A Guide to the UW Sociology Honors Program

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Table of Contents

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I. Introduction

Hello and welcome to the Sociology Departmental Honors Program! You have a very exciting year of personal and academic growth ahead of you. This handbook will serve as a guide through honors, with all of its moving parts.

The guide is divided into 3 main sections based on the work you will do as you move through this program: **Getting Started**; **Conducting & Presenting Research**; **Writing and Revising.** Each section contains general guidelines, tips, and supplemental materials. While using this handbook remember that your research, and everyone's research, is conducted iteratively. By that we mean that you will <u>revisit</u> the key components of your thesis (like the research question, literature review, research design) <u>multiple times</u> as you work on your project. Use the handbook to help you at any point, thinking of it as holding tools and insights for any time point in the process. If you feel your research is not directly aligning with a section of the handbook you are in, don't stress: simply look for the suggestions with page numbers that will direct you back to the portion of the guide that will be most useful for you. There are many ways to conduct research and you will need to sometimes think creatively and diverge from this guide.

Remember as you go through this program that despite the stress, all of the work you put into this research will culminate with a thesis that you will be very proud to have written. The research process can be intimidating at first, especially when you are just beginning but part of the excitement of conducting your research is getting to know what research, writing, and working styles work best for you. Throughout the program you will have each other, your advisor(s), and your instructors helping all along the way. You will not be alone!

During the final part of this program you will share your work with other scholars at the University and contribute to a greater wealth of knowledge for the UW community, and the larger community as well. Trust your instincts and remember there are many people working to support you throughout this program. Those many people want you to succeed and produce a final research project that is worth the hard work and effort you invest in it. At the end of the program you will look back on your initial time when you were just beginning to learn about the world of sociological research and you will not believe how much you were able to accomplish in just a short amount of time. Believe in yourself, remember to take time to enjoy the process, and if you are feeling stuck and alone in this research come back to this guide and refresh your memory on all of the resources and support available to you as a Sociology Honors student.

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Honors Program Requirements

Students must complete the following requirements to graduate with honors:

- **SOC 496-497: Honors Senior Seminar**. This two-quarter sequence, taught by the Honors Director and a PhD Graduate Student, covers study design, helps to refine students' research questions and strategies, and prepares them to undertake original thesis research. The Honors Director teaches SOC 496 and the PhD Student teaching SOC 497.
- **SOC 498: Honors Senior Thesis**. Successful completion of an honors thesis through a credit/no-credit independent study course under direct supervision of an individual faculty member/graduate student mentor with expertise in the student's area of interest.
- In addition to the above courses, sometime during their honors year, students are required to complete:
    - One 400-level substantive W seminar with a faculty member in the department (in addition to any such courses students took prior to their honors year). This requirement may not be met with SOC 402/403/404, or SOC 499. Check with Sociology Advising before you sign up so we can make sure the class qualifies.
    - Or, if a student is interested in taking a graduate level substantive seminar instead, they should discuss it with, and get permissions from, the Honors Director as well as from the Professor teaching the class. Graduate level courses are 3 credits but the department can facilitate a 2 credit SOC 499 add-on in cases where it's needed.
    - Or, students may propose taking an advanced Statistics course instead of one of the above options. Approval is required from the Honors Director, as well as from the Professor teaching the class.
- A SOC GPA of at least 3.50 and a UW GPA of at least 3.30 at graduation.
- A total of 60 credits in Sociology coursework, including all of the Honors requirements. Honors students must meet all other degree requirements for the BA in Sociology.

Register for Fall and Winter Quarter Honors: SOC 496 & SOC 497

As an Honors Student you will need to register for SOC 496 (fall quarter), SOC 497 (winter quarter) and SOC 498 (spring quarter):

- **SOC 496** in fall: Once you have been accepted into the Honors Program, Susanna Hansson in the Sociology Advising Office will assist you with your registration for SOC 496 for autumn quarter.
- **SOC 497** in winter: Send an email and include your student ID number to both Susanna Hansson (susanna@uw.edu) and asksoc@uw.edu on or after your registration date.

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REGISTER FOR SPRING QUARTER SOC 498 CREDITS

As honors students, you will register for SOC 498 in the Spring Quarter. You should start the process around week 5 of the winter quarter, which usually falls in mid-February. Please be sure to inform your advisor that you will be doing this.

SOC 498 will provide you with independent study credits under the oversight of your advisor. SOC 498 is graded CR/NC and thus will have no impact on your sociology GPA. To register for SOC 498, send an email to the sociology advising office with the following information:

- The name of your Honors Thesis Faculty Advisor
- Your student number
- The number of credits you would like.

The Department allows some leeway when it comes to credit hours for SOC 498. We assume most of you want to be registered for 5 credits, but if you do not want a full 5 credits (because you are juggling multiple majors/required courses, for example), you can register for anywhere between 1 and 5 credits. Keep in mind, however, that you must have earned *at least* 60 Sociology credits by the time you graduate. Carrying fewer than 5 credits of SOC 498 doesn't mean you spend any less time doing research or write a shorter honors thesis; the varying credit load is simply a mechanism that allows us to offer flexibility in terms of your schedule.

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II. Getting Started

Your sociology honors year will consist of coursework, independent research, writing and presentations.

