the student one quarter of RA support. The call for nominations are typically send out in early Spring Quarter.

Best Graduate Student Instructor. This award recognizes the best performance as an instructor by a graduate student. A winner selected based on course evaluations and faculty recommendations, and the award is typically announced in the Spring quarter.

Best Graduate Teaching Assistant Award. This award recognizes the best performance by a graduate student TA. The selection of a winner is based on course evaluations and faculty recommendations, and the award is typically announced in the Spring quarter.

V. Academic Progress

Annual Review

Every spring quarter, the sociology department conducts an annual review of all graduate students. The annual review process is an opportunity for graduate students to reflect on their progress and get feedback on their work from their advisors. It entails the following steps:

1. Students complete an Activity Report and submit an updated CV and unofficial transcript. The GPC will usually distribute these forms before Spring Break.
2. Each student should meet with their primary faculty advisor to go over their Activity Report. If a faculty advisor is not available to meet, the student should contact the GPC about finding the most appropriate alternative.
3. Faculty advisors review student materials and complete an assessment for all students they advise, either formally or informally. The assessment includes information about degree progress, notable accomplishments and milestones, plans and goals, work quality, areas for development, and advice.
4. The Graduate Program Committee (excluding the graduate student representative) meets to discuss these materials and presents a report to the faculty about the progress of students in the program. The primary focus of the meeting is to identify areas where we can better support students.
5. Students receive a progress letter about their standing in the department. This letter mentions their accomplishments, their upcoming milestones, and advice from faculty.
6. The Graduate Program Coordinator will contact students who have fallen behind to schedule a meeting to discuss ways the department can help in returning the student to good standing.

Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Progress

Your progress through the graduate program is evaluated primarily by the quality of your scholarly work (coursework and research activities) and meeting program milestones in a timely way. Students who are making satisfactory progress receive priority for departmental funding.

Satisfactory progress includes:

1. Maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.3 or higher (grades below 2.7 may not be counted toward a graduate degree). See [Grading Practices for Graduate Students](#).
2. Registering for a minimum of 10 credits per quarter
3. Completing MA course requirements within the first three years of the program
4. Completing the remaining Ph.D. requirements within three years of advancement to the PhD program (post-MA)

Unsatisfactory progress includes:

- Not completing the first-year requirements of the program
- A cumulative or quarterly grade point average (GPA) that falls below 3.0.
- Not completing the required coursework and the MA degree by the fourth year of the program.
- After advancement to the Ph.D. program: falling more than two quarters behind the expected timeline for satisfactory progress and receiving a passing grade on a subject area examination

The department and the Graduate School are invested in helping students who are not meeting program expectations. This process is a tiered approach, involving notification, academic alert, final academic alert, and academic drop. This process is detailed in policy [3.7.3 Unsatisfactory Performance and Progress](#).

Related Graduate School Policies and Procedures

- Graduate School's [process of termination](#)
- Academic [Grievance Procedure](#)
- [Reinstatement](#) is offered to previously registered students who failed to maintain graduate student status

Incomplete Coursework

If you do not complete coursework by the end of the quarter, the instructor may decide between an incomplete grade or failing grade. It is important to complete the coursework, so that the incomplete can be converted to a numeric grade.

Incompletes for required sociology courses should be completed within one quarter. For non-required courses, you have two years (per the Graduate School). Delays in converting an incomplete to a numerical grade may be considered during the annual review process and in funding decisions.

VI. Registration, Waivers, Leave of Absence, and Hardship Withdrawal

First year students will work with the GPA during their beginning quarter to register for required courses. Once a student has been matriculated into the system, students are able to register for all electives and courses, with the exception of 600/700/800 level Independent Study Courses.

400/500 Courses

Currently, all 400 level (undergraduate) classes that are taught by faculty or temporary instructors are open to PhD students. This is to maximize the breadth of course offerings available to our PhD students. For these courses, graduate students will register for the 590-level version of the class and will attend the normal class time for the course. These courses have special provisions for graduate readings, assignments, and instruction.

