

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
2016-2017**

Department of Sociology
901 McClung Tower
College of Arts and Sciences
University of Tennessee-Knoxville

Department Phone: 865-974-6021
Department Fax: 865-974-7013

Department Website: <http://sociology.utk.edu/>

Department Head: Dr. Jon Shefner
Director of Graduate Studies: Dr. Stephanie Bohon

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WELCOME!

Welcome to the Department of Sociology's Graduate Program at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville!

The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize graduate students with the content, admissions procedures, policies, and requirements of the program. Faculty members teach, conduct research, and perform service in ways that are consonant with the Department's Vision:

Our sociological research and teaching are inspired by our understanding of social justice and our drive for excellence. Social justice can only be realized when the causes of injustice are clear. Such clarity is gained through rigorous empirical analysis guided by theory. Analysis can then enrich teaching and learning, and contribute to public policy formation, and serve in various social settings to achieve a just society.

and our Mission Statement:

Our mission is the creation of a learning environment that emphasizes the theme of Social Justice. Through coursework and research in the interest areas of criminology, environmental issues, globalization and political economy, and critical race and ethnic studies students should develop an understanding of everyday social behavior as well as the structural factors that contribute to social injustice. From the classroom and the field, students also should acquire the intellectual tools to critically analyze social phenomena and trends and the methodological tools to conduct research and to evaluate social policy.

The Department offers programs leading to the M.A. and the Ph.D. degrees. The primary objectives of the Graduate Program are: 1) to offer coursework that equips students with a strong foundation in sociology and social justice issues and with depth of knowledge in the basic tools of the discipline; 2) to promote high-quality teaching; and 3) to provide professional socialization that prepares students for various careers in the discipline. The Department's overarching focus on social justice unites faculty members' research interests with graduate curricula.

The Interest Areas

As listed in the mission statement, faculty members' research centers on the following interest areas:

- Criminology/Criminal Justice
- Environmental Sociology
- Political Economy and Globalization, and
- (pending approval) Critical Race and Ethnic Studies

Faculty members specializing in **Criminology/Criminal Justice** apply a sociological approach to the study of crime and criminal justice, exploring the linkages between crime

phenomena, justice practices and strategies, and the elusiveness of social justice—both conceptually and practically. In addition, faculty members investigate how race/ethnicity, class, and gender affect criminal offending and victimization as well as criminal justice experiences. They consider the historically- and politically-specific processes whereby some actions are criminalized. Finally, they examine innovative harm reduction strategies, including restorative justice and responsive regulatory mechanisms. Their scholarship explores interpersonal, corporate, and state offending.

Faculty members specializing in in **Environmental Sociology** analyze the historical and social bases of environmentalism, the mobilization of grassroots environmental movements, and environmental justice at local and global levels. Environmental policies are examined as contributing to social justice in some circumstances, and as contributing to social injustice, at other times, Faculty members maintain research ties with a large number of organizations and programs outside the department.

Political Economy and Globalization faculty members analyze the political and economic foundations of change in global society, examining contemporary issues in the context of large-scale and long-term historical shifts, to understand continuity and change both in global society and in local communities. Seminars focus on the sociology of development, and political, economic, and social institutions and categories such as class, state, race and ethnicity, gender, markets, and social, nationalist, and revolutionary movements.

The faculty in **Critical Race and Ethnic Studies** interrogate how racial and ethnic categories coalesce around structural inequalities and across multiple geographies. Race and ethnicity are foundational social structures influencing nearly every process in which human beings are engaged. These markers of difference shape social life. Seminars focus on enabling students to demystify the claims of dominant groups about race and ethnicity and to understand overarching themes of social stratification, harm, and humanity.

Jon Shefner
Professor and Head

INTRODUCTION

The Graduate School

In order to serve the mission and vision of the Graduate School and preserve the integrity of Graduate Programs at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, information related to the process of graduate education in each department is to be provided for all graduate students.

Based on *Best Practices* offered by the Council of Graduate Schools, it is important that detailed articulation of the information specific to the graduate degrees offered in each department/program be disseminated.

The Department Graduate Handbook does not deviate from established Graduate School Policies noted in the Graduate Catalog (as <http://catalog.utk.edu/content.php?catoid=2&navoid=27>), but rather clarifies the specific ways in which those policies are carried out in the Department of Sociology.

Graduate students are expected to be aware of and satisfy all regulations governing their work and study at the university. Students should consult the Graduate Catalog, *Hilltopics*, and the publications on the Appeals Procedure, and the Graduate Assistant Handbook available on the Graduate School website (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/faculty-staff/graduate-council/academic-policy-committee/>)

Administration of the Graduate Program

The Department's Director of Graduate Studies is the primary administrator of the graduate program, who operates in conjunction with the three members of the Graduate Committee to admit new students, monitor the progress of current students, and operate the program within the charge of the full departmental faculty. Meetings of the Graduate Committee are open to elected representatives of the Sociology Graduate Student Association (except discussions of individual graduate students). The Director of Graduate Studies arranges an annual Department Orientation for new graduate students.