Summer

Prepare for honors by contacting your advisor and reading in your areas of interest

Fall

Course work: SOC 496
Honors students will work as a cohort to design their projects and write a research proposal

Winter

Course work: SOC 497.
Honors students will work as a cohort to collect data and write the first half of thesis
Apply to the Mary Gates Symposium

Spring

Coursework: SOC 498 (enrolled independent study with faculty mentor).
Honors students work independently to write up and present findings

You will also take another course to complete your Honors Credits: SOC 400-level writing seminar; or a 500-level graduate seminar (with permission from the honors director and course professor); or an advanced Statistics course (with permission from the honors director and course professor). You can take these courses at any point, but you are encouraged to take the course in the fall or winter quarters. In the Spring quarter you will be extremely busy as you work to complete your thesis.

Course Load for Fall Quarter

During the first stage of the research process you are required to complete SOC 496, which will provide structured guidance for you and your cohort as you begin the research process. You may also be enrolled in a seminar (400 or 500 level course). Remember that the information you learn throughout this quarter will be relevant throughout the entire program so keep organized, detailed notes on what you have learned, your ideas for your research, and what you want to achieve during your research program. These will be invaluable to you down the road, especially if you feel unclear of the direction of your project as more elements are added.

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Establish a working relationship with your advisor

When you enter the program you are assigned a faculty advisor. You are not permanently tied to this advisor, especially if you change research topic or method. However, having an advisor immediately will help you expedite the process of narrowing down your topic and developing a research question as soon as possible. The quicker you are able to decide on your research topic, the sooner you will be able to review some literature on your topic and explore possibilities for data and methods. You should not feel rushed, but having an advisor assigned right away will help you settle into the program faster and have someone to turn to with your questions, especially during the first few weeks, when you are just beginning to learn about the research process.

Advisors guide your process and grade your work, but as an honors student it is your responsibility to make sure that you stay on track, make regular progress, and meet deadlines. In the past, you could count on teachers to tell you what was due and when. For this program, however, it will be your job to keep the advisor abreast of upcoming due dates and developments.

Contacting Your Advisor

The first thing you will do as an honors student is send an email of introduction to your advisor. This email should be professional, formal, and concise. (Over time, you can follow the professor's lead and become more casual as they do.) You can find tips for contacting professors via email here, here, and here.)

Example of an Introduction Email to Your Advisor

Subject: Sociology Honors

Dear Professor Snape,

My name is Hermione Granger, and am looking forward to working with you as part of the honors program. While my topic of research is still developing, right now I am interested in the study of health disparities between people with and without magical abilities.

I will be in touch again when the fall quarter begins to find a time to meet. In the meantime, if there is anything you think I should do to prepare for honors, or any readings you think I should complete over the summer, please just let me know.

My thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Hermione

Clear Communication

Working with a faculty advisor can be incredibly valuable, but it is essential to remember that many of them teach courses and conduct their own research, so they face many competing priorities. Advisors also have very different advising styles. One person may want to meet with you every week. Another may expect you to work independently for longer stretches of time. Some professors are available for hour-long meetings. Others will end meetings after 15 minutes. While it is okay to ask for help and guidance, keep in mind that you will need to adjust to the professor's advising style. This is why it is

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important for you and your advisor to meet in person as soon as possible in the fall quarter to set up a working relationship. Topics to discuss include (but are not limited to):

- how often they want to meet
- how they would like to communicate with you outside of office hours
- how they prefer to review your work (do they want to review smaller sections, or just a complete draft?)
- what they will expect of you
- any areas you anticipate needing assistance with
- what assignments you will need to complete for class
- their expectations for an honors thesis: if they prefer a specific length, or have an example they want you to consult.

For every meeting with your advisor, you should prepare an update about what you've worked on since you last met, any hurdles you might have experienced, and a list of questions or concerns you might like for them to give you some guidance around. This can be done verbally during your meeting or you can send them a brief email update prior to the meeting. Following the meeting, write them a thank you note and a few sentences about what you will be doing between now and the next meeting. This will be helpful for you and them.

Set a Timeline

You and your advisor should agree on dates for all important milestones in the program, which include the following:

Milestone	**Approximate Timing**
Research proposal	November-December
Human Subjects Approval	January or early February
Mary Gates abstract approval	Late January / Early February
Data collection/preparation completed	Late February
Mary Gates Scholarship	Late February
Sociology Department Funding	Anytime Winter Qtr or Spring Qtr
Initial analysis completed	Early April
First draft due	Mid-late April
Final draft due	No later than finals period in June

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Establish a timeline and provide it to your advisor as soon as possible. A timeline will allow you to avoid confusion, and will ensure that your advisor will be able to appropriately support you at the pace you need. During the first two quarters, many of the milestones you complete will be dictated by requirements for SOC496 and SOC497. During the spring quarter, it will be up to you to set your own timeline and communicate it with your advisor.

Additional materials and milestones your advisor might want to see are: Additional human subjects research materials (includes statement of risk, consent forms, interview schedules, survey questionnaires, recruitment materials); Early findings/descriptive data; Analytical memos about results; Drafts of the various components of the paper: abstract, introduction, literature review, data and methods section, findings, discussion, conclusion, end matter; Drafts of posters for presentations.

Productive Meetings

In order to get the most out of your advising sessions with your advisor you should prepare in advance. This can mean preparing a memo or questions that does any of the following:

- Outline the updates you have on your research progress
- List questions you have for moving forward
- Explain your research plans, or what you will work on, for the next week or two

Coming to meetings prepared with these questions (and others like them) and knowing what you want to accomplish will help you stay on track and get the most out of your time with your advisor. This will be especially useful as professors' schedules get busy at year end, and it may become more difficult to meet regularly with your advisor at that time.