- **Readings:** Graduate students will have additional readings (which may be longer, more in number, or from more academic courses)
- **Assignments:** Faculty will assign graduate students tailored assignments that are appropriate for graduate level training (such as longer assignments and more written work). Upon agreement with the faculty, graduate students may opt-out of some activities that are not appropriate for graduate level training, such as some in-class discussions, group project work with undergraduates, and shorter writing assignments, like 1-2 page reflections or reading notes. In lieu of these activities, graduate students can be assigned one class session that they will organize and lead (including a lecture and discussion or activities) or be assigned additional class sessions in which they will lead the class or small group discussions. Under no conditions will graduate students grade undergraduate papers.
- **Instruction:** Professors will offer individual or small-group instructional time between the instructor and graduate students to review additional materials and work with them.

Graduate students are encouraged to reach out to instructors before the class starts to discuss appropriate adjustments.

SOC 600, 700, 800 Registration

Individually tailored study and research credit hours provide an opportunity to pursue in-depth study in specialized areas of interest to you, conduct thesis or dissertation research, or prepare for exams. Some of these credits are required for graduation: the graduate school requires 9 credits at the 700 –level to get your MA, and 27 credits at the 800-level to get your PhD.

To enroll in these courses, complete the [Sociology Independent Study Registration](#). Do so before the beginning of the quarter to avoid late fees. This requires developing a brief plan of study to include: a course description, meeting schedule, learning goals/purpose of course, expected outcomes/product, course structure and learning resources to be used, and method of evaluation. Additional information about the application process is included in the registration form.

SOC 600: Independent study credits

Use these to read deeply in areas of interest.

Here is an [example of a plan used to register for SOC 600](#).

SOC 700: Masters study credits

Use these to develop your MA paper.

Here is an [example of a plan used to register for SOC 700](#).

SOC 800: Dissertation (and Comps) Credits

Use these to take your comprehensive exams or work on your dissertation.

Here is an [example of a plan used to register for SOC 800](#).

A couple of things to keep in mind:

- You will need to work with your faculty supervisor to establish a plan of study (examples are available below).
- A full course load during the academic year is 10 credits, during summer 2 credits
- The credit hours should reflect the amount of work you plan to do. The Graduate School recommends 3 hours of effort per week per credit hour.
- SOC 600/700/800 courses are graded CR/NC

Course Waivers

Sometimes a student will want to waive a program requirement or request that a course fulfill a degree requirement. Here are a few scenarios:

- An incoming first year student with a solid background in statistics requests a waiver for SOC 504, SOC 505, or SOC 506.
- A student found a 400-level course that is important for your research and wants this course to apply to your degree.
- A student wants a non-Sociology course to count as one of your graded Sociology electives.

The scenarios above require a petition, which you can submit before or after you take a course. Send an email to the Graduate Program Coordinator (copy the GPA). Include:

- 1) Course description and (ideally) a syllabus
- 2) Key assignments (if known)
- 3) Why is this course relevant to your graduate studies?
- 4) The applicable degree requirement (i.e. graded Sociology elective).
- 5) Description of sociological content (if requesting that a non-sociology course be counted as a degree requirement).
- 6) List other software/programming you have used and describe your experience using R programming language.

Leave of Absence

During your time in the program, you need to maintain your graduate student status throughout the program. You do this by registering for courses or officially [going on leave](#) during the academic year. (If you fall out of status, you will need to petition for [reinstatement](#). This is an arduous process and one you want to avoid.)

The sociology department limits on-leave status to three quarters. After three quarters of being on-leave, graduate students are expected to either complete their studies and exit the program, or else to return to the program and continue their work on campus. Students may petition the Graduate Program Committee for an extension of their on-leave status. That petition should include a description of the student's plans and timeline, along with confirmation from the student's advisor chair that they will continue to work with the student, and that they approve of the extension.

While on leave:

- **You Keep:** UW email, library access, very limited faculty and staff counsel/resources, Hall Health Primary Care Center (pay-for-service basis), IMA (UW Seattle campus students only, extra fee)
- **You Lose:** Most faculty advising/resources, exam privileges, thesis/dissertation filing, university housing, student insurance, financial assistance.

