

## **Guide to Graduate Studies Department of Sociology, FSU Updated September 2004**

Welcome to the Sociology Graduate Program at Florida State University. This document describes our requirements, procedures, and programs (For updates, see our web-site at <http://www.sociology.fsu.edu>). Continuing a tradition of distinguished scholarship and teaching, our faculty is recognized by the National Academy of Sciences as among the best in the nation. Several members of the department hold leadership positions in national and international organizations, and all of us regularly publish articles in academic journals, book chapters, and books. Eight members of the faculty hold university-wide awards for teaching excellence, and we all enjoy working and publishing with graduate students.

Sociology offers graduate degree programs leading to the Master of Arts, Master of Science, and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. Our primary objective is to enable students in our graduate programs to become scholars who are able to engage in high-quality, innovative research and to provide the education and training that will serve as a basis for independent or collaborative research, depending on the individual graduate's professional goals. Our main emphasis is on research, to provide the skills needed to work at top-level research institutes and organizations. Students also obtain the experience and proficiency to teach at the spectrum of institutions of higher learning, including liberal arts colleges, regional universities, and research universities. Numerous graduates also have filled positions in business corporations and government agencies.

### **Facilities and Location**

The Department of Sociology is located in the Bellamy Building, in the center of the FSU campus. Faculty offices are on the fourth, fifth, and sixth floors. The departmental office, the Meyer Nimkoff Conference Room, the Sociology Library, the departmental computer laboratory for graduate students, and three rooms with student workspaces also are located on the fifth floor. Graduate students have access to computers and other facilities at the [Pepper Institute on Aging and Public Policy](#), where several faculty members with affiliations have offices. Other faculty members are associated with the [Center for Demography and Population Health](#) on the sixth floor of the Bellamy Building, where a library with extensive population and demographic materials and computer facilities are available to faculty and students.

The office of the Graduate Program Assistant is located in 523 Bellamy--the Departmental Graduate Office. The Graduate Program Assistant maintains records of all graduate students and is a source of practical advice; you should make it a habit to communicate with the Graduate Program Assistant, to insure that your records are up to date. The computer lab is located in 522 Bellamy, the library in 517 Bellamy, and the study rooms in 504, 506, and 509 Bellamy. The library and reading rooms are maintained by the Sociology Graduate Student Union (see Part IV), in cooperation with the Graduate Program Assistant. In addition to its regular holdings of books and periodicals, the library includes a separate section and file cabinet for "reserve readings" assigned by course instructors during the semester. All graduate students are encouraged to use the facilities of the library and study rooms and to aid in their maintenance. The Graduate Office also maintains bulletin boards for the posting of

announcements, including departmental memoranda, SGSU meetings, colloquia, job opportunities, and funding opportunities (grants, post-doctoral fellowships, etc.). Students should check the bulletin boards and their mailboxes located in 520 Bellamy, along with the Department's web site, for current information.

## **PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Admission Requirements**

Minimum admission requirements are established by the State of Florida and enforced by the Office of Graduate Studies. For the MA, MS and Ph.D, students must have a minimum G.R.E. Aptitude score (**combined** verbal + quantitative) of 1000 **and** a 3.0 grade-point-average for the last two years of undergraduate study. For the Applied Research Master's degree, students may have the combined GRE of 1000 **or** a 3.0 GPA for the last two years of undergraduate study. If a student fails to meet any of the admission requirements, admission may be possible on a provisional basis; under such provisional admission, the student will be required to correct deficiencies within an established period of time and according to stipulations of the Department. If not admitted, the student may discuss the matter with the Chairperson of the Department and with officials of the Graduate School.

### ***Date of Entry Rule***

Each graduate student who enters either the Master's or the doctoral programs is governed by the Master's or doctoral-degree requirements that are in effect, as stipulated in the University [Graduate Bulletin](#) and the Department's statement of Graduate Program requirements (see Part II, below) in force during the semester in which s/he enters that degree program. Since a student who enters the Master's program is neither simultaneously nor automatically admitted into the doctoral program, this rule means that the doctoral program requirements that are in effect during such student's semester of entry into the doctoral program will apply.