Graduate School

The Graduate School maintains general university requirements for all graduate students and provides information on a variety of topics, such as the following:

- **After Admission** (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/admissions/after-admission/>) – This page contains information about submitting transcripts, getting NetID and password, demonstrating English proficiency, etc.
- **Before Starting Research** (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/thesesdissertations/before-starting-research/>) – This page contains up-to-date information about the Office of Research and Engagement and the UT Libraries' Scholarly Publishing Toolkit
- **Best Practices in Teaching Program** (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/training-and-mentorship/bpit/>) – This page describes the BPIT program and will provide links to registration and agenda.

- **The Big Picture** (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/graduate-student-life/the-big-picture/>) – This page provides an overview of the graduate education process from getting admitted to graduation.
- **Graduate Student Life** (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/graduate-student-life/>) – This page is a jumping off point for multiple aspects of life as a graduate student, such as registration, engaging in research, getting funded, knowing rights and responsibilities, and links to UT resources that graduate students can make use of.
- **International Graduate Students** (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/graduate-student-life/international-graduate-students/>) – This page provides information and links for International Graduate Students.

Additionally, you may reach the Office of Graduate and International Admissions at <http://admissions.utk.edu/graduate>.

Please note that graduate students are expected to be aware of and satisfy all regulations governing their work and study at the university.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Admission to the Department of Sociology involves two processes, through the Department and through Graduate Admissions.

Admission through Graduate Admissions

Procedures include the completed Graduate Application for Admission (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/admissions/>); a non-refundable application fee; one official transcript from all colleges and universities attended; scores from the Graduate Record Examination; and scores from the Test of English as a Foreign Language or IELTS, if native language is not English.

Admission to the Sociology Program

The Department of Sociology requires for admission to the graduate program a minimum grade point average of 3.00, competitive Graduate Record Examination (verbal, quantitative, and analytical) scores, and completion of an appropriate previous degree. Students' admission to the program may be contingent on confirmation that the degree is completed. The following application materials must be received via online application at <https://www.applyweb.com/apply/utg/> by the January 15 deadline: the completed Graduate School and Departmental application form; GRE scores; three letters of recommendation from persons suited to evaluate applicants' potential for graduate work; a Statement of Purpose of attending graduate school in Sociology; a writing sample and, for international students, TOEFL or IELTS scores.

Applicants are notified of admission status as the decisions are made. The deadline for applications is January 15 (amended by faculty in 2016). Announcements of awards of financial support are typically made by April. By state law, international students are eligible for funding only *after* their English proficiency scores are tested and meet the English proficiency standards set by the University. Depending

on available space, applications for admission without requests for departmental funding are accepted on a rolling basis until January 15 for the academic year.

INFORMATION FOR NEW STUDENT COHORTS

In July, newly admitted students receive letters from the Director of Graduate Studies providing information on registration, the departmental orientation, and contacts for a temporary academic advisor and the leader of Sociology Graduate Student Association or SGSA (the department's graduate student organization). New students are asked to report upon arrival to the Graduate Secretary in 901 McClung Tower.

Full-time students must complete 6 credit hours per semester of approved, graduate-level coursework (amended by faculty in 2012), but the number of credit hours required for full-time status varies with appointments and with loan terms.

Graduate students funded at 25 percent must be enrolled for 9 or more credit hours per semester to be considered as full-time students by the Department and the University. Graduate students funded at the 50 percent level must be enrolled for 6-11 credit hours per semester to be considered full-time students by the Department and the University.

The definition of 'full-time study' may be different for students with Stafford loans.

Students may elect to attend graduate school on a part-time basis, but should be advised that courses are not readily available: few required courses are offered every year, few graduate seminars in sociology are offered in the evenings and summers.

The Graduate School maintains time limits for the completion of graduate programs: 6 years for the M.A. degree and 8 years for the Ph.D. degree.

Faculty Advisors

The initial assignment of a faculty advisor is intended as temporary. Students may change advisors at any time simply by securing consent from the chosen advisor and notifying the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Secretary. Often the newly chosen advisor and the thesis or dissertation chair are the same, but they need not be. Students are expected to work closely with advisors and/or chairs, meeting at least once per semester, to complete and regularly update the Plan of Study form and to gain approval of each semester's course-load. The Plan of Study form, available from the Graduate Secretary, is used to establish a tentative course of study leading to completion of the degree. The form must be completed by the student in consultation with the chair, signed by the chair, and placed by the chair in the student's permanent file.

Graduate Student Employee Insurance

Graduate Teaching Assistants and Associates and Graduate Research Assistants who are employed at least 25% FTE will automatically be enrolled in the Graduate Student Employee Insurance program. The university pays 100% of the premium for these students. These students may elect to add spouse or dependent coverage at their own expense. If students already have insurance coverage through another insurance carrier, this policy functions as additional coverage. The Student Health Clinic manages the

Graduate Student Employee Health Insurance Program. For information, see http://studenthealth.utk.edu/insrec_studentinsurance.php or call 865-974-3135.

