

# **GRADUATE HANDBOOK**

## **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT**

Revised Fall 2023

[DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY WEBSITE](#)

### **MAIN SECTIONS**

- OVERVIEW
- DEGREE REQUIREMENTS
  - RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR STUDENTS ENTERING WITH A B.A. DEGREE
- FACULTY ADVISING AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS
- FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS
- BENCHMARKS FOR MAINTAINING SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS
- MISCELLANEOUS
- APPENDIX

## THE GRADUATE PROGRAM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CONNECTICUT

### Overview of the Program

The Sociology graduate program at the University of Connecticut is a Ph.D. program where students attain a M.A. degree in the process of obtaining the Ph.D. We discourage students who are only interested in a M.A. degree in Sociology from applying to the program. We are seeking students who are willing to make the commitment to the Ph.D.

Most students enter with a B.A. and obtain the M.A. in Sociology in the first two years of the program, then proceed to the Ph.D. Students who are admitted with the M.A. in Sociology from another institution will typically finish the Ph.D. program in a shorter time. However, for students who have completed a Sociology MA degree elsewhere that did not require a thesis, the student must repeat the MA in order to complete a thesis and move on to the Ph.D. Any comparable courses taken may be waived but the student would need to finish 37 additional credits for the MA.

Students entering with a M.A. (with a completed thesis) from other universities may have to take some required coursework in order to cover equivalent material as students who attained their degrees at UConn. Students entering with graduate degrees in disciplines other than Sociology must fulfill the requirements of both the M.A. and Ph.D.

Here is information about [Admissions to the Program](#), and a specific list of [requirements](#), including information about qualifying for the Certification of English Proficiency.

## DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

### Requirements for the M.A. Degree

It is expected that most students will complete the M.A. degree in two years. The Graduate School requires that we provide a Plan A (thesis) and a Plan B (non-thesis) option for the M.A. degree. Plan A is the only option for students to earn a Ph.D. Students cannot move on to the Ph.D. phase of the program if they take the Plan B option.

The Master's degree in Sociology requires a minimum of **37 credits** in Sociology, including the following:

- SOCI 5001 Proseminar (year long, 1 credit)
- SOCI 5201 The Logic of Social Research (3 credits)
- SOCI 5203 Quantitative Methods I (3 credits),
- SOCI 5231 Qualitative Methods I (3 credits)
- SOCI 5251 Core Theorists (3 credits),
- GRAD 5950 Master's Thesis Research (9 credits)
- Plus 15 credits in Sociology electives.

Students may accumulate more than 37 credits before they file for their M.A. degree. In such situations, students should list only 37 credits on their Plans of Study. Additional credits will carry forward and count toward the Ph.D. portion of the program. Any classes listed on the MA plan of study cannot be used on the Ph.D. plan of study.

In addition to 37 Sociology credits, students must also complete a Master's thesis. To complete a Master's thesis, students need to have their Master's thesis research **plan approved** by their Advisory Committee. Students in consultation with their Advisory Committee may be asked to hold a master's thesis proposal defense, but a formal proposal defense is not required of a Master's thesis (it is required for a Dissertation proposal). All students who complete a Master's thesis **must pass a formal Master's thesis defense** (rules governing the Master's thesis committee and Master's thesis defense are described below).

Students are expected to complete the Master's thesis ideally by the **end of their fourth semester** in the program. In some circumstances, students may use the summer and early fall to finish their MA thesis, but we **strongly advise** that the defense be scheduled for no later than **October 1** of their third year, with submission of the final version incorporating required revisions **no later than November 1 or risk losing their funding**. By Spring of Year 3, graduate assistants funded by the department make the transition from teaching assistants to graduate instructors who teach undergraduate classes. A Sociology MA is required to work as a graduate instructor.

### Terminal Master's Degree (Non-Thesis, Plan B)

Students who do not wish to continue in the program may elect to complete the Plan B option. In addition to completion of the coursework outlined above, students must also submit a

portfolio of their scholarly work. The portfolio should consist of a minimum of 3 papers, each at least 15 pages in length, that together illustrate a command of sociological theory, research methods, and at least one substantive area. The scholarly work may originate from:

- 1) Formal course requirements, such as research papers that demonstrate competency in one or more of the areas outlined above. Students are urged to pursue with their Advisory Committee the appropriateness of course related submissions.
- 2) Research or writing done in an independent study
- 3) Non-course related accomplishments, such as grant proposals or conference presentations.

In all cases, any written material that is co-authored is not eligible for submission as part of the student's portfolio. The portfolio should be designed in consultation with the major advisor and will be evaluated by the student's three-person advisory committee. Please note, students who choose this option cannot continue into the PhD portion of the program and thus the election of this option is only advised for students seeking a terminal Master's degree.

Please note that Plan B students do not receive thesis credits. These students must take additional elective classes to attain the 37 total credits necessary for the Plan B Masters.