Students not registered in summer maintain the same privileges as students in on-leave status.

- You must request leave from the University quarterly. If you do not request and pay for leave, you will need to go through the long and arduous process of [reinstatement](#).
- Your on-leave status is not official until you pay the fee.
- **You cannot take any exam when you are on leave.**
- International students should consult the [International Student Services](#) office before going on-leave.
- The department limits on-leave status to three quarters

Procedure for Requesting On-Leave Status

To go on leave, first discuss your plans with your advisor, the GPC, and GPA. You will then need to apply for [on-leave status in MyGrad](#). Your request will be sent to the department for approval, and after your request is approved, you will return to MyGrad to pay the on-leave fee. The final step is for you to return departmental keys to the main office. Visit the UW Graduate School webpage to [learn more about the Graduate On-Leave process](#).

Three-Quarter Limit

The sociology department limits on-leave status to three quarters. After three quarters of being on-leave, graduate students are expected to either complete their studies and exit the program, or else to return to the program and continue their work on campus. Students may petition the Graduate Program Committee for an extension of their on-leave status. That petition should include a description of the student's plans and timeline, along with confirmation from the student's advisor chair that they will continue to work with the student, and that they approve of the extension.

Hardship Withdrawal

If you can't complete a noncredit course because of extenuating circumstances beyond your control, and the drop deadline has passed, you may petition for hardship withdrawal. If hardship withdrawal is approved, you'll get a W for the course on your UW PCE official record. To inquire about hardship withdrawal, contact Registration Services at c2reg@uw.edu.

How to Submit a Hardship Withdrawal

1. Make sure you review the criteria for different types of petition requests in the table below.

Some examples of reasons or scenarios that **don't** qualify for a petition request and won't be approved include:

- Misunderstanding refund deadlines or not reading transaction summary or welcome email, unsubstantiated phone conversations with UW personnel
- Request for proportional refund based on the number of days attended (regardless of reason or documentation)
- Dissatisfaction with course content, instructor or cohort-mates

2. Prepare a petition request that specifies what kind of hardship withdrawal you're requesting (drop/withdrawal only, drop/withdrawal and refund) and explains why you believe an exception should be made.

3. Include required documentation for your type of request from the table below.

4. Submit your petition request, along with supporting documentation, by email to c2petitions@uw.edu

You should initiate your petition request within four weeks of the onset of hardship or explain in your request why this was not possible.

Documentation Requirements

All documentation must be in English. Documents not originally written in English must be translated by an accredited translator or a third-party professional, and you must include the translator's contact information.

For documentation from a health care provider or employer, documentation may be verified directly with the provider by the petition committee. Any questions regarding Hardship Withdrawals should be directed to c2petitions@uw.edu

VII. Concentrations, Certificates, and Training Initiatives

While progressing through the Sociology program, students have the option of completing other certificates or degrees, including a concentration in Social Statistics, a concentration in Qualitative Methods, and [Graduate Certificates](#) from [CSDE](#), [CLASS](#), and [GWSS](#). Our department also offers a training initiative in demography from the Max Planck-UW Training Initiative.¹

Graduate concentrations, certificates and concurrent degrees require coordination between programs and the Graduate School, so it is important to inform the GPA about your plans to pursue one. Keep in mind that when you are ready to graduate, you will need to submit a manual degree audit to the graduate school. For this, consult the [Instructions for Graduating Concurrent Students](#).

Concentration in Social Statistics

The Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences (CSSS) promotes collaborative interdisciplinary research on statistical methods for the social sciences and teaches a rich menu of methodology courses for social science students.

The concentration in social statistics is designed to provide students with significant training in contemporary methods for quantitative sociological research. The core of the concentration is successful completion of advanced CSSS coursework. Students completing the concentration will receive a Letter of Recognition from CSSS.

The most up-to-date information is available on the CSS website ([Center for Statistics and Social Sciences](#)) on the page specifically dedicated to explaining the [Sociology Concentration](#).