Thesis and Dissertation

Graduate students are advised to familiarize themselves with thesis/dissertation requirements as soon as possible. The Graduate School publishes the *Guide to the Preparation of Theses and Dissertations*, available for downloading at <http://gradschool.utk.edu/documents/2016/03/guide-to-thesesdissertations.pdf>.

Departmental Courses

Substantive departmental seminars are offered in: Criminology, Environmental Sociology, Political Economy and Globalization, Critical Race and Ethnic Studies, Sociological Theory (coming soon); and Research Methods. Since seminars are typically offered once every two years, it is advisable to take required courses at the earliest opportunity. The core required Theory and Methods courses typically are offered annually while advanced methods courses are typically offered every other year. These courses need not be taken in numerical sequence. Statistics courses, offered in the Statistics Department, *must* be taken sequentially.

In addition to substantive seminars, other course numbers appear in the catalog.

500 Thesis Hours. (6) P/NP. Required.

502 Registration for Use of Facilities. (15) S/NC. Permits use of library and other university facilities when you are not otherwise registered. Use for the summer only. Hours do not count toward a degree.

593 Independent Study. (15) A-F. Student-initiated course that requires faculty member's approval and agreement to direct. Course requirements determined by faculty member. Requires form to be filed with the Director of Graduate Studies. Use this course to arrange for a class you would like to take but which is not offered by faculty.

599 Readings. (6) A-F. Student-initiated course that requires faculty member's approval and agreement to direct. Course requirements determined by faculty member. Requires form to be filed with the Director of Graduate Studies. Use this course number to permit time to read a body of literature.

600 Doctoral Research and Dissertation. (24) P/NP. Required.

629 Supplementary Readings in Sociological Theory. (3) S/NC. Allows preparation time for the qualifying examination in theory while maintaining full-time status.

639 Supplementary Readings in Methodology. (3) S/NC. Allows preparation time for qualifying examination in methodology while maintaining full-time status.

649 Supplementary Readings. (3) S/NC. Allows preparation time for one specialty examination while maintaining full-time status.

695 Advanced Special Topics. (6) A-F. Typically faculty-initiated but sometimes students-initiated course in which students pursue a specific, narrowed focus within the literature.

699 Tutorials in Advanced Topics. (6) A-F. Student-initiated course for doctoral student's pursuit of a special topic- often involves the examination of a potential

dissertation topic. Requires faculty member's approval and agreement to direct. Course requirements determined by faculty member. Requires form to be filed with the Director of Graduate Studies. This course is essentially an independent study course for doctoral students who are ABD (have completed All But Dissertation requirements).

No more than 12 total credit hours from the following courses will count toward the degree: Sociology 510, 593, 599, 695, and 699. Plans for those courses, with the exception of 510, must be approved by the faculty person directing the course and the appropriate form must be completed and filed with the Director of Graduate Studies.

Plans must specify (1) the nature of the work to be done, and (2) how the work will be evaluated for purposes of assigning a grade.

FUNDING

Graduate Assistantships and Associateships

The Department Head awards Graduate Teaching Assistantships and Graduate Teaching Associate positions to new and continuing students selected on the basis of merit. Appointments are usually made for an academic year but, occasionally, the appointment is made for one-semester only. These positions provide a stipend for service, as well as health insurance and a remission of tuition and other fees as designated by the University. Extraordinary circumstances may require a student awarded an assistantship to resign his/her position during the academic year. In such cases, the student must file a letter with the Department Head describing the circumstances necessitating resignation. Students who are not accepted into a degree program are not eligible for departmental assistantships/graduate teaching associate or for loans through the Financial Aid Office.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships are awarded to select entering MA students and to select entering Ph.D. students who have completed fewer than 18 graduate credit hours in Sociology. Graduate Teaching Assistants assist with teaching and advising activities and engage in supervised teaching in Introduction to Sociology and in Social Justice and Social Change courses.

Graduate Teaching Associateships are awarded to selected students who have completed at least 18 graduate credit hours in Sociology. Graduate Teaching Associates are granted sole teaching responsibility for sections of Introduction to Sociology or Social Justice and Social Change. In special cases of departmental need, Graduate Teaching Associates may occasionally be granted the opportunity to teach upper-division courses in the student's area of specialization.

Funding decisions are made on the basis of the Annual Review (see **Policies** below) and reflect two goals: to support and reward continuing students who progress through the program in a timely fashion; and to admit and support the most qualified new applicants in numbers sufficient to sustain the program in the future. Students admitted without

funding may re-apply in the next year. To be awarded and to maintain departmental funding, MA students are expected to remain on-track to earn the degree in two years and Ph.D. students are expected to remain on-track to earn the degree in four years.