Any student who is enrolled in either degree program may elect to be governed by program requirements as subsequently amended and approved for that degree program. This substitution may be made only with respect to the program requirements as a whole (i.e., no student may elect to substitute only a part or parts of the newer program requirements) and the substitution is nonreversible.

### **Fees and Course Loads**

For a detailed official description of student costs, fees, out-of-state tuition, and the regulations pertaining thereto, you should consult the current edition of the Florida State University [Graduate Bulletin](#) or at <http://www.sfs.fsu.edu/tuitrates.html>.

**A full-time course load** for graduate students is defined as twelve (12) credit hours per semester. Fellowship holders with no work responsibilities must register for twelve (12) credit hours. Graduate students appointed as departmental assistants on a regular quarter-time or half-time basis (10 or 20-hours of work commitment per week) are eligible for matriculation waivers for their tuition fees provided they are full-time students (12 semester hours). Exceptions to the twelve-hour rule may be requested of the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair, but no waiver will be given to any student

registered for fewer than nine (9) credit hours. Out-of-state graduate students with a one-half-time assistantship (or fellowship that is equivalent to a one-half-time assistantship) may apply through the Director of Graduate Studies for a waiver of a portion or all of out-of-state tuition fees. Out-of-state fee waivers may be limited in number and are awarded on the basis of academic progress **only during a student's first year of course work**. After a year of full-time study at FSU, students must apply for Florida residency status (and obtain residency in time for fall registration, at the beginning of the second year). Students will not be awarded an out-of-state tuition waiver after being in Florida for a full year. The Graduate Program Assistant will inform students at the beginning of their course of study about requirements for establishing Florida residency.<sup>1</sup>

## **PART II: MASTER'S PROGRAMS**

The Master's program in sociology allows two options, the **Master of Sociology** and the **Master of Applied Social Research**. The Sociology degree is designed to prepare students who plan to take the doctoral degree. The Applied Social Research degree is designed to prepare students for employment in the public or private sector.

### **A. Master's Degree in Sociology**

For the Master's Degree in Sociology, a minimum of 34 semester hours is required, with a minimum of 21 hours on a letter-grade basis in graduate level courses in the Department of Sociology. Students must satisfactorily complete a number of core courses and write a Master's research paper, to be approved by their supervisory committee. (The Master's research paper is described below.) We encourage students to spread their elective courses over the major areas in our department—demography, health and aging, inequality and social justice, and social psychology.

We recommend that Master's students define for themselves the knowledge and skills they would like to acquire during their degree work. Students admitted to the Master's program who intend to apply for admission to the Ph.D. program should plan their coursework accordingly. It is possible to take a set of courses that will simultaneously fulfill the Master's requirements and constitute normal progress toward the Ph.D. Up to a maximum of six (6) hours of appropriate graduate credit can be transferred from another institution for the Master's degree. However, we encourage most incoming students to take our "core" courses for review, strengthening, and depth.

To meet minimum course credit requirements of the University and Department, Master's of Sociology students must take two theory courses for a letter grade (SYA 5125 and SYA 5126), three courses in research methodology for a letter grade (SYA 5345, SYA 5455 and SYA 5406), as well as a sufficiently large number of substantive courses. Students in this program must pass the theory and methodology courses with a minimum grade of 'B' (not "B-"). Students may not advance to the next course in the methods sequence until they have earned a letter grade of B or higher, and they may not formally enter

---

<sup>1</sup> When completed, the residency form provided by the Office of the Registrar and required documents (driver's license, voter's registration, vehicle registration, or other evidence related to permanent domiciliary status) must be presented at the Leon County Courthouse, to the Clerk of Courts, Public Records Office, where you will fill out a Declaration of Domicile to the State of Florida and Leon County. The form will be notarized and you will be charged a fee. Take your Declaration of Domicile to the residency officer in the FSU Office of the Registrar, who will write an approval letter and update your enrollment files. Also give a copy of this letter to the Department, to be included in your permanent file.

the Ph.D. program until they earn a letter grade of 'B' or higher in the two theory courses. Entry into the Ph.D. program is not automatic, and requires a separate request of admission.