The two main requirements for the concentration are

1. Successful completion of a coherent set of four courses in social statistics
2. One quarter of CSSS 590 (the CSSS weekly seminar)

After you complete your coursework, submit the [Request for Concentration in Social Statistics form](#) to the Sociology GPA. When course completion is confirmed in the department and the CSSS, you will receive your letter of completion.

Qualitative Methods Concentration

QUAL is a program hosted under the Jackson School of International Studies that offers education and training to researchers interested in conducting qualitative data analysis across different sectors.

The Qualitative Methods Concentration focuses on providing formal training about the design, method, and analysis of qualitative research including interviews, focus groups, archival research, digital ethnographies, case studies, and discourse analysis. Students and researchers must complete a series of coursework and qualitative data analysis software workshops (ATLAS.ti).

Concentration Requirements and Procedures:

1. Complete a minimum of 15 credits (here's the breakdown):
 - o 10 credit minimum from Methods courses
 - o 5 credits minimum from Theory of Gateway courses
2. Complete 2 [Atlas.ti Data Analysis](#) workshops
3. Attend a minimum of 2 [Speaker Series](#) events

For additional information regarding the application process, students should refer to the following website [link](#).

CSSS Concentration FAQ

How do I signal my advanced training in quantitative methods on my resume?

There are a couple of ways to do this: (1) Add a line called 'Research in Quantitative Methods' to your resume, listing the quantitative methods from the CSSS Concentration; (2) Add a section to your resume titled 'Advanced Training in Quantitative Methods' that summarizes CSSS coursework and mentions the letter of recognition from CSSS. This can be included in your comprehensive exam.

I enrolled in a non-CSSS Section of a CSSS course. Can I count this towards the concentration?

Sure!

Is the CSSS concentration a graduate certificate?

No. This is a concentration and not a graduate certificate.

Qualitative Methods Concentration FAQ

When should I submit the planning form?

The deadline is the end of the first week of classes of each quarter.

Can I include previously taken courses in the planning form?

Yes.

Can I petition to have a course qualify for the QUAL concentration?

Yes. Petitions must include the course name, description, and syllabus.

¹ NOTE a change in July 2022 removed restrictions around counting credits towards both a graduate certificate and a graduate degree.

Max Planck-CSDE-UW Training Initiative

This is a training opportunity for admitted graduate students at the University of Washington, who would like to study demography with the Center for Studies in Demography & Ecology and the [Max Planck Institute for Demographic Research](#) (MPIDR) in Rostock, Germany. The two-year program offers students the opportunity to develop creative research in demography and a global presence as population scientist. Students receive mentorship from faculty and the opportunity to receive a certificate for training from the Max Planck School of Population, Health, and Data Science. For additional information, see the [Max Planck-UW Training Initiative](#)

The Certificate in Demographic Methods

The [Certificate in Demographic Methods](#) is a transcribed training program. This means that it formally appears on your graduate transcript. The program requires 13 credit hours of courses and seminars and offers substantial additional mentoring and professional development resources. For more information, contact csde@uw.edu or visit the [training page website](#).

Concurrent Degrees

Sociology does not have any official concurrent degree programs, so dual degrees would be informal. The graduate schools' policy on [Concurrent Degree Programs](#) will answer many of your questions. Rules governing dual degrees depend on the degree. Sociology students would most likely pursue a non-sociology master's degree. For process information, see [UW Graduate School policy](#).

VIII. Exiting the Program

Completion of the PhD

Detailed information about the steps required to graduate with a PhD can be found in the section above on PhD requirements for more information about this.

Exiting Through Non-Registration

Students may exit the program at any point by not registering for classes and not filing for on-leave status. If you are not registered or on leave, the graduate school will consider this evidence that you have withdrawn and resigned from the graduate school, as per UW Graduate School policy 3.5.

Withdrawal

Students can request withdrawal from a graduate program, effective the quarter following their request. Students who withdraw from a program may only re-enter through reinstatement (see below) or by submitting a new application

Academic Probation and Removal

For students making unsatisfactory progress, the department may issue an academic alert to initiate a probationary period with the possibility of subsequent advance of removal, as per UW Graduate School policy 3.7.