The Department typically funds graduate students for two years at the MA level and four years at the PhD level. In some circumstances, assistantships are awarded for additional years of study. No such request will be granted if it exceeds the time limits for completion of graduate programs (6 years for the M.A. program and 8 years for the doctoral program).

Graduate Students receiving assistantships are appointed at 25 percent time or 50 percent time. Those receiving a .25 FTE appointment are required to spend an average of ten hours of work per week over a 15-week semester. Those receiving a .50 FTE appointment are required to spend an average of twenty hours of work per week over a 15-week semester.

Faculty members whose research is funded and includes a stipend for a Graduate Research Assistant makes those selections in consultation with the Department Head; the Graduate Program Committee does not make related decisions.

Other funding opportunities are managed through the Graduate School, which awards a limited number of Fellowships each spring and posts descriptions of available open assistantships on their webpage. Additional information and application materials on Fellowships are available from November through January in the Graduate School. Completed applications are usually due in the Graduate School by February 15. Awards are typically announced by March 15.

Funded students are strongly discouraged from taking on additional income-generating work is likely to slow or jeopardize progress in the graduate program.

Travel Support

Travel awards for graduate students participating in national and regional professional conferences are available through the Department and through the university's Graduate Student Travel fund administered by the Graduate Student Senate. Departmental travel awards are made through application to by the fall and spring deadlines (announced in advance) to the ad hoc committee composed of Department Head and Director of Graduate Studies by completing the Application for Travel Support Funds from the Department of Sociology. Applications are given highest consideration when students have applied for GSS funding and have proof of accepted conference to be presented. For the university's Graduate Student Travel awards, see the Graduate Student Senate webpage <http://gss.utk.edu/travel-awards/>.

Dissertation Research Funds

As of 2014, the Department has funds to provide limited support for PhD students needing assistance with research related expenses, including but not limited to travel to field sites, purchase of equipment, and purchase of data. Applications are accepted by the

ad hoc committee composed of Department Head and Director of Graduate Studies once per semester (depending on student interest) in Fall and Spring semesters. Deadlines will be announced in advance.

THE MA DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY

The MA degree in Sociology requires a minimum of 30 credit hours beyond the bachelor's degree. At least 21 total credit hours must be completed in 500- and 600-level courses. MA students may take 9 credit hours in 400-level courses that carry graduate credit (in consultation with their advisor). Twelve credit hours may be taken outside the Department, with the advisor's consent. Students must complete all requirements within 6 calendar years of enrollment.

Required Course Work

All MA students must complete the following requirements (6 courses for 15 credit hours):

- Sociology 506 Social Justice and Public Policy (2 hours);
Sociology 511 Pedagogy and Graduate Instruction (1 hour);
- Sociology 521 Sociological Theory (3 hours);
- Sociology 531 Research Methods in Sociology (3 hours); and
- Two Courses (Foundations and one other) in one specialty area (Criminology, Environmental Sociology, Political Economy and Globalization or Critical Race and Ethnic Studies). - Choose one from Sociology 503 Foundations of Environmental Sociology 504 Foundations in Political Economy, 505 Foundations in Criminology, plus one additional course in the same area. Numbers for Critical Race and Ethnic Studies course will be included as they are approved by the administration.

Students entering the MA program who have not completed at least one undergraduate course in Statistics or its equivalent must take Statistics 531 prior to enrolling in Sociology 531. Students may additionally elect to complete requirements for the MA Statistics Minor. A minor in statistics consists of 9 hours of statistics courses. See the Intercollegiate Graduate Statistics Program in the Haslam College of Business.

Although the program offers thesis and non-thesis options, all MA students—*particularly* those planning to pursue the Ph.D.--are strongly encouraged to pursue the thesis option. The Department of Sociology will not admit students into the PhD program who received a non-thesis MA from UT Sociology.

The Thesis Option

MA students choosing the thesis option are required to complete 9 credit hours of coursework in addition to the required 15 credit hours described above and 6 credit hours of 500 Thesis Hours. When a decision is reached about the thesis topic, the student should consult with the faculty member whose interests most closely match the student's and with whom the student can establish a strong working relationship and request that the faculty member chair the thesis committee.

Thesis Committee:

Application for admission to candidacy for the master's degree should be made as soon as possible after the student has completed required prerequisite courses and 9 hours of graduate course work with a 3.0 average or higher in all graduate work. The student acquires and completes the Admission to Candidacy Application Master's or Specialist Degree (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/admission-to-candidacy-masters-or-specialist-degree/>), obtains signatures from the thesis committee members and the Director of Graduate Studies, and submits the form to the Graduate School no later than commencement day of the semester preceding the semester in which he/she plans to graduate.

The thesis committee is composed of the major professor and at least two other faculty members at the rank of Assistant Professor or above. Students pursuing a minor must have one committee member from the minor department. Any change in the composition of the thesis committee must be formally made at least **one month** prior to the final oral examination to provide the new committee member with time to become familiar with the thesis work.