### **Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree**

Once the Master's degree is completed, the Ph.D. typically requires an additional four years to complete. The Ph.D. requires a total of **33 credits** beyond the Masters Degree:

6 credits of required courses:

SOCI 6203 Quantitative Methods II (3 credits)

SOCI 6231 Qualitative Methods II (3 credits)

12 credits of Sociology elective seminars

15 credits of GRAD 6950 Doctoral Dissertation Research

Please note that graduate level course work taken outside the Sociology Department does not count toward the student's degree requirements. Exemptions from this requirement are made on a case-by-case basis by the DGS. To attain an exemption, the **faculty advisor** must submit a formal request to the DGS that clearly explains why the course is necessary for the student to prepare for their area exam or dissertation and documents that no comparable course is offered in the Sociology department. Students granted this exemption may list the course on their Plan of Study alongside their Sociology electives.

Generally, once students are done with coursework, they take 6 credits of GRAD 6950 per semester to maintain their status in the program until they receive the Ph.D.

The student must also pass a **General Exam** (sometimes called an “Area Exam”) in one or two areas of specialization within Sociology. More information about the General Exam is provided below.

Students entering the program with an M.A. in Sociology from another school will be exempted from the required Master’s courses, SOCI 5201, SOCI 5251, SOCI 5203, and SOCI 5231 if they have taken equivalent coursework in their previous M.A. programs. Requests for exemptions are reviewed before graduate students begin their graduate study. To apply for exemptions, students must provide course syllabi to the DGS. Required courses that are not exempted may be counted as Sociology electives in the Ph.D. phase of the program.

Here you can find a full list of [Graduate Sociology courses](#) including descriptions.

Students who complete the Master’s degree in Sociology at UConn will typically carry forward course credits from the M.A. phase of the program that will count toward their Ph.D. course work. Those extra credits should be listed on the Ph.D. Plan of Study. Students who complete the Master’s degree in Sociology at other schools will typically not be able to carry forward previous credit from their M.A. programs. This means that students entering with the Master’s in Sociology from other schools will usually have a bit more coursework to complete in the Ph.D. phase of the program.

### **Graduate Certificates**

Some graduate students in Sociology choose to pursue a Graduate Certificate which is a focused concentration of coursework in a discipline outside Sociology. This may supplement the student’s training in Sociology and provide an edge on the job market. Here you can find information about [Graduate Certificates](#).

### **Independent Study Courses**

Graduate students may take Independent Study Courses with the consent of a faculty member under the course number SOCI 5899 Independent Study for Graduate Students. SOCI 5899 can be arranged for 1-6 credits per semester, but typically it is set up as three credits.

There are several reasons why a student may wish to pursue independent study: a) to undertake a course of study in an area which is not being offered in the regular curriculum; b) to undertake intensive reading in a specialized area of study in preparation for the Area Exam; or c) to work on an independent or collaborative research project or a publication with a faculty member.

The graduate student and the faculty member should reach an understanding in advance, preferably in writing, of how the course will be organized, what the requirements will be. Independent Study Courses are graded on a standard grading scale and can be counted as Sociology elective courses. However, the student may include no more than six total credits of SOCI 5899 during their graduate careers. Any exceptions to this policy must be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies.

## Limitations on Course Credit

The Graduate School limits the total number of credits per semester to 20 credits. Graduate students should also note that the Graduate School does not permit students to take all 15 credits of GRAD 6950 in a single semester.

## Summary of Required Coursework

To summarize, the Ph.D. program in Sociology is divided into the M.A. phase (two years) and the Ph.D. phase (three years). Combining these two phases of the program, there are seven required courses that all students must take to achieve the Ph.D. in Sociology. These are:

### M.A. Phase of the Program:

SOCI 5001 Proseminar (1 credit)  
SOCI 5201 The Logic of Social Research (3 credits)  
SOCI 5203 Quantitative Methods I (3 credits)  
SOCI 5231 Qualitative Methods I (3 credits)  
SOCI 5251 Core Theorists (3 credits)

### Ph.D. Phase of the Program

SOCI 6203 Quantitative Methods II (3credits)  
SOCI 6231 Qualitative Methods II (3 credits)

Even though these requirements are spread over the two phases of the program, in practice, we encourage students who enter the program *without* the M.A to complete most course work in their first three years. This means that students concentrate on the core coursework in the first two years and then focus more on elective courses after the second year. Students entering the program with the M.A. from another university are encouraged to complete any courses for which they have not received exemptions as soon as possible.

The next section provides a **Timeline for Completion of Coursework and Key Requirements** to demonstrate how the typical student entering the program *without* the M.A. would progress through the program and achieve the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Sociology. The Timeline can be adjusted to accommodate the individual circumstances (e.g., those entering the program *with* the M.A). The Department considers students entering *with* a M.A. to be in the “third year” of the program. Also note that Plan B students do not receive any thesis credits. *Plan B students must take additional elective classes (9 credits) to attain the 37 total credits necessary for the degree.* Ph.D students that have enough Dissertation credits (GRAD 6950  $\geq 15$ ) should registrar for continuing enrollment.