Access to UW Resources After Exiting

Computing Resources. You will have access to computing services for your UW NetID (including your UW Google account and UW Office 365 account) until the fifth week of the second consecutive quarter in which you are not registered as a student (excluding summer quarter). For more information about what to expect, and how to preserve your work, please consult the [UW IT page](#).

Library Services. Students can access email and electronic resources off-campus and borrow materials until the second consecutive quarter in which you are not enrolled (excluding Summer). After that time, you may access library resources by joining the UW Alumni Association.

IX. Resources for Graduate Students

Graduate School can be a long, expensive, and sometimes stressful experience, but there are many resources to help you through. Whether you want to make connections with others who share your academic interests, want to learn more about Seattle, are looking for new sources of funding, or just need someone to talk with, there is a place to find assistance.

Quiet Room

Savery 252 is available to be reserved for quiet room needs. Reserve this space if you have a zoom or other call that requires confidentiality, if you want a prayer space, lactation station or a place to rest. To book, see the [schedule a room](#) page, or stop by the front desk in Savery 211.

Departmental Resources ● Graduate Advising Guidelines ● Graduate Student Guidebook (an insider’s guide written by and for graduate students) ● Department Intranet (for faculty, staff, and graduate students) ● Diversity Statement for the Department ● Graduate Student Resource Library ● Affiliate Centers ● Sociology Writing Center ● Sociology Syllabus Archive ● Schedule a room in the Sociology department ● Office Space Policy	International Students ● International Student Services Office can provide guidance on maintaining F-1 or J-1 immigration status while attending the UW; process F-1 and J-1 immigration benefits; navigate university policy and understand F-1 and J-1 visa restrictions; ensure university and student compliance with immigration policies. ● Resources for the UW’s global community
Resources for RAs and TAs ● Academic Student Employees (ASE) ● Personnel and Labor Relations ● Teaching Support ● Sociology Teaching Toolkit (on Canvas)	Graduate School Policies ● Graduate School Policies ● Graduate Degree Requirements ● UW Grading Practices for Graduate Students ● Graduate Faculty Locator
Communities @ UW ● GSEE: Graduate Student Equity and Excellence ● wəˈtəbʔaltx™ – Intellectual House ● Alene Moris Women's Center ● Disability Resource Center ● The Q Center ● Veterans Center	Grants and Fellowships ● Fellowships The Sociology department’ fellowship page ● Funding opportunities at CSDE ● Training resources, from CSDE ● Travel and Research Support
Health and Wellness ● UW Rec (includes information about the Intramural Activities Center) ● Hall Health Primary Care Center ● Livewell (a center for advocacy, training, and education) ● Husky Health & Well-being (student health services in one place) ● Counseling Center ● Student Life ● Campus Safety ● Safe Campus (anonymous discussions of safety concerns) ● Husky NightWalk Service	Additional Resources ● Travel and Research Support ● Career Planning ● Student Legal Services

Appendix A: Approval of Previous MA

Students who enter the program with an MA can request a formal faculty review of their thesis. Students whose MA is approved via this process are not required to complete a second MA degree in the UW sociology department. However, they need to take the required first-year courses.

To submit a request for a review of your prior MA, inform the GPA and GPC. Before or during your first quarter. You will need to compile a packet of materials documenting your prior MA work. This packet will include:

- 1) A short statement describing the MA program and what the thesis accomplishes
- 2) The MA thesis (must be submitted in English – if your thesis was originally written in a language other than English, you may submit a translated version)
- 3) A transcript of prior graduate coursework.

Submit these materials to the Graduate Program Advisor. The Graduate Program Advisor will record the packet submission and pass it along to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who will convene an ad-hoc committee of at least two faculty members to review the materials. At least one member of the committee will have substantive and/or methodological expertise in the thesis topic. The prior MA will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

1. Does the MA thesis demonstrate an ability to conduct methodologically sound social scientific research?
2. Does all of the submitted work demonstrate that the student is prepared to begin independent, empirical, sociological research at the Ph.D. level?

Committee members will provide a summary evaluation of the MA thesis and make a recommendation about advancement to the Ph.D. program.