The student works on the thesis primarily with the major professor. Other committee members serve as a resource base, offering suggestions at the proposal hearing, evaluating the student's written thesis and oral defense of the thesis, assessing the student's potential as a prospective doctoral student, and writing reference letters.

Thesis Proposal Meeting:

Students must submit a written thesis proposal to all committee members at least one week before a proposal meeting with the thesis committee is convened. At the hearing, committee members provide suggestions on the proposed research. Committee approval of the proposal is required.

Thesis Defense:

Copies of the complete thesis must be submitted to all committee members at least two weeks prior to the thesis defense. During the thesis defense the thesis committee members conduct an oral examination on the student's thesis and evaluate it as Pass/Fail. The committee may require revisions of the written thesis prior to final approval and may withhold signatures of approval until the revisions are satisfactory.

Deadlines for the thesis defense and for final submission of the thesis to the Graduate School are regularly posted in the Department and through the Graduate School. A notice of the time and place of the thesis defense must be circulated to the Department at least **one week** in advance. Anyone may attend the defense. It is advisable to meet prior to the deadline with the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant in Graduate Student Services (thesis@utk.edu) to assure that the thesis is correctly formatted but no later than the announced deadline. Many students arrange the consultation at the same time as submitting the thesis to committee members.

Students must obtain the appropriate forms prior to the thesis defense and submit to the thesis committee chair. After the thesis defense, the thesis committee chair submits a signed form to the Graduate School, documenting the student's performance in the oral examination, and a memo to the Director of Graduate Studies, indicating the thesis committee's recommendation on the candidate's suitability for doctoral study. The committee chair also reports the results of the thesis defense to the faculty.

All theses and dissertations accepted by the University as partial fulfillment of master's and doctoral degrees must conform to formatting standards. Therefore, it is required that all graduating theses and doctoral students be in contact with the Graduate School's thesis/dissertation [consultant](#) to discuss how formatting guidelines apply to their document.

At the end of the review and approval process, students will upload the final, official copy of their **Theses and Dissertations** to the Graduate School's collection in [Trace](#), the university's electronic repository. The Graduate School will post students' theses and dissertations to the internet after graduation. For more detailed instructions, see <http://web.utk.edu/~thesis/files/Trace ETD uploading guide.pdf> . Students can request an embargo on open-access publishing for a limited time. See <http://gradschool.utk.edu/thesesdissertations/publication-policies/>

The Non-thesis Option

MA students choosing the non-thesis option are required to complete the required 15 credit hours described above and 15 additional credit hours of coursework. Application for admission to candidacy for the master's degree should be made as soon as possible after the student has completed required prerequisite courses and 9 hours of graduate course work with a 3.0 average or higher in all graduate work. Plans for the completion of the non-thesis MA must be filed in writing with the Director of Graduate Studies. The student acquires and completes the Admission to Candidacy Application Master's or Specialist Degree (<http://gradschool.utk.edu/documents/2016/02/admission-to-candidacy-masters-or-specialist-degree.pdf>), obtains signatures from the non-thesis committee members and the Department Head, and submits the form to the Graduate School no later than commencement day of the semester preceding the semester in which he/she plans to graduate.

The non-thesis committee consists of three faculty members; the committee chair and at least one other member must be a Sociology faculty member. The committee performs evaluations of the student's work.

In place of the thesis project, the non-thesis MA candidate must complete: (1) a paper of about twenty pages on a topic in the interest area; (2) a three-hour written examination in the standard format that covers theory, methods, and the student's interest area; and (3) defend his/her work in an oral defense. Committee members evaluate the paper, the written exam, and the oral defense as Pass/Fail. Students may have two attempts to pass the written examination. Students may also have two attempts to pass the oral exam, but the second oral exam cannot be taken within 30 days for the first failed attempt.

Students must obtain the appropriate forms prior to the defense and submit to the committee chair. After the non-thesis defense, the committee chair submits a signed form to the Graduate School, documenting the student's performance in the oral examination. Deadlines for the oral defense are regularly posted in the Department and through the Graduate School. Copies of the paper and the written examination are placed in the student's permanent file by the committee chair. The committee chair reports the results to the faculty for its information.

THE PH.D. DEGREE IN SOCIOLOGY

A minimum of 51 credit hours beyond the Master's degree is required for the PhD degree: These hours include 24 credit hours of Doctoral Research and Dissertation and a minimum of 27 hours in graduate course work (9 courses). Students must also pass two qualifying exams, one each in theory and in methods, no later than the beginning of the third year of study; a comprehensive examination in one of the four areas of concentration (criminology, environmental sociology, critical race and ethnic studies, and political economy and globalization), pass the defense of their dissertation proposal, write a dissertation based on original research, and pass a final oral examination on the dissertation. At the completion of coursework and prior to dissertation work, students must complete one Comprehensive Examination in their specialty area.