### **Master's Research Paper**

A thesis is not required for the Master's degree. Instead, students must complete a research practicum and writing course in their second year. The research practicum is organized and coordinated through combined class meetings with a central instructor and work with the student's faculty supervisor on a topic and data of substantive interest. The writing course will result in a professional-style paper, in journal format, reporting the results of the research practicum or an analogous research project. The paper must circulate to and be approved by a committee of faculty in the student's specialty area. An approved copy of the paper with approval signatures of three faculty members must be dated and submitted to Director of Graduate Studies for the student's file in order for the Master's degree to be awarded--assuming all other requirements are met. The Master's research paper is a research project leading to an article-length manuscript (about 25 pages).

### **Master's Supervisory Committee**

Students pursuing the Master's Degree in Sociology must form a faculty committee to supervise their Master's Paper. The committee will consist of three sociology faculty members with at least "Master's directive status" as designated by the FSU Graduate School (see FSU [Graduate Bulletin](http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/grad_degree.htm) or [http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/grad\\_degree.htm](http://registrar.fsu.edu/bulletin/grad/info/grad_degree.htm)). Students should select a major professor and in consultation with him or her, select two other qualified sociology faculty members to serve as the Master's supervisory committee. The student will have satisfactorily completed the Master's paper when all members of the supervisory committee sign to indicate approval. Students must turn in to the Sociology Graduate Program Office an approved (signed and dated) copy of the Master's paper for inclusion in their official file.

### **Requirements: Master of Science or [Master of Arts](#) in Sociology**

SYA 5125	Classical Social Theory (3 hours)
SYA 5126	Contemporary Sociological Theory (3 hours)
SYA 5345	Introduction to Research Methods (3 hours)
SYA 5455	Social Statistics and Data Analysis (3 hours)
SYA 5406	Multivariate Analysis (3 hours)
SYA 5515	Sociological Research Practicum (1 hour)
SYA 5971r	Master's Paper Research (2 hours)
SYA 5516	Reporting Sociological Research (3 hours)
SYA 5625r	Proseminar (1)

Elective courses: A minimum of 12 hours

### **B. Master of Science in Applied Social Research**

The Master's in Applied Social Research requires 33 semester hours of graduate coursework. A minimum of 21 hours must be taken in the Sociology Department. Additional hours can be taken in Sociology or in other programs with approval of the Sociology Graduate Director.

Students are required to take a minimum of 15 hours of research methods and statistics, including the following (or approved substitute):

SYA 5345 Introduction to Research Methods  
SYA 5406 Multivariate Analysis  
SYA 5455 Social Statistics and Data Analysis

Also required is **one** of the following research methods courses:

SYA 5315 (Qualitative Methods)  
SYA 5355 (Comparative Historical Methods)  
SYD 5135 (Techniques of Population Analysis)  
SYD 5137 (Fundamentals of Epidemiology)  
or approved comparable course(s) from other graduate departments.

Remaining hours should be taken in a substantive, theory, or research area that fits the student's academic interests and needs. Students are strongly encouraged to take a research practicum of three or more hours with an established researcher to gain practical experience. Students will be provided with internship opportunities during the summer term.

### **PART III: DOCTORAL PROGRAM**

Formal admission to the doctoral program requires the approval of the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee and the Director of Graduate Studies. Students with Master's degrees normally enter the doctoral program after they have completed the departmental core requirements and after previous graduate work has been evaluated and approved by the faculty. Students officially become a *candidate* for the Ph.D. degree upon successful passage of the major area preliminary exam.

Students in the doctoral program must complete the following:

- 1) Students must complete courses in their major and in minor program areas. Students select a major and minor substantive area from among the four program areas: ***Demography; Health and Aging; Inequality and Social Justice, and Social Psychology***. In addition, Research Methods and Statistics is offered as a minor area of concentration.
- 2) Written examination in their *major* program area
- 3) Completion of a doctoral review paper
- 4) Successful teaching of an undergraduate course
- 5) Doctoral dissertation
- 6) **Required courses** are as follows:
  - 3 hours of statistics or methods: SYA 5407 Advanced Quantitative Methods
  - 3 hours, SYA 6660, Teaching at the College Level in Sociology
  - 15 hours, five Major Area courses
  - 9 hours, three Minor Area courses
  - 0 hours, Proseminar in Fall term during five years of study
  - 0 hours, Colloquium in Spring term during five years of study

## **Program Areas**

The Department offers four major substantive areas; listed below.