The two most common outcomes include accepting or denying the previous MA. In rare cases, the committee will recommend that a student work with a faculty member to revise their thesis. This requires: (i) approval of the entire graduate program committee, (ii) agreement from the designated faculty member, and (iii) completion of revisions within two quarters

Students whose MA is accepted will be classified as 'post-MA'. Students with extensive prior coursework in social statistics may petition to waive one or more of the required statistics courses.

Appendix B: Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam Procedures for Students Who Entered before 2026

Students who entered the program before 2026 have the option of taking the version of the comprehensive exams that was in place when they accepted their offer to join the program. This version of the exams can be taken in traditional or 'synthetic' areas. Exams that bridge areas may be useful for students whose emerging research agenda draws on multiple lines of scholarship. The topic and coverage of the exam should be substantially broader than a dissertation, and it should cover foundational readings and current scholarship in the chosen area(s). Specific exam areas will be developed by you in collaboration with your committee.

You should take the comprehensive exams within one year of completing the MA degree, and no later than the spring of the fourth year. You must be registered in the quarter in which you take the exam, and the exam is typically taken *two weeks before* the end of a quarter so it can be graded before the break. Exams cannot be taken during vacations or breaks.

Committee

The exam committee should include at least three faculty members selected by the student. A departmental representative (DR) is also randomly assigned to the committee by the GPC. At least two of the student-selected faculty members should have at least a 25% appointment in the sociology department. The third should have, at a minimum, adjunct status in the department.

Reading List

In preparation for the comprehensive exam, students should create a reading list in consultation with their committee. The length varies, but lists should consist of about 30 books and 100 articles and/or book chapters covering both contemporary and classic literature in the chosen area. Students may consult examples of exam topics, reading lists, and exam questions from other students. As you approach this milestone, you should meet with the GPC to discuss your plans for forming a committee, making your list, and figuring out your timeline and plans to prepare. Other graduate students have also put together a list of preparation tips.

Format

Comprehensive exams are offered in two formats. Format A is the most common, but format B is also an option when graduate students consult with their committee.

Format A: Open Book Exam

Question: Exams typically consist of three to six questions posed by the examining committee.

Response: Written responses should not exceed 30-pages (double-spaced, standard margins, 12-point Times New Roman or similar font). Responses need not be of equal length.

Time limit: Students will have 48 hours to complete the exam.

Protocol: This is an open book exam, allowing students to consult books, articles, notes, and online materials. However, students should not discuss the questions or responses with anyone. The exam instructions provided by the examining committee will specify whether citations and references are required and whether references count toward the 30-page limit.

Format B: Closed Book Exam

Question: The total number of questions is determined by the examining committee.

Response: The examining committee will set the response terms for the student.

Time Limit: Students will have a maximum of 8 hours each day to complete the exam.

Protocol: This is a shorter, closed-book exam, also conducted over a two-day period. The final structure of the exam is determined by the examining committee.

Additional Time

You can request a 24-hour extension if you are a non-native English writer, are pregnant, have a documented learning disability or have a health condition that requires additional time. Request this extension when scheduling your exam and send the exam committee's approval to the GPA.

Narrative Rationale

Prepare a short narrative rationale for the exam (one page or less). Describe why you are proposing this particular exam and outline the broad contours of the exam's domain. If the exam covers more than one field or subfield in the discipline, the narrative should briefly discuss how this combination of fields will prepare you for future research and teaching.

Requesting an Exam

To request an exam, you will need to submit a [Comprehensive Exam Request form](mailto:tmcscha@uw.edu) to the graduate program advisor (tmcscha@uw.edu). As part of that form, you will need to include a narrative rationale along with your reading list. You will then wait for approval and the assignment of the departmental representative. Once that is approved, you should schedule your exam with the committee.

Departmental Representative

After the proposed exam has been approved by the GPC, a Departmental Representative (DR) will be randomly assigned to your committee. The main role of the DR is to ensure that exams do not become too closely aligned to a student's (or faculty member's) idiosyncratic interests. It also provides faculty with an opportunity to see what type of work is being done in the department. In practice, the DR provides coordination and oversight, as opposed to creating the exam and providing feedback. At a minimum, the DR should review exam questions to ensure that they are neither too broad nor too narrow and have an opportunity to read the completed exam.