No matter what, you should maintain regular communication with your advisor even if you are not meeting in-person regularly. This can take the form of a brief email update or outline of what you have been working on or what you plan to take on next; a short memo of updates emailed to your advisor; or even sharing your work and outlines over google drive. Never assume a faculty member is available at the last minute, or can give you comments on short notice. Above all, never miss a scheduled meeting unless it is a true emergency -- skipping out on meetings communicates that you are not taking honors seriously, or worse, that you do not respect the professor's time.

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Get Organized

By the time you have finished this academic year, you will have collected so many ideas, resources, citations, and data for this project that it will be hard to keep track of everything. If you do not come up with a system for tracking what you have done, you may soon find yourself overwhelmed. Citation organizers, research notebooks, a special folder in your google drive or on your computer can all help keep things manageable. Get started early to make your life easier later on.

Citation organizers such as Zotero are useful because once you download them to your computer they allow you to instantly save your source to a compiled list where you can add notes, sort materials into different subsections, and have access to the citation all in one place. As time passes, having a short summary or a few notes to remind you of why you grabbed a particular citation can be incredibly helpful and time-saving. Another way to keep your citations organized is to take reading notes. This might include notes about the research question, data and methods, results, and what you found interesting from it during your initial read. Reading notes will allow you to quickly glance over a memo and jog your memory as to what you were thinking when you first read the source.

One thing that sets honors apart from other classes is how often you will be expected to revise your work. In SOC496 and SOC497 you will draft parts of the thesis (like the abstract, introduction, literature review, and data and methods sections) multiple times, so that you can workshop them with peers and then revise your work.

Pro tip: Google Drive

Snow recommends using Google Drive because it automatically backs-up your work, and allows you to easily share an up-to-date version of any document with a peer, advisor, or professor.

You will need to keep these drafts organized so as not lose any relevant information. Develop a straightforward system for managing your drafts at the beginning of fall quarter. You might keep a Google Drive folder that holds all of your documents in one place, or a folder on your computer. Either way, remember to give each of your folders and documents specific labels with unique names so you will not confuse them along the way.

Another tool to consider is a research notebook. By keeping an organized and semi-formal research notebook you will very easily be able to track your ideas and insights throughout the program, and you will be able to keep all of your research plans in one place. This can be online or on paper, and it can help you keep track of even the smallest details that can otherwise get lost in all of the documents you will be using.

C.Wright Mills (a famous sociologist who wrote the *Sociological Imagination* (1959)) talks about his method of keeping a 'file' containing all his ideas and progress associated with a project

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Here's a link to his essay describing his research process and his 'file', which is an appendix to *Sociologial Imagination*. Check it out!

https://www.miguelangelmartinez.net/IMG/pdf/1959_Mills_on_intellctual_craftmanship.pdf

Find a Research Topic

As you enter the Honors program, remember that you are not tied to a research topic simply because you wrote about it on your application. You are able to change your topic during this exploratory phase based on your personal preference, access to resources, and suggestions from your advisor(s) and cohort. This stage is the basis for the rest of your research process. The work you do now will pay off in the later stages because you will gain a clearer idea of which direction you are going in and how you want to structure your data collection and analysis. Be sure to take advantage of all of the resources available. This includes your cohort, advisor, and any guest speakers that visit SOC 496 or SOC 497 to explain aspects of the research process. The guidelines in this section will help you prepare to use these to the best of your ability and will help to eliminate any confusion as to the benefit of these in developing the foundations of your research.

There are a few strategies for finding a great research topic.

- **Ask the experts.** Faculty members have spent years (if not decades) researching their areas of expertise. Many have ideas for topics that are understudied, or research projects that can be done as an honors project. When you meet with faculty, ask them if they have ideas for topics or projects that would be appropriate for an honors thesis.

- **Find a role model.** Scientific understanding grows through a process of accumulated knowledge, and all research builds on the work that came before. As an honors student, following the lead of an existing study is a fantastic way to learn how to do research while making a substantial contribution. This can take the form of a replication study that determines whether an existing result is reproducible. Another option is to adapt an existing study: you can use a new dataset to test an existing model; reproduce an ethnography in a new time and place; take an interview study and investigate the same topics with a new set of people. If this interests you, talk to your advisors, and other faculty members, about studies worth revisiting or extending.

> **Pro tip:** Use the Proxy Server
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> If you conduct research off-campus, the UW library proxy server will allow you to quickly access online resources. Visit the Off-Campus Access website for detailed directions on how to download the proxy bookmark onto your personal computer.

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- **Reflect on your interests**. If you are feeling unsure about what topic you want to focus on, that is completely normal. In that case, try to identify a topic that interests you, and review sociological research on the topic. Look for cues about how other scholars approached this matter. Once you have this starting point, talk with your advisors and peers about how to narrow your interests. If this is still too broad for you, don't worry, narrowing your topic and developing a research question will come more easily as you go through the honors program.

- **Read the News.** Consider important events in your community that create "data outcroppings" (to borrow a phrase from Kristin Luker) that you can easily access. Right now Seattle is going through rapid changes. Tech is booming, homelessness is skyrocketing, the fight for $15 has raised the minimum wage, and recreational cannabis is newly legalized. Consider how these dynamics, and more, could provide an opportunity to advance some aspect of sociological understanding.

Narrow Your Research Question

After you select a research topic, you will have to devise a specific research question. As you do this, you will decide on how to "frame" your project, which is to say, how to explain in a quick way why this research matters to sociologists. Developing a research question and developing a "frame" for your study often happen concurrently. If you are feeling stuck on how to narrow down your research topic it may be useful for you to focus on framing first and then try to nail down a specific question.