**Demography.** This program area addresses issues related to birth (fertility, fecundity), marriage, health (morbidity), death (mortality), and migration (internal to the U. S. and globally), including study of the vital processes and migration, per se, as well as a focus on how social institutions and processes affect and are affected by demographic events.

**Health and Aging.** This program allows concentration in one of two related areas or a program that draws significantly from both.

- **Sociology of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Problems** considers the social distributions of psychological distress and disorder, substance abuse, and deviant behavior. Much of the training falls within the domain of social epidemiology.
- **Aging, Health and Social Policy** considers the relationship between such issues as health and labor force participation, health and family relationships, public insurance programs for the elderly, and the causes and consequences of inequality in access to health care over the life course.

**Inequality and Social Justice.** This area involves the study of race, gender and class inequality, the social movements mobilized to effect social change, inequality in work and labor markets, and the political processes that contribute to or help to ameliorate inequality.

**Social Psychology.** This concentration enables students to gain expertise in classical and cutting edge approaches to understanding the relation between selves and society. The area focuses on training students to understand and critically evaluate theory and research on social psychological processes.

Students in any major area may choose **Research Methods and Statistics** as a minor area.

**NOTE:** Students whose interests fall outside one of the above areas, e.g. theory, can petition the Graduate Director to be examined in a distinct area if they can demonstrate sufficient coursework and research experience in the area.

## **Courses for Satisfying Major and Minor Area Requirements**

**Requirement:** Five courses in a Major Area and three courses in the Minor Area. NOTE: If a course is counted for the Major Area, it cannot be counted for the Minor Area. No specific course is required in any of the areas. Courses, although not offered every year, are routinely scheduled. The specific schedule for courses in an area can be obtained from the chair of the area committee.

For List of courses, see [Sociology Graduate Course Descriptions](#)

### **Course in Teaching**

Students must take and pass with a 'B' or higher grade, SYA 6660 Teaching Sociology at the College Level.

### **Methods Sequence**

Doctoral students must complete, with a letter grade of B or higher, the three required methods courses in the Master's program and the additional course required in the doctoral program. Students may not advance to the next methods course until the standard of a B grade is met. If *Research Method and Statistics* is chosen as a minor area, students must complete three additional courses beyond these requirements. [Note: Students who enter with a Master's degree in sociology may be eligible to exempt the first methods course and one statistics course. See **Policy and Procedures on Exemption** in a later section.]

### **Doctoral Preliminary Examination**

Ph. D. students must pass a preliminary examination in the student's Major Area.

#### *Major Area Preliminary Examination.*

When students have completed their coursework, they take a Doctoral Preliminary Examination in their major area of study—Demography, Health and Aging, Inequality and Social Justice, or Social Psychology. Students take an eight-hour exam in their major field to address questions posed by the departmental committee in their area.

#### *Procedure.*

The Major Area Examination will be prepared and evaluated by the departmental examining committee of the academic year in which the examination is taken. Each member of an examining committee shall be responsible for submitting a pair of questions for the examination; the committee as a whole shall decide on the final selection and organization of questions for the examination. Students who plan to take an examination are encouraged to consult members of the examining committee in preparation for examination. All students sitting for an examination in a given examination period will receive identical examinations. Except under the most unusual extenuating circumstances, a student will be considered to have taken an examination once he/she has received the examination questions. For any examination the student shall be allowed a maximum period of eight (8) hours, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. of given day, during which to answer in writing the examination questions. All examinations are "closed-book" in a location provided by the department; they must be completed with the understanding that no consultation with another person is permissible. Failure to observe such understanding and/or failure to return the examination to the departmental office by the end of the eight-hour period will constitute sufficient reason to dictate a decision of "not qualified" on that examination. Answers to examination questions need not be typewritten; they must be legible, however.