Students without thesis or with thesis from other disciplines

Any student accepted into the PhD program who has not completed a masters thesis must complete a thesis-length research paper within the first two years in the PhD program. An ad hoc committee that is comprised of at least two sociology faculty members must approve this paper. Any student who has completed a thesis in a field or discipline other than sociology must have their thesis approved by the graduate admissions committee as comparable to a sociology master's thesis. If the thesis is not approved, the student must complete a thesis-length research paper within the first two years in the PhD program. An ad hoc committee that is comprised of at least two sociology faculty members must approve this paper.

Required Course Work

If not completed at the MA level, students must complete SOC 506, SOC 511, SOC 521 and SOC 531. However, note that these hours will not count toward the minimum number of hours required for the PhD.

At least 12 credit hours (4 courses) must be completed at the 600 level.

The following requirements must also be met:

- Three core courses (9 hours): SOC 621; SOC 631; one from SOC 633, SOC 636, SOC 638, or SOC 640
- Three courses (9 hours), including foundations class, in one area of concentration
 - The criminology concentration includes SOC 505, SOC 652, SOC 654, and SOC 655
 - The environmental sociology concentration includes SOC 503, SOC 661, and SOC 665
 - The political economy and globalization concentration includes SOC 504, SOC 541, SOC 543, SOC 644 and SOC 645
 - The critical race and ethnic studies concentration includes...(courses will be inserted as they approved by administration)
- 9 hours in second area (another concentration in Sociology, a foreign

language, interdisciplinary social theory graduate certificate, statistics minor or MS, or an additional area proposed by the student in consultation with their advisor and approved by the graduate committee.

- At least 24 hours of SOC 600 Doctoral Research and Dissertation

No more than six credits outside of Sociology can count for number of credits required for the PhD, although more credits can be taken.

Students pursuing a dissertation in an area requiring statistical competence beyond forms of regression are strongly encouraged to take appropriate advanced methods and/or statistics courses from other departments.

Qualifying Examinations in Theory and Research Methods

Qualifying Examinations are offered once each semester. The theory exam is offered on the first Friday before Fall classes begin and on the Friday immediately before Spring Break. The methods exam is offered on the Friday immediately before Fall Break and the first Friday before Spring classes begin.

Students who fail an examination are allowed to retake the exam once. Students are required to take both exams no later than **the end of their fourth semester** in the PhD program and pass both exams, including any necessary retakes, by the end of the fifth semester in the PhD program. Anyone who fails an exam (or part of an exam) the first time, must take his/her second attempt in the following semester (not including summer). Students are allowed two attempts to pass each examination. Under special circumstances, a student may petition the full faculty for the opportunity to take one of the examinations a third time. Students unable to complete this requirement are dismissed from the program.

All incomplete grades in methods and theory courses must be eliminated by the date of examination. A 3-credit hour supplementary reading course (S/NC) is available for each exam (Sociology 629 for sociological theory and Sociology 639 for research methodology). The credit hours for these courses count toward the 18 credit hours/year requirement for funded students but do *not* count toward the 24 hours of coursework required for the degree. The courses are intended to allow adequate time for exam preparation. Copies of earlier theory and methods exams are available from the Graduate Secretary to aid in preparation for the exams.

Examination procedures

As of fall 2014, based on faculty decisions during 2013-14, all qualifying exams are given in take-home format. This decision was taken based on faculty interest in the goal of testing knowledge, rather than rote memorization of materials.

Students must register their intent to take the exam with the Graduate Secretary at least two weeks prior to the examination start date (i.e., two weeks before the questions will be provided to examinees). The Graduate Secretary will provide the questions to the student by email at the beginning of the 72-hour (*Theory*) or 48-hour (*Research Methods*) period,

usually at 8 am of the day when the exam period begins. (Students can choose the location where they will take the exam.) When finished, examinees submit the answers in the form of an electronic file to the Graduate Secretary, before the 72-hour or 48-hour period has come to a close. The Secretary will verify with the student that their exam answer is complete. Each member of the examining committee will receive a complete copy of the exam answers without the student's name indicated.

In *Theory*, students are allowed two attempts to pass each examination. Under special circumstances, a student may petition the full faculty for the opportunity to take the examinations a third time.

In *Research Methods*, students must pass all three areas of the exam in order to earn a passing grade. Students who fail one or more area of the exam must retake the failed area only. Failure to pass an area on a second attempt results in a second failed exam, and the student must leave the program or petition for a third attempt.

The examining committees

Each examining committee consists of three faculty members. The committee chair and members are chosen by the Department Head. In the case of the Theory exam committee, all members serve for one year. In the case of the Research Methods exam committee, the chair serves for one year and other members are appointed based on the expressed methodological preference of the student(s) who sign up for the exam. Each examination committee determines a grade of Pass or Fail for each student. Grades are determined by majority vote, unless there are extraordinary circumstances, in which case a vote of the full faculty will be requested.