**\*—Note:** Credits for 6203 and 6231 should not be included on the Master’s Degree Plan of Study and will carry forward to the Ph.D. program. *Students that decide to take both SOCI 6203 & SOCI 6231 in the same semester of their second year will need to take an additional elective in the Spring of the second year.*

## RECOMMENDED TIMELINE FOR STUDENTS ENTERING WITH A B.A. DEGREE

### **FIRST YEAR**

#### *Fall Semester*

SOCI 5001 (0 credits)

SOCI 5201 (3 credits)

SOCI 5251 (3 credits)

SOCI elective (3 credits)

*If needed* SOCI 3211Q (taken Pass/Fail)

#### *Spring Semester*

SOCI 5001 (1 credit)

SOCI 5203 (3 credits)

SOCI 5231 (3 credits)

SOCI elective (3 credits)

### **SECOND YEAR**

#### *Fall Semester*

SOCI 6203 or SOCI 6231 (3 credits)\*

SOCI elective (3 credits)

SOCI elective (3 credits)

GRAD 5950 (3 thesis credits)

#### *Spring Semester*

SOCI elective (3 credits)

GRAD 5950 (6 thesis credits)

(Total credits end of second year = 40)

*Master's Thesis completed and approved by the Advisory Committee by end of academic year*

### **THIRD YEAR**

#### *Fall Semester*

SOCI 6203 or SOCI 6231 (3 credits)\*

SOCI elective (3 credits)

SOCI elective (3 credits)

#### *Spring Semester*

SOCI elective (3 credits)

GRAD 6950 (6 dissertation credits)

**IMPORTANT:** MA thesis oral defense deadline, **Oct 1st**; Deadline for filing MA thesis, **Nov 1st**

### **FOURTH YEAR**

#### *Fall Semester*

SOCI elective (3 credits)

GRAD 6950 (6 dissertation credits)

#### *Spring Semester*

GRAD 6950 (6 dissertation credits)

### **FIFTH YEAR**

#### *Fall Semester*

GRAD 6950 (6 dissertation credits)

#### *Spring Semester*

GRAD 6950 (6 dissertation credits)

**IMPORTANT:** Final deadline for completion of General Exam is **Feb 15th**

### **SIXTH YEAR** [Note: Funding not guaranteed]

#### *Fall Semester*

GRAD 6950 (6 dissertation credit)

#### *Spring Semester*

GRAD 6950 (6 dissertation credit)

**IMPORTANT:** Final deadline for completion of Dissertation proposal is **Feb 15<sup>th</sup>**

## FACULTY ADVISING AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESSES

### Major Advisor and Advisory Committee

All students in the graduate program must have a **Major Advisor** who is a tenured or tenure track member of the Sociology Department and the UConn Graduate Faculty. The Major Advisor should be selected by mutual consent between the student and the faculty member based on similarity of interests and/or availability of the faculty member. The Major Advisor serves as a mentor to the student, Chair of the Master's Thesis Committee, General (Area) Exam Committee, and Dissertation Committee. The Director of Graduate Studies will facilitate the selection of an initial Major Advisor for students entering the program. Students may change the Major Advisors if it becomes apparent that another faculty member is more suitable. In such cases, appropriate forms must be filed with the Graduate School to make the change official. **By the start of their second year** in the program, all students should have an Advisory Committee of at least three members, the composition of which is described in the paragraph below. The Advisory Committee serves as the student's Master's Thesis Committee.

The members of the Advisory Committee are also chosen by mutual consent of the student and the faculty members. The Advisory Committee consists of two faculty members in addition to the Major Advisor. In cases where the student forms a three-person Advisory Committee, all three must be members of the Sociology Department *or* affiliated members of the Sociology Department. All members of the three-person Advisory Committee must be members of the UConn Graduate Faculty. In cases where the student forms an Advisory Committee of more than three faculty members, these faculty must meet the same requirements, except that a fourth and fifth member may also be: a) a faculty member from another UConn department who is a member of the Graduate Faculty, b) a faculty member from another university who receives approval from the Graduate School.

Most students constitute an Advisory Committee of only **three members** during the M.A. portion of the program and increase the Advisory Committee to **four or five persons** during the PhD portion of the program. (Note, students will need five faculty for dissertation approval, see voting matters below). The decision about the size of the Advisory Committee is at the discretion of the student in consultation with the Advisor and other members of the Advisory Committee. Students may change members of their Advisory Committees if other faculty are more suitable and are willing to serve. When a change is made to the Advisory Committee, appropriate paperwork should be filed.

Just as students have the right to request the faculty members they prefer to serve on their Advisory Committees, faculty have the right to turn down students' requests for any reason. Students' inability to form a viable Advisory Committee at crucial junctures in their graduate careers (M.A. thesis, General Area Exam, Dissertation) may stall their progress in the program and effectively terminate their graduate careers at UConn.

All faculty serving on Advisory Committees must have Graduate Faculty status from the Graduate School or, in the case of faculty from other universities, the equivalent designation from their universities. According to Graduate School rules, retired UConn Sociology faculty may only serve as Major Advisors or members of Advisory Committees if they were already serving in that capacity for that particular student before they retired.

## **Voting Matters**

*Master's Thesis.* The decision to approve the master's thesis is made by the student's Advisory Committee. Approval is determined by majority of faculty on the Advisory Committee voting to approve the thesis. A majority is defined as 2-1 in the case of a three-person Advisory Committee, 3-1 in the case of a four-person Advisory Committee, and 3-2 in the case of a five-person Advisory Committee.