Each member of the examining committee shall be responsible for an independent blind evaluation, based on uniformly applied criteria, of the performance of all examinees on all parts of the examination. The committee as a whole shall compare the individual assessments of performance, separately for each examination, and determine by majority vote the level of performance on each separately considered

examination. The committee may render one of three decisions: “qualified”, “not qualified”, or “conditionally qualified.” Exceptionally strong exams may be acknowledged by a designation of “with honors.” A decision of “conditionally qualified” may be granted only in cases in which the committee concludes that performance is at a qualifying level for all examination questions but one and that it would be inappropriate to expect the student to retake the examination in its entirety. The committee shall report its decision by official memorandum from the committee chair to the Graduate Director, no later than fourteen (14) days after the end of the examination period. The committee shall report reasons, question by question, for a decision of “not qualified.” In the event of a decision of “conditionally qualified,” the committee as a whole shall decide, in consultation with the student, what course of action will satisfy the conditional grade. The committee as a whole shall determine by majority vote whether the condition has been satisfied. The condition must be satisfied no later than the end of the fourth calendar month following the month in which the examination was taken. Failure to satisfy the condition within this period shall constitute sufficient reason to convert the committee’s initial decision from “conditionally qualified” to “not qualified.”

A student who fails to qualify on an examination may request re-examination in the particular area during the next regularly scheduled examination period. Such re-examination must be accomplished no later than the end of the twelfth calendar month following the initial examination. A student who fails to qualify on first re-examination in an area may petition the Chairperson of the Department, requesting a second re-examination. No student may be re-examined more than twice in any area. A student who has qualified in his/her major area is eligible to present a dissertation prospectus and proceed to work on the dissertation requirement. However, we recommend that the student next undertake and complete the Doctoral Review Paper.

### **Doctoral Review Paper**

The Doctoral Review paper requires students to conduct a broad review of literature in an area of inquiry that they select in consultation with their major professor and supervisory committee. The paper is **comprehensive** in that it encompasses multiple areas of content and is considered to be preparation for, but broader in focus, than the dissertation prospectus.

### **Doctoral Candidacy**

Once a student has completed all required coursework and examinations, including the Doctoral Review Paper, he/she may be admitted to doctoral candidacy. By Florida State University regulation, a student may not register for dissertation hours until she/he is a doctoral candidate. The presumption is that a doctoral candidate is someone who can now work on the dissertation and whose primary obligation for completing the Ph. D. degree is the dissertation project.

### **Doctoral Dissertation and Prospectus**

The doctoral dissertation is a project entailing original research that the student completes under the supervision of his/her major professor and supervisory committee. Graduate students must register for and receive a grade of S in at least twenty-four (24) hours of dissertation credit for graduation.

Prior to writing a dissertation, a student must complete and gain approval from his/her Ph. D. supervisory committee for a dissertation prospectus. The prospectus is a plan for the dissertation research that contains appropriate supporting materials such as a review of literature, theory(ies), framing of the research question, data collection and analysis details, and a timetable for completion of

the study. When the student's dissertation supervisory committee has approved the prospectus, a signed and dated copy must be submitted to the Sociology Graduate Program Director, for the student's official file. At the end of the dissertation project, the student defends the dissertation to the same committee. When the committee approves the dissertation, the student turns in the mandatory number and quality of copies to the Office of Graduate Studies of Florida State University. The title page of the dissertation must include space for the signatures of the Sociology Department chair and Dean of the College of Social Sciences. (See Graduate Program Assistant for the correct format for the title and signature pages.)

### **Dissertation Committee**

Students pursuing a Ph. D. degree in sociology must form a faculty committee to supervise their dissertation research. The committee will consist of a minimum of three sociology faculty members with graduate faculty status, two of whom must have "doctoral directive" status, and one faculty member from another academic unit with "doctoral directive" status (see list of faculty at back of [FSU Graduate Bulletin](#) for a faculty member's status). Students should select a major professor and, in consultation with him or her, select a minimum of two other qualified sociology faculty members and one qualified faculty member from another academic unit. The outside member represents the Florida State University Graduate School and assures that proper standards are met and procedures followed.