Specialty Examination

After passing the qualifying examinations in theory and research methods and completing all required course work, a student asks a faculty member to serve as chair of the specialty examination committee. Three members make up the specialty examination committee, devise a plan for the completion of the Specialty Examination. Students select the format of the examination from the following options:

Option 1, 72-hour take-home format

The student in consultation with the chairperson selects a Specialty Examination Committee appropriate to his/her interests and generates a bibliography in consultation with committee members. The Specialty Examination Committee constructs the exam. On the exam date, the student receives the exam at 9:00am on a day of their choosing. Typed, double-spaced essays are returned to the Graduate Secretary for photocopying and distribution by 9:00am three days later. A typed bibliography of the works cited in the exam must be submitted to the secretary on the following Thursday. Committee members evaluate the exam and recommend a grade of Pass or Fail to the faculty for their approval. [The committee may or may not elect to provide the student with an item pool of potential test questions prior to the agreed-upon examination date.]

Option 2, 6-hour in-house formal

The student in consultation with the chairperson selects a Specialty Examination Committee appropriate to his/her interests and generates a bibliography in consultation with committee members. Committee members design the examination to allow for four hours of writing time and two hours of organization. On the agreed-upon examination date, the student takes the exam and submits essays (print or electronic) to the Graduate Secretary for photocopying and distribution to committee members. Committee members evaluate the exam and recommend a grade of Pass or Fail to the faculty for their approval. Committee chairs should send an email to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate Secretary when an exam is scheduled.

The Dissertation

Students may not enroll in Sociology 600 (Doctoral Research and Dissertation) until they pass all qualifying and specialty examinations. Once a student enrolls in Sociology 600, s/he must maintain continuous enrollment (fall, spring and summer terms) until graduation. The dissertation process involves: selecting a dissertation committee, holding a dissertation proposal hearing, completing the dissertation project, admission to doctoral candidacy, and the oral defense of the dissertation.

Dissertation Committee

Students choose a dissertation chair according to shared research interests. The committee is composed of the dissertation chair as the chairperson and at least three other faculty members, one of whom is from a department other than Sociology. Three of the four committee members must be approved by the Graduate Council for directing doctoral research. Any changes in the dissertation committee must be approved by the Department Head and the Graduate School at least **one month** prior to the oral defense of the dissertation.

The dissertation chair provides guidance at every stage of the research process and in the preparation of the written dissertation. Committee members also provide consultation. The dissertation committee evaluates the dissertation proposal, acts as a resource base, evaluates the written dissertation and the student's oral defense of it, and writes recommendation letters for job applications.

The Department strongly encourages all Ph.D. students to write proposals to obtain funding for their dissertation research. Faculty members are available to advise and otherwise assist students, as needed.

Dissertation Proposal Hearing

Students are required to write a proposal for the dissertation research and to schedule a formal hearing for the committee's review of the proposal. A minimum of **two weeks** must be allowed between the time the proposal is received by committee members and the hearing. The proposal must be approved before the student proceeds.

Admission to Candidacy

The Graduate School must approve admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree at least one full semester prior to the date on which the degree is to be conferred. Admission to candidacy forms should not be filed until all qualifying and comprehensive examinations are passed and the doctoral committee is approved.

Dissertation Defense:

Copies of the complete dissertation must be submitted to all committee members at least two weeks before the oral defense is held. The dissertation defense is a meeting in which committee members conduct an oral examination of the student's dissertation and evaluate it as Pass/Fail. The committee may require revisions of the written dissertation prior to final approval and may withhold signatures of approval until the revisions are satisfactory.

Deadlines for the dissertation defense and for final submission of the dissertation to the Graduate School are regularly posted in the Department and through the Graduate School. A notice of the time and place of the dissertation defense must be circulated to the Department at least one week in advance. Anyone may attend the defense. (Only members of the dissertation committee may vote on the outcome of the examination.) It is advisable for students to meet prior to the deadline with the Thesis/Dissertation Consultant in Graduate Student Services (thesis@utk.edu) to assure that the dissertation is correctly formatted. Many students arrange the consultation at the same time as submitting the dissertation to committee members, as long as they meet the Graduate School deadline for doing so.

Students must obtain the appropriate forms prior to the dissertation defense and submit them to the dissertation advisor. After the defense, the dissertation advisor submits a signed form to the Graduate School, documenting the student's performance in the oral examination. The committee chair also reports the results of the dissertation defense to the faculty.

Two copies of the final draft of the dissertation, with original signature sheets, must be deposited with the Graduate School. An electronic copy must be deposited with the Director of Graduate Studies for placement on our website. Rules for embargoes apply. Additionally, members of the dissertation committee frequently request copies of the dissertation.

POLICIES

Continuous Enrollment

In April 2014, the Graduate Council approved a new continuous enrollment policy, as follows:

All degree-seeking graduate students are expected to make a full commitment to their graduate and professional study in order to ensure that they can complete all degree requirements without unnecessary delay. Graduate students are therefore required to maintain an active status through continuous enrollment from the time of first enrollment until graduation.