*General (Area) Exam.* According to Graduate School rules, General Exam Committees must **consist of five faculty members**, at least four of which must be UConn faculty members. In addition, they must be UConn Department of Sociology Graduate Faculty or a faculty member with graduate faculty status and a courtesy appointment in Sociology; and they must have expertise in the area covered by the General Exam. No more than one member of the General Exam Committee may be from another university.

In cases where the student's Advisory Committee consists of five members, all five are automatically members of the General Exam Committee. In cases where the student's Advisory Committee consists of less than five members, the students must add additional members to constitute a five-person General Exam Committee. All five members of the Committee—whether or not they are members of the student's Advisory Committee—participate in the determination of the reading list and the creation and evaluation of the General Exam. The decision to “pass” a student on the General Exam is determined by a vote of 4-1 or 5-0.

*Dissertation Approval.* According to Graduate School rules, the Dissertation Committee must **consist of five faculty members**. If the student's Advisory Committee has less than five members, then the student must ask additional faculty members to be present at the dissertation defense as members of the Dissertation Committee. A fourth and fifth member may also be: a) a faculty member in Sociology who is a member of the Graduate Faculty; (b) a faculty member from another UConn department who is a member of the Graduate Faculty; (c) a faculty member from another university who receives approval by the Graduate School.

These additional members do not have voting status on passing the dissertation, but they must sign the paperwork required to indicate they were present at the defense. *The decision to approve the dissertation is made by those members of the Dissertation Committee who are also members of the student's Advisory Committee.* Approval of the dissertation is thus determined by a majority of faculty on the Advisory Committee voting to approve the dissertation. A majority is defined as 2-1 in the case of a three-person Advisory Committee, 3-1 in the case of a four-person Advisory Committee, and 3-2 in the case of a five-person Advisory Committee.

## Master's and Dissertation Defense Announcements

The University requires a public announcement at least **TWO WEEKS** in advance of the Dissertation defense date. All other defenses (except oral component of the area exam) must be advertised at least **ONE WEEK** in advance of the defense date. If an announcement is not sent with enough notice, you will be asked to reschedule your defense.

Once you have identified a date for the defense, announce your defense in:

- The [University Events Calendar](#) [Dissertation only is required]
- Email your announcement to the graduate student list serv: [SOCI-GL@Listserv.uconn.edu](mailto:SOCI-GL@Listserv.uconn.edu).
- Kathy will forward it to the faculty list serv.

This announcement should include:

- the title of your thesis or dissertation,
- a list of your committee members,
- an abstract,
- the date, time, and location of your defense.

## The General (Area) Exam

Students are required to **take one** General Exam in the Ph.D. phase of the program. This is sometimes referred to as the “Area Examination.” *The General Exam must be taken after all Sociology coursework for the Ph.D. is completed (including removal of all incompletes), unless there is unanimous consent by the General Exam Committee that it can occur earlier.* The General Exam is designed to demonstrate mastery over at least one area, of sociological expertise, but two areas is more typical. The Exam should be considered a “bridge” between coursework and the dissertation. It is designed to go beyond previous coursework that a student has taken, and to be broader than a dissertation-specific topic. The breadth of the General Exam should dovetail with that of an ASA section or the intersection of two ASA sections. So, for instance, a General Exam on either “Sociology of the Family” and/or “Sociology of Education” would constitute suitable areas. Here is a complete list of [ASA sections](#).

The reading list for the General Exam will be tailored to the student’s interests within the area and will be determined by a process of negotiation between the student and the members of the General Exam Committee. Those faculty members with greater expertise in the area will typically have greater influence in shaping the reading list, but all committee members must approve the list before the exam can be scheduled.

The General Exam shall have both a written and oral component. It is important to simultaneously schedule both the written and the oral components. Students will have **two weeks to complete the written portion**. The written portion is take-home, with open book and open notes. Students will typically respond to at least three questions designed to emphasize a broad understanding of theory, methods, and substantive areas. Faculty have leeway as to how they ask

questions and what choices students have in answering questions. Student responses must be 40 pages or less (not counting references).

The oral portion of the General Exam must be completed **within one week** of turning in the written portion. During the oral portion, committee members may probe answers that seem insufficient, ask about questions the student did not choose to answer, or raise anything else within the parameters of the reading list. There can be no feedback from committee members to the student between the written and oral portions, except for questions of clarification.

The written and oral portions shall be assigned a single grade of either “Pass” or “Fail.” A grade of “Pass” requires a positive vote of at least four members of the General Exam Committee. There is no grade of “Partial Pass” and there is no provision for retaking just a portion of the General Exam.

Reserve a room for the defense with Kathy Covey. The oral defense **is not a public event** that is open to the University community. Submit the form [“Report on the General Examination for the Doctoral Degree”](#) to the Registrar. The semester after this exam is processed, your pay level will be increased to Level III.

If the student fails the General Exam, they may schedule a second opportunity to take it within six months of failing the first exam. The student may constitute a new General Exam Committee for the second exam, but ordinarily this is not advisable. If the student fails the exam a second time, or does not complete it within six months, this is grounds for dismissal from the graduate program.