## **PART IV: RESPONSIBILITIES, EVALUATION, AND PROCEDURES**

### **Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate assistants are normally appointed for 20 hours a week and are assigned to work as Teaching Assistants (TA), Research Assistants (RA), or some combination. Teaching assistants assist faculty members with large section classes or statistics or research methods courses although students with a completed Master's degree may be assigned to teach an undergraduate course on their own. Research assistants assist faculty members with the faculty member's research projects. In recent years, first and second year students without a Master's degree have been assigned to ten hours a week of teaching and ten hours a week of research assistance. Space and equipment sufficient to carry out assignments are made available to graduate assistants. Students normally have a desk and chair, shelf space, a mailbox, and office supplies and they have access to computers, typewriters, duplicating equipment, and a telephone. Teaching assistants are normally assigned space that allows them to meet with their students during office hours. Notice of appointments for graduate assistantships are given by the Director of Graduate Studies at the start of each academic term.

*Teaching Assistants.* Teaching assistants are supervised by a faculty member who serves as the Departmental Teaching Coordinator. Students should consult with this person on a regular basis, particularly if they teach a course on their own. The Teaching Coordinator may make classroom visitations as part of the Department's program of peer review of teaching process; if so, s/he will give the TA advance notice of the visitation. Teaching assistants are required to administer teaching evaluations, as instructed by the University: These evaluations are provided to the Teaching Assistant supervisor and/or the department chair by the Office of Evaluation Services. Teaching assistants are also required to attend early in the Fall and Spring semesters workshops on effective teaching offered by the FSU Program in Instructional Excellence. Teaching assistants have access to services that are

available to faculty in support of instructional duties and they are encouraged to utilize materials of the Teaching Resources program of the American Sociological Association (housed in the Graduate Student Teaching Resource Office) and, where appropriate, use other teaching resources and evaluation services of FSU's Program for Instructional Excellence.

*Research Assistants.* Research assistants work under the direction of the faculty member to whom they are assigned on a research project of the faculty member's choosing. Faculty members with external grants may employ a student as a research assistant for a particular project. When this occurs, students are obliged to fulfill the obligations of the grant in accord with the faculty supervisor's instructions.

*Agreement with faculty on duties and evaluation.* In the first week of the assignment period, graduate assistant and faculty supervisor must agree on a written statement specifying the duties, obligations, time commitments, and "products" (if any) of the student for the term. A signed and dated copy of the agreement work must be turned in to the Graduate Program Director for the student's official file. Students will be evaluated against the tasks and standards specified in the agreement thus they should take an active role in defining the job; for example, they should express their goals early in the term of appointment and work with the supervisor to achieve them. The assistant is responsible for making the most of the assistantship experience and, in consultation with faculty supervisor, should assess the work experience on a continuing basis.

*Evaluation.* Evaluation, a crucial part of the assistantship experience, is an ongoing process of communication between graduate assistant and faculty member; it should be supportive and help the assistant identify strengths and weaknesses and improve skills. Students should be aware that the faculty member will report to the Graduate Director his/her assessment of the assistant's performance (during the annual evaluation process in the spring term, see below). Graduate assistants are obligated to respect the standards of academic honesty and integrity and to report any violations to the faculty supervisor, Graduate Director, or department chair.

*Records.* The graduate assistant should keep records of his/her work assignments so that progress and problems can be documented. Recognizing that the assistantship is temporary, the graduate assistant should leave records sufficiently detailed so that decisions can be traced, results verified and incomplete work finished after the assistant has left the position. If problems arise in the work assignment, the graduate assistant should seek help from the faculty supervisor. If those efforts fail, the student should consult the Graduate Director.