Jump In

In order to frame your topic and find the right research question you will need to do some initial research. The best place to start this is on the UW library page. To maintain a focused approach to your research you should make sure to use the *Research Guides* section on the library's Sociology page. This is a guide carefully created by the Sociology librarian to help you either begin your research or to help you refocus when you get stuck. The *Oxford Bibliographies* online is another helpful resource that can give you a general view of how sociologists have approached your topic in the past. This can provide some early inspiration. Some other good resources for figuring out a topic are in the *Annual Review of Sociology*. In the journal articles, authors provide a review of the current research on a topic. Those articles provide an overview of the theories and evidence, thematically organize research in the topic area, and they often provide suggestions for future research in that topic area. They can be excellent resources for launching a research project. Another good place to look for research questions is to read book reviews. *American Journal of Sociology* and *Contemporary Sociology* provide book reviews that give you a good sense of the latest research and important questions in a topic area. Additionally, you might peruse *Sociological Abstracts* which provides brief synopses of research studies.

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> **Pro tip:** Keep Your Research Design In Perspective. You must be careful to design a project that is doable in the time you have allotted, and with the resources available to you as a student. Check with experts, like the honors director and your advisor, to make sure your plans are do-able.

If you are having trouble getting started with your research, or do not know what key terms you should use to review the literature you can set up an appointment with the Sociology librarian from the same main *Research Guide* web page. The librarian can help you identify search terms and point you toward the best resources for your topic. You should remember this throughout the year. You will need to visit the literature multiple times: first you will need to have a basic sense of work in the field when you write up your proposal; next you will need to write a more extensive literature review as part of your thesis; finally, you may also need revisit the literature after you have collected and analyzed your data, to help you make sense of any surprising findings.

MIND THE GAP

As a researcher, you want to create new knowledge. To do this, you need to understand what we already know — and don't know — about your topic. Sometimes this is discussed as "identifying a gap in the literature," which just means identifying something scholars have not yet figured out, or have even looked for/considered. For example, say you are interested in studying sororities and sexuality, but are not sure where to begin. As you look at existing studies, you realize that the existing research shows that sororities control the sexual expression and behaviors of their members, but no one has yet researched whether or how sexual control could vary among sororities. This is a problem because we know that social and organizational differences could potentially play a major role in magnifying or diffusing these social processes.

You can work with your advisor to find the current research on your desired topic. Your advisor may even be aware of a gap that needs to be filled, which will help you craft a clear and concise research question. This question should be concise, yet also address the variables you hope to investigate in your research. Your research question is bound to evolve throughout the year, but the sooner you can narrow down your topic and frame and build your research question the easier it will be for you to settle on a research plan.

CREATE A RESEARCH PLAN

Once you have a research question and understand your contribution to an existing conversation in sociology, you will decide how you actually want to collect and analyze your data. This sounds relatively straightforward; however, there can be a lot of moving parts, especially in this first stage as you will constantly workshop your research question and framing. As a frame of reference for how reflexive this research process is, you should refer to ***Salsa Dancing into the Social Sciences: Research in an Age of Info-Glut*** by Kristen Luker. This book takes the reader through the research process and explains the complex nature of

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completing a social science research project from start to finish. You may also want to refer to books about writing for research audiences. ***Economical Writing*** by Deidre McCloskey is helpful (it's meant to encourage you to write clearly and concisely). Former UW Sociology Professor, Howard Becker, has written two books that are useful for sociological research and writing. One is ***Tricks of the Trade: How to Think About Your Research While Doing It*** and the other is ***Writing for Social Science***.

You will start by figuring out what data you need. For quantitative data this could mean what dataset you will need to analyze in order to answer your question. For qualitative research, it could mean deciding what population you want to interview, or what group you want to observe. You should work with your advisor, cohort, and honors professor to establish what data will work best for your question and your framing.

An additional source of inspiration for your research design can come from the literature. Search for examples of other sociological studies of the topic. What data did they use? How was it collected and analyzed? Your advisors are also a good starting point for this as well, because they have all conducted their own research before (and are probably in the middle of a project right now). If you are stuck on how to find inspiration or an article that is similar to your own refer back to the section on **Developing a Research Question** and review the resources listed there.

After you have decided on what data you want, you will have to decide how to collect it. Ask yourself a few questions:

- Will I use human subjects?
- How will I recruit people to participate?
- What resources (funds, for example) will I need to get access to my data?
- Will I need permission from an outside data source to access my dataset?
- How much data will I be able to gather in the time that I have?

For quantitative data you will need to know who owns the dataset you want to use, and what form it will be in in once you get access to it. For qualitative data you need to find out if you need approval from the human subjects review board. For that, you will have to know exactly what population you will study, how you will access and recruit participants, and how you will structure the data collection. Some students may conduct mixed methods research, and use a mix of quantitative and qualitative research; however, this is generally advised against for the purposes of this program due to the limited time you have to complete the thesis.

You may be asked to write up a "Research Plan" for SOC 496 or your advisor. If you do, you will find that you can later use some of this material again when you write your research proposal and your thesis, or when you complete an Institutional Review Board application (if you are using human subjects).

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Pro tip: Online Data Sets

The SDA: Survey Documentation and Analysis website gives you access to a variety of online data sets, including the General Social Survey (GSS), the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) and public use microdata (PUMS) from the 2000 U.S. Census (and there are many others). It also includes an interactive statistical package for analyzing the data sets.

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III. Conduct & Present Your Research

As you begin this phase of your research keep in mind a few key ideas from the first section of this guidebook. Your schedule and needs will change during this new stage of the research process, so you will need to take some time to re-establish your working relationship with your advisor. This is another good time to check in about meeting times and frequency, goals, and any support you might need. Doing this will help ensure you and your advisor are both on the same page and can work together cohesively.