## **Dissertation Proposal**

The dissertation committee oversees the dissertation proposal. Students should consult extensively with their major advisor and committee about their plans for dissertation research before scheduling a proposal defense. Depending on the nature of the research, students may have to obtain IRB approval for the research plan. If this is necessary, students should obtain IRB approval **before** the dissertation proposal defense. Dissertation proposals are generally around 20-25 pages. Schedule your proposal defense with Kathy Covey and fill out the [the form](#). At the defense, you may be asked to make revisions in the research plan. Revisions to the IRB proposal, if relevant, may also be necessary. Submit all forms to the Registrar after the Department Head has signed.

## **The Plan of Study**

**The Master's plan of study** should be filed by the end of the fourth week of the student's final semester before the degree is completed. Make sure to count only 37 Sociology credits toward the Master's Degree. Additional credits can be carried forward to the Ph.D. program. Please make an appointment with the Sociology Graduate Educational Program Coordinator, Kathy Covey, to review your plan prior to submission. Forms should be submitted to the Registrar's Office. [MA Plan of study here. https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2019/03/Plan-of-Study-Masters.pdf](https://registrar.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/1604/2019/03/Plan-of-Study-Masters.pdf)

**The Ph.D. plan of study** should be submitted when no more than 18 credits of coursework toward the degree have been completed. Please make an appointment with Kathy Covey to review your plan prior to submission. Forms should be filed with the Registrar's Office. [Ph.D. Plan of study here.](#)

The Master's thesis proposal defense, Master's thesis defense, Dissertation proposal defense and Dissertation defense all are public events that are open to the University community. Reserve a room for the defense with Kathy Covey.

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Typically, students admitted to the M.A/Ph.D. graduate program in Sociology receive a five-year financial assistance package including tuition waiver and a financial stipend through a teaching assistantship, research assistantship, or fellowship. A graduate assistant is also eligible for health insurance. Students receiving financial assistance are expected to be enrolled full-time (a minimum of 6 credit hours for students with Graduate Assistantships). These are typically nine-month assignments; students are expected to be available from **August 23 - May 22**.

As of AY21-22, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) funding package is a 75% assignment of 15 hours per week for Years 1-5 based on satisfactory progress in the program and their duties and availability of funds. (Graduate students who enter with a Sociology M.A. can expect to receive three years of CLAS funding.) Currently, the Sociology department offers graduate assistants in good standing an additional 25% assignment for a full-time, 20 hour appointment. This will continue for as long as departmental funding permits. (Graduate students admitted in prior cohorts retain their original financial commitments.) Students are still eligible to receive some types of graduate assistantships after Year 5, when funding permits, but appointments beyond Year 5 are no longer guaranteed.

The graduate stipends at each level are available [here](#).

Students may have the opportunity to experience several different types of funding assignments during their graduate careers including research assistantships, fellowships and graduate assistantships in other units. Each assignment should be viewed as part of an apprenticeship in which graduate students are learning the craft of Sociology, either as a teacher or as a researcher.

**Teaching Assistants:** Teaching Assistants (TAs) assist faculty members with a variety of duties such as grading, holding office hours for students, administering exams, and maintaining gradebooks. In some classes, students will lead discussion sections or computer lab sessions. Most TAs are held by students who are at early stages of their graduate careers (i.e., pre-M.A.) or new to the graduate program. However, in some cases, more advanced students may be assigned TA positions such as assisting with graduate statistics courses.

All Teaching Assistants for whom English is not a native language must pass an oral English proficiency test regardless of citizenship or visa status. See this link [here](#) for more information.

**Graduate Instructors:** Graduate instructors have full responsibility for teaching their own classes. In a given semester, students may be assigned two small writing intensive classes, two standard sized classes, or one larger class. To serve as a Graduate instructor, students must have completed their Master's degrees and have successfully completed Teacher Training (to be described below). Generally, graduate instructors are assigned to courses on the Storrs campus in Years 3-5.

**Graduate Assistants:** Graduate assistants assist faculty with their research or other academic duties. These positions are usually funded by internal or external research grants or by other funds to support faculty who edit journals or have administrative responsibilities. These positions may provide students with opportunities to gain valuable research experience and perhaps collaborate with faculty on research papers. These assistantships are usually awarded based on

the skills the student brings to the position and the compatibility of research interests between the faculty member and the student.

**Graduate Assistantships at Other Units:** students are also encouraged to explore graduate assistantship opportunities in other units at UConn. Sociology graduate students have received TA or Graduate Instructor positions at Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies; Judaic Studies; and Human Rights Institute and administrative positions at the Writing Center and in residential programs. Other units may list open graduate assistantships [here](#). A list of centers and institutes at UConn is available [here](#).

**Fellowships:** Graduate students may also receive fellowships from either internal or external sources. External fellowships are available from a variety of federal agencies and private foundations. Graduate students are strongly encouraged to apply for external fellowships in their second year of graduate school, predissertation stage, dissertation fieldwork stage and final year stage. See [here](#) for more information.