## **Reappointment Procedures**

*Annual Evaluation Procedure.* In the spring semester of each academic year, the Graduate Director sends a request to all faculty members to evaluate every student with whom they have had contact since the last evaluation period. (They could have taught a student, supervised a teaching assistant, supervised a research assistant, served on a student's Master's Paper committee, seen the student present a paper at a professional meeting, have worked on a research project with the student, and/or served on a departmental committee with a student, etc.) The Graduate Director compiles the results and takes them to the faculty members of the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee for review. The Committee reviews the material in a meeting in which all faculty members are invited and rates each student's overall performance during the preceding year (as High, Medium, or Low priority, or No,

relative to funding for the upcoming year). Ratings are compiled and acted upon by the Graduate Director in awarding funding for the following year.

*Standards for Reappointment.* Priority for reappointment is given to graduate students who make expected progress toward completion of the degree, receive positive evaluations for their assistantship duties, and show evidence of developing sociological knowledge and skills appropriate to their stage in the program. Assessments are made on the basis of the following criteria by faculty on the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee:

- (1) cumulative G.P.A. and G.P.A. for the current academic year;
- (2) evaluation by faculty members who supervised the work of the assistant;
- (3) evaluations of progress and performance by other faculty;
- (4) length of time in assistantship;
- (5) length of time in degree program;
- (6) satisfying requirements for the Master's degree/core by the end of Spring term in the second year in residence;
- (7) passing preliminary exam, doctoral review paper, and required courses on schedule;
- (8) earning grades of B or higher in theory and methods/statistics;
- (9) existence of incomplete grades received and length of time incompletes are outstanding (Incompletes impede progress. Students should complete courses in the term during which they receive credit for them.)

Reappointment is not automatic. Rather, final decisions are based on departmental needs, financial resources, equal opportunity/affirmative action, and an effort to provide as many students with assistantship opportunities as possible. Students who were not funded in one year are eligible for funding in a succeeding year, based on the evaluation results.

### **Procedure of Dismissal from the Graduate Program**

During the annual performance review of graduate student, faculty on the Graduate Admissions and Financial Aid Committee shall advise the Director of Graduate Studies of any student who should be dismissed from the graduate program because of inadequate progress or unsatisfactory performance in meeting program requirements. The basis for a recommendation of dismissal may include one or more of the following: (1) failure to maintain a GPA above 3.0; (2) inability to complete departmental exams or writing requirements after two attempts; (3) a pattern of incomplete ("I") or inadequate ("B-" or lower) grades; (4) falling one year or more behind the normal time for completion of program requirements; (5) two or more negative annual performance evaluations (low or no priority for funding); and/or (6) violation of the Academic Honor Code of Florida State University or the Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association.

A recommendation of dismissal requires a majority vote of the GAFAC. The Director of Graduate Studies will immediately inform the student, the student's major professor, and the Department Chair of the recommendation. The student will have two weeks to respond in writing and/or in a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies. After the consideration of the committee recommendation, the student's response, and any other relevant information, the Director of Graduate Studies shall (1) dismiss the student from the graduate program or (2) retain the student in the program on a one-year

probationary status. In the latter instance, the Director of Graduate Studies, the student, and the student's major professor must prepare a plan to overcome the deficiencies in the student's performance within one year of the decision. If, in a subsequent annual performance review, the GAFAC determines that the student is not adequately meeting expectations of this plan, the student shall be dismissed from the program by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students who have been dismissed will have the opportunity to use all other avenues for appeal of this decision at the departmental or university levels.

## **Grievance Procedures**

Graduate students have a right to initiate a grievance or appeal a decision through the following channels. First, an assistant should attempt, where appropriate, to rectify the matter by negotiation with the other party or parties involved. If the matter cannot be resolved at that point, the assistant should report the grievances or register the appeal with the Director of Graduate Studies, who will attempt resolution. If the matter cannot be resolved by the Director of Graduate Studies, the assistant should report the grievances or register the appeal with the Department Chairperson. Appeal beyond this point must follow University procedures as described in the [FSU Bulletin](#). At every step in the appeal process the assistant has the right to a fair and impartial hearing. Every attempt will be made by the administrator hearing the appeal to resolve the grievance in accordance with sound academic policy and the welfare of all involved.