Course Load for Winter Quarter

During the winter quarter you will be completing any final preparations necessary before you collect your data. In SOC497 you will also write the first half of what will become your final thesis. Because collecting and working with data takes time, you may write some sections out of order. Review the section on writing up your findings for more information on each component of the thesis.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

Although intimidating, applying for IRB approval and receiving it does not need to be a scary task. In recent years, applying for IRB has become much more straightforward and there are many resources available to you through the honors program and through UW at large that will make it as painless as possible. This guide will help walk you through the process.

- The first step is to decide whether or not you need to apply through IRB. If you are unsure check out the tools on UW's IRB webpage "Do I Need IRB Review?"
- The second step is beginning to draft your IRB Review application. Visit UW's webpage "Apply for Review" to find links to all of the application materials you will need as well as more detailed information on the entire application process.
- The application materials you will need to fill out will include the IRB Protocol form, documents specific to your research project (i.e. consent forms, recruitment materials, and survey or interview questions etc.) and the Zipline SmartForm
- Once you apply it can take anywhere from 2-6 weeks (sometimes even longer) depending on whether your application qualifies as Exempt, Expedited, or Full Board Review. This all depends on the level of risk to your human subjects as perceived by the Review Board.
- You may need to modify your application after you have received approval if your plan

> **Pro Tip:** Start Early with IRB
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> Begin your IRB application as soon as possible so if you run into any issues with approval you have plenty of time before you need to begin collecting your data.

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for collecting data changes significantly. For a detailed guide on completing a modification check UW's "Modify the Approved Study" webpage.

Compile Existing Data or Collect New Data

Here it is, the moment you've been waiting for: you start working with existing data or collect your own new data!

Treasure troves of existing data abound!

You will find that sociologists and other social scientists have collected and archived many kinds of data, including wonderful survey data and administrative data. Many of us collect more data than we can ever completely analyze and that creates room for you to use their data to answer your own questions. There are many archived data sources available and you might ask your advisor, the data archivist at CSSCR, or a UW librarian. Through CSSCR, UW is a member of the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Science Research (ICPSR) and you can access any of their data through the CSSCR archive and you can ask CSSCR consultants questions about existing data via csscr@uw.edu.

if you are collecting your own, new data, ask yourself these questions first:

- Did you receive IRB approval (if necessary)?
- Did you consult with your advisor about your final plans for collecting the data?
- Do you need financial reimbursement from the Sociology Department for materials used during the recruitment or data collection processes?

Once you have received approval from your advisor (and IRB, if applicable) you should begin the data collection process. If you feel you should be reimbursed for any costs associated with your research process you should fill out the request sooner rather than later so you will get reimbursed as soon as possible.

While you are collecting the data, keep detailed records of any data transformations or cleaning you are doing for quantitative data and of any information regarding participants, consent forms, survey or interview responses for qualitative data. If you are doing interviews, remember that transcription is very time consuming and can delay your analysis. You should begin your transcriptions as soon as possible so you do not get stuck transcribing everything at the end.

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Data Collection for Quantitative Data

Here are some tips for collecting, cleaning, and transforming your quantitative data:

- RStudio is good software to use if you are new to statistical programming because it is relatively quick to learn the basics of and there are many online resources for you to access. You can download Rstudio for free on your personal computer through the Rstudio website. See more notes about R in the next section.
- The webpages for DataCamp and Rstudio will lead you to tutorials that can help you start out.
- You can also use the remote desktop available to you through the department's terminal server to access data. Just follow the instructions within the "Terminal Server Information" webpage to get access to the remote desktop and the statistical software available to you as a student.

Data Analysis for Quantitative Data

After you have cleaned your data you will begin your analysis. Once again, I recommend that you use Rstudio to complete your data analysis because it is relatively easy to learn in a short amount of time and it will allow you to do a variety of statistical analyses and to customize it to the needs of your specific research question.

You can also get extra support from the following places:

- Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences, Statistical Consulting (CSSS) Statistical services, including research design and the application of specific methods. Consulting RA is available by appointment or on a "walk in basis" during the office hours. Email: csss-consult@stat.washington.edu
- Statistical Consulting Services (SCS) Biostatistics and Statistics offer consultation and advice to researchers through scheduled appointments.
- The Center for Social Science Computational Research (CSSCR) offers workshops and consultations for both qualitative and quantitative analyses and software.

Here are some tips for using Rstudio:

- First, you need R. You can download R here.
- Second, you also need to download a platform that can run R; the most common is RStudio (there are other options, but they are more complicated to setup and use; RStudio is designed specifically to integrate with R). You can download RStudio here.
- Charles Lanfear, a PhD from the Sociology Department at UW, has an Introduction to R course and all of his materials are available for free online. His course page also provides links to a number of other resources, like the R for Data Science textbook and videos of some of the workshops he has put on.You can also play around with a package (requires

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downloading R and RStudio first) called "swirl", which uses R to teach you how to use R and a few of the really important packages, and it's all done within the R command line.

- Finally, there are a few R courses at DataCamp and EdX, and I'm sure many others are out there. Keep in mind, R is free, and there is an abundance of resources available for free to help you learn. There is no reason you should pay for anything when it comes to R, and that's how the R community wants to keep it.
- When using functions from dplyr or tidyr (part of the tidyverse) you can consult these helpful 'cheatsheets'.