**Internal fellowships include:**

- [The Jorgensen Fellowship \(JF\)](#) is funded by the Graduate School. Candidates from Sociology are nominated by the Director of Graduate Studies during the graduate admissions process.
- [The Harriott Fellowship \(HF\)](#) is funded by the Graduate School. Candidates from Sociology are nominated by the Director of Graduate Studies during the graduate admissions process.
- [UConn Humanities Fellowship](#) is a one-year fellowship funded by the UConn Humanities Institute to pursue dissertation work in the humanities.

### **Internal Supplemental Funding for Research, Travel and Professional Development**

Graduate students are also encouraged to apply for funding to support research expenses, travel to field sites and professional conferences, methods training workshops and other professional activities. These funding opportunities are not intended to provide tuition remission or salary but rather to supplement existing graduate employment.

- **Graduate School Predoctoral Fellowships** are supplemental funds from the Graduate School awarded to doctoral students who the Director of Graduate Studies determines are within the 5-year CLAS funding cycle, post-M.A., and show significant scholarly accomplishments as evidenced by research publications and external grants/fellowships received while enrolled as a UConn student.
- [Summer Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships](#) is a one-time \$2,000 fellowship from the Graduate School to support the successful completion of the dissertation.
- [Graduate School Conference Participation Travel Award](#) are available to support doctoral students' ability to present their research at national or international meetings and conferences, including both in-person and virtual events.

- [Human Rights Institute Graduate Research Funding](#) and **Dissertation Writing Fellowship** support research on human rights.
- [El Instituto Tinker Foundation Field Research Grants](#) provide travel funds to Latin America and the Caribbean:
- **InCHIP Graduate Student Affiliate Seed Grants** are awarded by the Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy to support new research initiatives and pilot work in the areas of health behavior and health behavior change.
- **Sociology Department Funds**; the Sociology department periodically distributes funds for travel to professional conferences and other related activities. Contact the Department Head for more information.

### **External Funding for Research, Travel and Professional Development**

Graduate students are also encouraged to apply for external funding to support research expenses, travel to field sites and professional conferences, methods training workshops and other professional activities.

### **Teacher Training**

Students are required to successfully complete Teacher Training before they can teach their own classes. Graduate students usually participate in Teacher Training in their first year of the program. Once students have completed Teacher Training and attained their Master's degrees, they are eligible to teach their own classes.

### **Summer Teaching**

Students who have attained their Master's degrees, successfully completed Teacher Training, and taught at least one course during the academic year are eligible to teach their own classes in the May, summer, and winter intersessions.

### **Funding Eligibility and Alternative Sources of Employment**

The financial assistance package is intended to provide support for graduate students to make satisfactory progress toward completion of their degrees and to allow necessary time to produce publishable research. Students are ***strongly discouraged from working over 20 hours***. Such employment is detrimental to progress through the program, performance in the TA or RA role, and to the time it takes to work on publishable research. In the rare circumstances where employment outside the Department is justified, the student may go on University supplemental employment. Supplemental employment refers to employing a GA above 20 hours/week or on another UConn payroll while classes are in session. It requires major advisor approval. The form is an [online workflow](#). For GA work (either teaching or research) this is paid via special payroll. For non-GA work (e.g., administrative work) this is paid via student labor. Working in such outside employment without permission may disqualify students from receiving financial assistance from the Department in the future.

Employment external to the University requires written confirmation from major advisor, per the Graduate Catalog. No Supplemental Employment Request is needed. See more information about supplemental employment [here](#).

Occasionally, graduate students may get an opportunity to work in a graduate assistantship not funded by the Sociology Department (e.g. TAs at WGSS). In these cases, the student will exit the departmental funding stream and the departmental funding for that student will be reallocated to other Sociology students. Funding cannot be “banked” for future semesters by students who leave the departmental funding stream. If that student later returns to the departmental funding stream, they will return to where they would have been if they had never left. For instance, if a student works as a Research Assistant in years two and three, they will return to their regular place in the funding stream in year four.

### **Teaching Required Undergraduate Courses**

Teaching any of the required undergraduate courses (SOC 3201, SOC 3211Q, SOC 3251) is a valuable experience for graduate students who may wish to teach these classes in their faculty careers. Exceptionally qualified students may teach any of the required undergraduate courses by permission only. The preferred qualifications for graduate students who wish to teach a required undergraduate class are that they must have:

- A GPA of A- (3.67) in relevant coursework
  - For SOC 3201: SOC 5201, SOC 5231, and SOC 5203
  - For SOC 3211Q: SOC 5201, SOC 5203, and SOC 6203
  - For SOC 3251: SOC 5201 and SOC 5251
- Previously served as a teaching assistant for the class in which s/he wishes to teach, or in the case of SOC 3211Q, having served as a lab assistant for the graduate statistics
- Passed the General Exam
- Letters of support from two faculty attesting to the student’s ability to teach the course
- Had solo teaching responsibility for another course before they teach a required course

No single criterion shall disqualify a student; rather, permission will be granted on the basis of the total package of qualifications. Final approval must be granted by the Undergraduate Program Committee and Graduate Program Committee.