Outcome

You will learn the exam outcome within two weeks. Exam outcomes include: Pass with Distinction, Pass, Conditional Pass or Fail.

A conditional pass means that the committee is asking for revisions. You have 60 days (about 2 months) to revise and resubmit. If you do not resubmit, you will be placed on warning status with the graduate school. Students placed on warning must retake the comprehensive exam within one quarter after the original exam date.

Students who fail the exam will be put on warning status and can retake the exam in the next quarter. Students who fail the exam a second time will be dismissed from the program. A third attempt is granted if two-thirds of the faculty approve.

Appendix C: Approved Subfields for Third Year Comprehensive Exams

Below is a list of approved subfields and their associated supervising faculty. Note that this is not an exhaustive list of all important subjects in sociology, or work being done by our faculty or graduate students. Rather, the list specifically reflects existing areas of departmental expertise, which means that there are at least three faculty members who are qualified and prepared to work together to create and maintain a list in that area, and to evaluate exams drawn from those lists.

1. **Demography:** Curran, Williams, Dorélien, Almquist, Catron, Crowder, Cha, Johfre
2. **Migration:** Williams, Catron, Almquist, Crowder
3. **Law & Society:** Beckett, Rocha Beardall, Harris
4. **Health:** Louie, Dorélien, Almquist, Cha
5. **Stratification** (includes readings on labor/work): Crowder, Harris, Ince, Catron, Rocha Beardall, Brines, Quinn
6. **Comparative and Historical Sociology:** Quinn, Catron, Rocha Beardall
7. **Race:** Harris, Ince, Rocha Beardall, Louie, Beckett, Crowder
8. **Sex, Gender and Sexuality:** Curran, Johfre, Kichler, Brines
9. **Urban Sociology** (includes readings on Housing, Homelessness, and Neighborhoods): Crowder, Messamore, Almquist, Rocha Beardall
10. **Culture and Cognition** (includes readings on social psychology): Johfre, Ince, Quinn, Louie
11. **Environmental Sociology:** Greiner, Curran, Almquist, Crowder, Johfre, Dorélien
12. **Political Sociology** (includes readings on social movements): Ince, Messamore, Almquist, Quinn
13. **Social Networks:** Almquist, McCormick, Messamore

Students may petition for other topics by finding three or more faculty who are willing to oversee an exam in that area.

Appendix D: Additional Requirements for Students with Concurrent Degrees/Certifications

If you are pursuing concurrent degrees/certifications (for more on this, see VII. Concentrations, Certificates, and Training Initiatives) you have additional graduation requirements, see the [Concurrent Degree Graduation Review](#) page. Inform the GPA about concurrent degrees and certifications. Note: CSSS is a concentration, not a certification.

To avoid delays in graduation, please follow these guidelines when submitting your UW Concurrent Form:

1. Submit your requests in MyGrad for each degree or certificate.
2. Prepare your Transcript
 - Review your unofficial transcript in MyUW.
 - **IMPORTANT: Make sure you have no Incompletes or outstanding grades before submitting concurrent degree transcript before quarter deadlines**
 - Download or print your unofficial transcript from MyUW.
 - Highlight the courses that meet each degree or certificate requirement
 - Highlighting Tips
 - Use distinct colors to highlight each program:
 - Recommended for Paper: Yellow, Green, Pink
 - Recommended for PDFs: Light Yellow, Light Blue, Light Green
 - Avoid similar shades or dark colors that might obscure the text.
3. Upload your transcript to the [UW Concurrent Form](#)
 - Use your student name (as listed on your unofficial transcript) when completing the [UW Concurrent Form](#) and uploading your unofficial transcript. Do not use your preferred name.
 - Ensure the image or PDF of your unofficial transcript is:
 - Clear and legible
 - Properly cropped (not zoomed out or tilted)
 - Free from shadows, glare, or illegible handwritten notes