Data Collection for Qualitative Data

Here are some tips and reminders to keep in mind as you begin collecting your qualitative data:

- Recruitment will often be the longest and most tenuous part of the data collection process
- Always maintain good organization of contact information and participant responses
- Google Forms allows you to create a free survey of any length online
- Having your materials available online can help expedite the data collection process
- Always record your interviews if possible (remember to ask permission to record the participant before beginning)
- Transcribe as you get the interviews done
- If you get stuck and are not able to find enough participants remember to consult with your advisor to help you workshop solutions

Data Analysis for Qualitative Data

As you begin your data analysis for qualitative data don't forget to check the canvas page for a list of readings and resources that will provide an overview on coding and analysis. By this point you should have collected all of your data and you should be transitioning into cleaning and organizing your data. Once your data is transcribed, cleaned and organized, you can conduct your analysis.

Remember while you are transcribing or uploading any survey data, you have to maintain excellent organization and any confidentiality required by the terms of your IRB approval. If you need some tips on organization, revisit the section on getting organized at the start of this guide.

Qualitative data analysis is different than quantitative because it involves developing your own codes based on your research question, framing, and what you feel is important. While it might feel more subjective, it does require systematic, analytical reasoning behind why you chose the codes you did and how you determined their significance in your data (i.e. through frequency, or theoretical relevance). To keep track of any codes you've developed and what they mean

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specifically you will need to create a codebook. The most straightforward way to do this (especially for a relatively small dataset) is to use Excel or Google Sheets. Within your spreadsheet you should include the following general information but you can customize your sheet as you see fit for your thesis:

- The code name
- A specific and succinct description of what qualifies under this code
- Examples of what would fall under this code (to help someone else understand your coding process)
- A notes section for each code

If you find that your data is actually categorical data, such as data collected from a multiple choice response survey, see the "Data Analysis for Quantitative Data" section above for data analysis tips.

There are many ways to conduct analyses of qualitative data.

Pro Tip: Keep in mind that codes can be usefully classified into the following sociological categories:

'What' codes - events, phenomena, types of people, situations, places

'To what extent' or 'whether' codes - conditions, contexts, variations, magnitudes, intensities

'How' codes - feelings, perspectives, relationships, duration, processes

'Why' codes - explanations, predictions, importance, implications

The Classic Approach:
Researchers use a technique of note taking before, during, and after interviews and observations. These notes are best structured in three distinct parts:

1. a memo prior to your field work that describes your planned interview or observation and is fairly detailed about what you expect it to be about and what you will learn
2. a detailed description of the actual interaction or observation - this is divided into two parts:
    a. very detailed and non-judgemental descriptions or accounts of an interaction or observation and
    b. your inner thoughts, reactions, judgements during the experience
3. a reflective memo about the interaction or observation - which compares and contrasts what you expected and what occurred, along with what seemed to be surprising or interesting moments.

Sometimes you can add observations that might be ideas about codes. These notes are then followed by thematically focused memo writing and vignette summaries. These last kinds of memos are usually drafted once you have done several interviews or observations.

More Technological Approaches:

Adding recording devices to your data collection can help, but you may still need to transcribe them or generate metadata to help catalogue them. Recordings can be still photos, audio

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recordings, or video recording. Qualitative software can help with managing text, video, images, audio recordings. These technical additions should build on the principles in the classic approach. However, they do allow you to manage in one place all of the material and to create the codes you might use to sort and compare. There are two software packages easily available to you - Atlas Ti and NVivo. The library provides links and guides here for those who might be interested.

UW and Departmental Research Funds for Honors Students

The department has a limited set of funds to support undergraduate research. In the past this has been used by students to: cover printing costs for surveys; print flyers used to recruit interview subjects; compensate interview subjects; gain access to privately-held datasets.

If you have expenses related to your honors project and would like to apply for research support, please send an email to the Honors Director containing (i) a proposed budget, and (ii) a 1-2 paragraph explanation of why the expense is necessary. Please copy your advisor on that email to the Honors Director.

If the expense is approved, you will pay for the expense out of pocket (if there is an issue with paying out of pocket, please let us know), and then submit the expense to the department's administrator. You can do this by leaving a copy of the receipt in her mailbox, or sending a scanned copy of the receipt. When you do submit your expenses, you must include a note explaining that the department has agreed to cover the expense as part of the Honors program.

There are research scholarships available through the Mary Gates Undergraduate Research program. Applications are accepted twice per year – once in Autumn Quarter and once in Winter Quarter. The scholarships are $5,000 and disbursed in installments of $2,500 each over two quarters. Graduating seniors may request to receive a one-quarter award totaling $2,500.

Get the Most out of Spring Quarter

In spring quarter you will work one-on-one with your advisor and while there is no regular or formal meeting with your cohort, you may want to meet with each other, anyway. It can be supportive to meet with your cohort regularly and informally. It is ultimately up to you to decide how you want to structure your workload to complete your data analysis and written thesis by the end of the quarter. Here are some things to keep in mind as you get started with this final stage of your thesis research process:

- Set up a regular meeting time with your advisor
- Establish goals and a semi-formal timeline for the quarter according to your specific needs

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- Get feedback from your advisor on the first half of your thesis that you submitted last quarter as soon as possible to help with revisions

Symposium Presentations

As an honors student you will be required to complete both the Mary Gates Undergraduate Research Symposium and the Sociology Department Research Symposium. These events are opportunities for you to gain practice presenting your work, and will give you a broad range of feedback on your findings, which is helpful to have before you finalize your thesis. Since these are formal events, you should wear business casual attire at each. At both, you should be prepared to discuss your posters to a broad audience that includes sociologists and non-sociologists.

Mary Gates Undergraduate Research Symposium

You will apply for the symposium online in the fall or winter quarter, and this requires you to submit an abstract. The Mary Gates application will automatically send this abstract to your advisor for approval, so let your advisor know to expect this.