## **BENCHMARKS FOR MAINTAINING SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS**

Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress to continue to receive financial assistance from the Department. The faculty hold a special meeting on the first Wednesday in March to discuss the progress of each student in the program and determine if funding will be renewed for the next academic year. In the March meeting, student progress is evaluated based on their standing as of **February 15** each year. Students are expected to achieve certain benchmarks as they progress through the program. The following timeline provides the benchmarks students are expected to achieve for each year in the program. Completion of the benchmarks is not a guarantee that financial assistance will be renewed, since financial assistance is always contingent upon the continued availability of funds.

### **First Year Review (based on progress through 1<sup>st</sup> semester as of February 15):**

- Completion of SOCI 3211Q, if needed (Note: This course is taken Pass/Fail as the course is not counted in the calculation of the GPA.)
- Completion of 9 graduate credits toward M.A./Ph.D. degree
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Satisfactory performance in TA/RA assignments
- Possible exceptions: one incomplete

### **Second Year Review (based on progress through 3<sup>rd</sup> semester as of February 15):**

- Completion of 31 graduate credits toward M.A./Ph.D. degree
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Satisfactory performance in TA/RA assignments
- Possible exceptions: one incomplete

### **Third Year Review (based on progress through 5<sup>th</sup> semester as of February 15):**

- Completion of oral defense by October 1<sup>st</sup> and filing of M.A. degree by November 1<sup>st</sup> of fifth semester \*
- Completion of 9 graduate credits toward Ph.D. degree
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Satisfactory performance in TA/RA assignments
- Possible exceptions: one incomplete

*\*This early date is necessary in order to qualify third year students to teach their own classes in Spring of their third year. The faculty also includes a brief review of 3rd year students in the November faculty meeting. Failure to have met the November 1 filing deadline may result in loss of funding beginning as early as the Spring semester.*

**Fourth Year Review (based on progress through 7<sup>th</sup> semester as of February 15):**

- Completion of 27 graduate credits toward Ph.D. degree
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Satisfactory performance in TA/RA assignments
- Possible exceptions: one incomplete

**Fifth Year Review (based on progress through 9<sup>th</sup> semester as of February 15):**

- Completion of all required coursework for Ph.D. degree
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 (B average)
- Completion of General (Area) Exam
- Satisfactory performance in TA/RA assignments
- No incompletes

**Sixth Year Review (based on progress through 11<sup>th</sup> semester as of February 15):**

- Completion of Dissertation Proposal
- Satisfactory performance in TA/RA assignments
- No incompletes

Based on the faculty review, students may be given a probationary renewal of their financial assistance, pending the completion of all of the benchmarks by a specified date. In these probationary cases, the Director of Graduate Studies will determine whether the situation has been remedied by the date specified and whether financial assistance will be renewed.

Students whose financial assistance is not renewed have one year to remedy the situation which led to the non-renewal. They will automatically be re-evaluated in the next year's review. If they have remedied the situation, their financial assistance may be renewed if funds are available. After two years of being denied financial assistance, the student must formally apply for financial assistance in subsequent years.

## MISCELLANEOUS

### Graduate Students on Committees

Graduate students serve on several Department Committees, which include the Executive Committee, the Graduate Program Committee, and the Undergraduate Program Committee. They are elected by their peers to serve on these committees. Graduate students also elect a **Graduate Executive**, commonly known as the “Grad Exec,” to represent graduate student interests in the department. The Grad Exec attends the Department’s Faculty Meetings, with the exception of the ones in which personnel issues are discussed. They also preside over graduate student meetings.

### Graduate Shared Drive

The Graduate Shared Drive is an online repository of resources for Sociology graduate students including examples of successful job market materials and grants and fellowships. Graduate students are encouraged to share their useful materials. These resources are accessible through Microsoft’s [OneDrive](#) under the [Graduate Share Folder](#).

### Sociology Computer Lab

The Sociology Computer Lab is located in Manchester Hall, Room 318. The Computer Lab is primarily for use by graduate students and for lab sessions for graduate quantitative methods classes. Faculty or students who wish to use the Lab for research or teaching purposes should reserve the room with the Administrative Assistant. The computers in the Lab are stocked with a variety of quantitative and qualitative software, Microsoft Office, and other software. Graduate students are given access codes to the Lab so they can get into the Lab 24 hours a day.

### Graduate Student Office Policy

Graduate students in the Sociology program shall be provided with office space in which to complete their course work, conduct research, and hold regular office hours with their students. Due to the limited space available, offices will not be provided to students who are beyond their 8<sup>th</sup> year of study (based upon the statute of limitations set by the graduate school for completing an advanced degree). In the event of a shortage of office space, the following procedure shall be followed for determining the assignment of offices:

1. Students beyond the department timeline for completion of a degree will be asked if they would like to share a desk with a fellow grad or relinquish their office space.
2. If there are no volunteers in step 1, then the two students that are furthest beyond the departmental timeline shall be required to share a desk.
3. If the shortage of space requires further reductions, then the next two students that are furthest beyond the timeline will be required to share a desk.
4. In the event that these changes still do not adequately address the space shortage, then the student furthest beyond the departmental timeline will no longer be granted office space. Further reductions should proceed in this manner, affecting only students beyond the departmental timeline for completion to degree.