The graduate assistant should be notified of any complaints received by a faculty supervisor, or, in the case of a teaching assistant, any students in his/her classes, concerning the performance of duties. The assistant has the right to respond to such complaints and present evidence in defense, if appropriate. The burden of proof rests with the person making the complaint. University policies regarding issues such as sexual harassment will be strictly followed.

## **Policy & Procedures on Exemption**

Students who enter the Sociology graduate program with a Master's degree in sociology from an accredited graduate program may request exemption from some courses or requirements.

*Waiving courses.* Any student may petition the coordinating and examining committee in theory or research methods to request exemption from one or more of core curriculum courses. Ordinarily such requests are made by students who enter with a Master's degree in sociology and who have had substantial graduate course work in theory and/or research methodology; however, any student may present a petition. In presenting such petition, the student must show substantial evidence of preparation and competency in the content of the courses for which exemption is requested. This evidence should include syllabi, texts, examinations, and any written work for the course or courses that are thought to be equivalent to the course in our core. All materials in support of the petition should be presented to the committee in the summer term before fall entry if possible but submission at a later date is acceptable.

The committee will review the materials and make a recommendation to the Director of Graduate Studies who rules on the formal petition and notifies the student. If the petition is weak, the committee may require an exam to demonstrate appropriate competence in the area prior to making a positive recommendation. If the petition is approved, notation that the course or courses in question has/have been waived will be entered in the student's official record. Waived courses do not carry any credit

hours and will not appear on transcripts. Course waivers may apply to major and minor area requirements as well as the core.

Students should consult with their major professor and Director of Graduate Studies before deciding to petition. The department generally discourages the waiving of courses. We like students to move through the program in cohorts and have found that M. S. students who take our core theory and methods courses are strengthened by the experience rather than held up in their progress toward the Ph. D. degree.

*Transferring courses.* Some courses may be transferred. Transfer of courses not counted toward a previous degree is limited to six (6) semester hours. No courses counted toward a previous degree can be transferred.

## **PART V: FINAL-TERM ACTIVITIES FOR DOCTORAL AND MASTER'S STUDENTS**

The outline below is from a document entitled "[Clearance Guidelines and Requirements for Thesis Writers and Doctoral Students](#)," prepared by the Office of Graduate Studies and Research. Before you begin the writing of your research paper or dissertation, you should read this document carefully. Responsibility for meeting the final clearance requirements rests solely with you. Early in the writing stage, each student should obtain from the Manuscript and Final Clearance Advisor in 408 Westcott Building:

1. Manuscript and clearance information, including deadlines for applying for the degree and submitting required materials.
2. Survey of Earned Doctorates questionnaire (doctoral students only).
3. Placement information card (doctoral students only).
4. Microfilm Agreement form (dissertation writers only).
5. Dissertation Defense Publication form.

### **Before the defense:**

#### **A. At FSU Office of Records and Registration:**

1. Consult the [Bulletin](#) or your advisor about how to register for defense.
2. Apply for degree at the graduate desk in the Registrar's Office DURING THE FIRST TWO WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER and receive Final Term Degree Clearance form. If the graduation is postponed, the *student must reapply* with the appropriate period of the following semester (or the semester of his/her graduation) and pay a diploma fee.

#### **B. At FSU Cashier's Office:**

1. Obtain clearance stamp (after third week of classes when records have been transmitted to Cashier or bring proof of fee payment for earlier clearance).
2. Pay binding fees
3. Pay microfilming fees (dissertation writers only).
4. Pay copyright fee (dissertation writers only; optional).

**After the defense:**

Please refer to the [Final Term Clearance Checklist](#) created by the Office of Graduate Studies.

**PART VI: SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT UNION (SGSU)**

The graduate students in sociology at Florida State University have an organization, the Sociology Graduate Student Union (SGSU), which promotes students' welfare and helps them work with faculty on departmental governance issues. In addition to its representational function, SGSU facilitates the introduction and integration of graduate students into the daily life of the Department. New students are encouraged to take advantage of SGSU assistance in becoming established residentially and as a new member of the University, College, and department. More information is available on the [SGSU web page](#).

All full-time sociology graduate students are eligible for nomination to appropriate departmental committees and meetings as stipulated in the [By-laws](#) of the department.