When you apply, you will need to decide whether you will be completing an oral or poster presentation. You can attend a practice session before the symposium. You register online for this. Prepare your presentation to the specifications dictated by the Undergraduate Research Symposium guidelines and review your presentation with your advisor. Arrive at the event early to ensure everything runs smoothly.

Sociology Research Symposium

The sociology symposium is usually held a week or so after the Mary Gates symposium, and you are welcome to invite friends and family. Every student at this event will present a poster. In addition to that, one or two students are usually invited to give a short oral presentation of their findings.

Before this event you should revise your presentation and/or poster based on your feedback and experience from the Mary Gates Symposium. You should set aside the entire afternoon for this event; typically we gather the in sociology advising office and walk over to the symposium together. We will take the official sociology honors picture at this time.

The symposium is always followed by the AKD reception; your attendance at the reception is optional.

Poster Presentations

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UW has many resources for both oral and poster presentations (see "Poster design workshops," and "PowerPoint workshops"). For posters there is free printing available through CSSCR, and you can apply for research support funds to print out a glossy poster through UW Creative Communications. There are many online resources available to guide you through creating a poster. We recommend: How to Create a Poster Using PowerPoint.

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IV. Writing & Revising The Thesis

One way to think about an Honors Thesis is in terms of its major sections and the following is only a suggestion of the general length and the relative lengths of sections. We are suggesting that you really **don't** want to write a thesis that is very long, but you also want to provide enough detail to document your work and make the case for your good work. The following indicates a maximum of 56 pages, which is merely an estimate. The best course of action is to ask your advisor for their advice on length and in relation to what is the really necessary content required to write a strong thesis:

Section	Description	Suggested pages
Cover page	Title, Abstract, Advisor Name, Your Name	1
Introduction	Research question, hypotheses, justification for the work (answers the "so what?" question), brief discussion of data, methods, and findings	2-5
Lit Review	Situates the research in a broader sociological conversation; tells us what we do not yet know	5-10
Data and Methods	Clear and detailed description of how all data was collected and analyzed; acknowledges limitations	3-5
Findings	Presents results	10
Discussion	Interprets findings	10
Conclusion	Summarizes paper, discusses policy implications and/or areas for future research	3-5
End Matter	References, Appendices, Charts/Graphs	5-10

What if You Feel Stuck?

Do not panic if you feel stuck at any point during this process. When you feel lost, confused or frustrated, reach out for help. As long as you keep working with your advisor, cohort, and the honors director, you will eventually find a path forward. It is often the case that the most innovative and profound analysis comes out of working through a roadblock.

Pro tip: Stay organized

If you maintain a structured schedule to help you stay on top of your analysis and writing, you will not feel so pressed for time at the end of the quarter.

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One way to keep going and overcome blocks is to form a writing group, where you meet up regularly amongst yourselves to share your feelings and challenges, as well as bits of your writing or other aspects of your research products. Sometimes one way to get over a writing block or feeling stuck, is to help someone else get unstuck! You'll find that your insights for them might loosen yourself up to overcome a roadblock. Or, they will return the favor and gain an insight. In any event, just talking through your project with someone else can just help. Meeting weekly can be very helpful.

THE INTRODUCTION

Writing the introduction to your thesis is a task that is at once both easy to overthink and easy to underestimate. You want to intrigue the reader with your topic and framing, yet you do not want to overwhelm the reader with irrelevant information. When you are writing the introduction keep a few things in mind:

- You should keep it concise. Only include essential information such as the research question and an overview of your methods, data, and analysis.
- You want the reader to finish the introduction knowing exactly what you intend to discuss in the following sections.

You will most likely work on your first draft in SOC 496 or SOC 497, before you have completed your actual research. At that point, because your research is underway, you will not be able to include any specific information on your data or analysis; this will come later in the process. You should still use the opportunity to find a concise way to explain how and why you have set up your research in the way you have.

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Conducting and writing a literature review is a task that sounds daunting but becomes more manageable once you know and use all of the resources at your disposal. To begin, think back to the work you did framing your research during fall quarter**.** This framing was the beginning of your literature review. To have a well-crafted literature review that is relevant to your topic and strategically helps you set up your research question and design, you should focus your review around articles and books that highlight some gap that you intend on filling with your research.

Remember to use the resources listed in Section 1, page 9 to help you find articles and books relevant to your topic. If you find yourself stuck, set up an appointment with the Sociology Librarian, with your Honors professor, and/or with your advisor to help put you back on track.

While you are doing a deep dive into the literature and writing the first draft of your review you may find that your original framing and/or research question may not be exactly how you want them or may not be as relevant as you once thought. If you realize that there is a different gap

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you want to fill that requires you to tweak the wording of your question and framing--don't panic! Revisit the section of this guide on writing your question and developing your framing, and work with your advisor to shape it into what you feel would be best, or most complementary, with the literature that exists. Don't feel stuck with a certain wording or exact framing. It is normal for research projects to evolve.

A literature review is a concise, focused, and relevant review of previous research that informs why your research question is an important question, how it is an important question, and how your research approach and focus is among the best approaches for answering your research question. It is not overly long and it should be tailored specifically for your research question and the way you plan to answer your research question. As noted above, the literature review will be written and rewritten to reflect the changes in your research throughout the year.

DATA & METHODS SECTION

In this section, you will explain in detail how you collected and analyzed your data. This discussion should be clear enough that a reader could repeat your study. For inspiration, try looking at a few sociology articles that use your method, and see how they presented their research. This section will also address the strengths and limitations of the research design. As needed, this section may also discuss how key variables are operationalized; present models; explain the logic of case selection and/or comparison.