5. While not recommended, students that are within the timeline who do not use their offices may volunteer to share or relinquish their space to other students who may have a greater need for that space.

These policies were adopted by the Sociology Graduate Students in Spring 2014 and are open to revision during future meetings of said body.

In the event that personal belongings are left after a student relinquishes their office, the Graduate Facilities Committee is entrusted with clearing the office two weeks before the start of the semester. The department will store up to one copy box full of personal items in the Manchester Basement contingent on space available for up to 6 months before disposing of them. Large personal items like futons will be distributed to other current graduate students or disposed.

### **Graduate Student Awards**

The College of Liberal Arts offers several awards that Sociology graduate students are eligible to win. **Graduate students are strongly encouraged to submit [applications here](#).**

The Department of Sociology makes several awards to recognize graduate students with outstanding research and teaching records. The criteria for these awards is provided below. Past awardees are listed on the Department website.

The **Outstanding Graduate Student Research Award** is given to a student who demonstrates excellence in scholarly accomplishments as evidenced by research publications, funded grants and fellowships, and research-related awards.

The **Outstanding Graduate Student Teaching Award** is given to a student who demonstrates excellence in quality of teaching and teaching-related awards.

The **Ron Taylor Award for Best Graduate Student Paper** is awarded to the student or students who writes the best paper in a given academic year.

#### **The Arnold and Sandra Dashefsky Student Award for Excellence**

To be eligible for the scholarship, students must be:

- a. Incoming or continuing graduate or undergraduate student enrolled full time in CLAS
- b. Be majoring in Sociology or related fields.
- c. Demonstrate outstanding academic achievement in one of the following topics:  
American Jewry, prejudice discrimination, racism, or anti-semitism.

The **Michael L. Dunphy Scholarship Award** recognizes an outstanding student with an interest in American politics, society, culture, and history. The Dunphy Scholarship includes a financial award of up to \$500 and rotates among the Sociology, History, and Political Science departments at UConn.

## APPENDIX

### The Graduate School

The Graduate School creates and enforces policies that apply to all graduate students at the University of Connecticut. The policies of the Department of Sociology must conform to the policies of the Graduate School; however, in some cases, the Department of Sociology may have policies that go beyond those of the Graduate School. The policies of the Graduate School are provided in the [Graduate Student Catalog](#) and you can find important information [For Incoming Graduate Students](#) and [Graduate School Regulations](#).

### Departmental Personnel

**Department Head:** The Department Head is a faculty member who is responsible for administering the Sociology Department, including the faculty, administrative staff, and the undergraduate and graduate programs. The current Department Head is Professor Andrew Deener who can be contacted at [andrew.deener@uconn.edu](mailto:andrew.deener@uconn.edu).

**Associate Head:** The Associate Head is a faculty member who assists the Department Head with administrative duties in the department including helping schedule classes taught by faculty and graduate teaching assistants. The current Associate Head is Liz Holzer who can be contacted at [elizabeth.holzer@uconn.edu](mailto:elizabeth.holzer@uconn.edu).

**Director of Graduate Studies:** The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) is a faculty member who is responsible for administering the graduate program. The DGS is the first contact person if students have questions or concerns about the graduate program. The current DGS is Professor Jeremy Pais who can be contacted at [Jeremy.pais@uconn.edu](mailto:Jeremy.pais@uconn.edu).

**Director of Undergraduate Studies:** The Director of Undergraduate Studies is a faculty member who is responsible for the undergraduate program. Since graduate students work with undergraduates, either as teaching assistants or as teachers, the DUS is your resource for all questions or concerns about the undergraduate program. The Director of Undergraduate Studies is Professor Ruthie Braunstein who can be contacted at [ruth.braunstein@uconn.edu](mailto:ruth.braunstein@uconn.edu)

**Graduate Educational Program Coordinator:** Katherine Covey assists the Director of Graduate Studies in the administration of the graduate program. The Program Coordinator maintains academic records for graduate students and assists with processing forms for the Graduate School and can provide helpful assistance for graduate students. The Educational Program Coordinator is Ms. Kathy Covey who can be contacted at 860-486-4423 and [katherine.covey@uconn.edu](mailto:katherine.covey@uconn.edu).

**Educational Program Coordinator:** Mary Malley assists graduate students in budget and fiscal items (e.g. handling travel grants paperwork and special payroll). Mary Malley can be contacted at 860-486-4416 and [mailto:mary.malley@uconn.edu](mailto:mailto:mary.malley@uconn.edu).

**Educational Program Assistant:** Alenies Rodriguez assists graduate students with the website, building access and keys, and publicizing. Alenies can be contacted at 860-486-8880 and [Alenies.Rodriguez@uconn.edu](mailto:Alenies.Rodriguez@uconn.edu).

**Staff Undergraduate Advisor:** The Staff Undergraduate Advisor advises undergraduate Sociology students and assists the Director of Undergraduate Studies in the undergraduate program. The Staff Undergraduate Advisor is Katie Upson who can be contacted at 860-486-0085 and [kathryn.upson@uconn.edu](mailto:kathryn.upson@uconn.edu).