For our program, this may be the first section you write in the first part of winter quarter, as you prepare to begin your research and/or apply for IRB approval. If so, this will just be a first draft that you will revise later in the year. Take the opportunity early on to receive constructive feedback on your writing.

RESULTS

When writing your results or findings section, remember that this is *not* your analysis section. Your results should be as straightforward and concise as possible. The intent is just to relay the data you collected and present it to the reader without any analysis as to its meaning in the larger picture. You do not have to walk the reader through every piece of data you collected, but you do need to go through what is essential for your written thesis and the analysis to come. This section should provide enough detail for the reader to follow your train of thought from the original methodology section you wrote to the analysis section that will follow this. It allows the reader to get a picture of the data in detail without actually looking at the raw numbers.

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Discussion

The discussion section is where you take the information on the data you collected and translate it into something meaningful for the reader. That is, you will take the specifics of your findings and relate them back into your research question, framing, and literature review. Here you should explain your contribution, or how you addressed the gap identified in the literature review. Typically the discussion section will come after the Results section. Sometimes with qualitative studies, however, the results and discussion sections are combined.

Remember when writing this section that you are *the expert* on the data you have collected. Present your analysis in a confident way and make sure to focus on the most important take-away points. Also: don't forget that a negative finding is also a finding. If you come to the end of your data collection and analysis and you find that you didn't find anything you expected that also tells us something about the world. Be true to the data, but also be creative and bold in your thinking!

The Conclusion

Much like the introduction, writing the conclusion is relatively simple, although it does require some creativity to put all of the necessary information together (i.e. research question, literature gap, methodology, data, and analysis) in a concise and engaging way. This will be a section that sums up all of the work you did in the previous sections. One way to make sure you have done this is to check all of your topic sentences.

Revision

After you have completed both symposiums, it will be time to focus all of your energy on revising your writing and putting together your final thesis. The feedback you receive from the symposiums will be imperative to you in revising and ensuring that your framing accurately represents the gap in the research you are filling.

Here are some tips for revising effectively:

- While you are revising your latest written sections, remember to review the sections you wrote in previous stages to ensure they have a cohesive flow and make consistent claims.
- Read your writing out loud (to yourself or someone else)
- Ask someone from your cohort to peer review your work
- Complete a “reverse outline" of your work to make sure your points flow logically

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Pro tip: Triple check your topic sentences.

Topic sentences are essential for good writing: They help maintain a cohesive flow, and make it easy for your readers to skim your writing and still understand the important details. As you revise read through all of your topic sentences, revise them to only have the most important information summing up the paragraph that follows.

Finishing and Submitting your Thesis

To complete honors, you will need to send an electronic copy of your thesis directly to Susanna Hansson in the Sociology Advising Office. When you submit your thesis, you should email your advisor with a request to confirm for Susanna that the thesis is finished.

Make sure that you have received and incorporated feedback from your advisor and check for typos and format errors thoroughly before you submit it.

Final Thoughts

Take some time during this final stage to enjoy your completed thesis and the results of all of your hard work. It is really easy to let yourself be overcome with stress, but if you take a minute to breathe and enjoy this last part of the process you may find that conducting research is very exciting once you’re over the hump. You are now winding down in your undergraduate research journey and you deserve to enjoy the opportunities you get to show off your research.

Congratulations and good luck putting the final touches on your thesis!

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Example of Rubric Used to Grade an Honors Thesis Related Paper in the Winter

Area	Detail	Points
Front Matter (10 points)	TITLE PAGE. Contains the title, date, your name, and the name of your thesis advisor.	5
	ABSTRACT. Summarizes the project in 250-500 words. This should tie together: the research question, a gap in the literature, the significance of the project, and data and methods. I	5
Introduction (20 points)	RESEARCH QUESTION. The question is clear and concise, and can be answered by your research design.	5
	SOCIAL SIGNIFICANCE: Answers the "so what" question; explains how this project will make a meaningful contribution to knowledge, public policy, or general wellbeing.	10
	SETS UP RESEARCH: Briefly introduces the gap in the literature, and explains what data and methods will be used to answer the research question. If you have preliminary findings, you may mention them here.	5
Literature Review (25 points)	STATE OF KNOWLEDGE: Provides a succinct and accurate summary of what we know in the relevant subfield(s). Avoids digressions or tangents. Relies on more than one reading to support arguments (include at least 10 references). Connects points to hypotheses or expected findings.	15
	IDENTIFIES GAP: Explains what we do not yet know, and makes a convincing case for why that gap is important.	10
Data & Methods (20 points)	DATA: Provides a detailed and straightforward discussion of how the data was gathered, and why that data was selected.	10
	METHODS: Provides a clear and detailed discussion of the method of analysis, why that method was selected. As needed, it may: discuss how key variables are operationalized; present models; explain the logic of case selection and/or comparison.	10
	STRENGTHS AND LIMITATIONS: Addresses the strengths and limitations of the research design.	5
Writing (20 points)	ORGANIZATION. Points logically flow from one to the next. Quotes are properly introduced. Topic sentences and transition sentences used throughout. Pages are numbered.	5
	CLARITY: Direct, concise, varied sentences. Precise word choice. Technical terms are defined. Minimal jargon throughout.	5
	PROOFREADING: There are few errors in grammar or spelling.	5
	CITATIONS: Proper and consistent use of ASA-style citations. All citations are listed in a References page.	5
Excellence (5 points)	Exceeds expectations: either in the research design, writing style, logical rigor, insightfulness, or creativity of the project.	5