Continuous enrollment is maintained by registering for a minimum of one graduate credit hour per semester (excluding the summer unless stipulated otherwise by the program or department). However, students who have started taking dissertation hours (Course 600), must maintain a minimum of three credit hours per semester during all semesters, including the summer, as stipulated in the policy on “Registration for Course 600 (Doctoral Research and Dissertation)” in order to comply with the Continuous Enrollment requirement (see under Doctoral Programs for details).

The minimum enrollment for international students may be different, and international students always need to check with the Center for International Education (CIE) in order to determine what minimum enrollment they need to maintain in order to satisfy all enrollment requirements attached to their specific visa.

This policy does not apply to part-time students, who should consult with the Graduate School if they need to discontinue enrollment for a time.

Leave of Absence (LOA) and Reinstatement Policy

In April 2014, the Graduate Council approved a new Leave of Absence Policy, as follows:

If extenuating circumstances arise, that make it necessary for students to interrupt their studies temporarily, a request for a Leave of Absence (LOA) for a maximum of 2 years may be granted by the Graduate School upon approval by the student’s home department or program. All Graduate Student Leave of Absence Requests are reviewed and granted on a case by case basis. There are many situations for which a leave can be requested, such as the birth or adoption of a child, dependent care, a serious medical condition, military service, or other personal reasons. A Leave of Absence (LOA) will not be granted with the sole reason of financial hardship.

Graduate students are strongly encouraged to consult with their program, advisor, and Director of Graduate Studies of their academic unit in order to determine whether a Leave of Absence (LOA) is the most appropriate course of action, and international students must also consult with the Center for International Education in order to ensure compliance with Federal immigration policy. Prior

to requesting a Leave of Absence (LOA), graduate students should always explore alternatives, which would allow them to remain registered and make progress toward the degree, even if at a slower pace.

Students who are granted a Leave of Absence (LOA) by the Graduate School in accordance with this policy are eligible for Reinstatement provided they enroll no later than the term immediately following the expiration of the approved Leave of Absence, excluding summer (see policy on “Reinstatement” for more details). The term(s) and/or year(s) of an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) will not be counted toward time to degree, and milestone deadlines such as Admission to Candidacy will be adjusted accordingly. Having a Leave of Absence (LOA) granted does, however, not imply a guaranteed continuation of funding options upon return.

Graduate students who are on a Leave of Absence (LOA) suspend their active study for one term or more (up to 2 years), and while on a Leave of Absence (LOA) they are not able to make any formal progress toward their degree. In addition, they may not use faculty services and/or university facilities for the period of time that they are on a Leave of Absence (LOA).

Students are expected to return from a Leave of Absence (LOA). If they do not return to active student status by the end of the period of time stipulated in the approved Leave of Absence (LOA), they will be considered non-enrolled once their LOA has expired and lose their eligibility for Reinstatement. Graduate Students who have lost their eligibility for Reinstatement need to seek Readmission prior to being able to continue work in their graduate degree program (see policies on “Consequences of Non-Enrollment without Leave of Absence” and on “Readmission”).

In order to return to an active student status, graduate students on an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) need to establish Reinstatement into their graduate degree program by the end of the leave period stipulated on their approved Leave of Absence (LOA). Students on an approved Leave of Absence (LOA) need to complete and submit their Request for Reinstatements to the Graduate School no later than on the last day of classes of the semester prior to the semester for which they seek to be reinstated. (also see the graduate policy on “Reinstatement”)

If a student would like to return to active study earlier than originally anticipated and approved on his or her Leave of Absence (LOA) Request, the student will need to contact the director of graduate studies of his or her academic unit and discuss available options.

Dismissal from Graduate Program

Plagiarism is a grave offense and is the basis for dismissal from the program. Penalties for plagiarism and procedures for handling cases are outlined in *Hilltopics*.

Students whose GPA drops below 3.00 are placed on probation by the Graduate School and are not permitted to graduate until the GPA is above 3.00. Students who receives

three grades of C+ or lower in any university courses taken for graduate credit are dropped from the program at the end of the semester in which the third C+ or lower grade is received.

A grade of incomplete automatically converts to an “F” after two semesters. Changing the “F” to a higher grade requires written justification to the Graduate School, and that office decides whether to approve the grade change.

Petitions and Special Requests

Requests pertaining to the waiver of departmental requirements should be submitted in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will report information about waivers to the faculty.

Complaints about unfair treatment should be addressed first to the student's advisor and then to the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Head. If no resolution is obtained at the departmental level, consult *Hilltopics* for grievance procedures.

Annual Reviews

Each spring, graduate students are required to submit an annual report on their progress to the faculty. As part of the report, students must indicate which Graduate Handbook edition year they are following (either the year they entered or a subsequent edition). Students are only allowed to switch Handbook years one time. Faculty advisors and chairs are responsible for completing the Advisor Report and Chair's report, respectively, which provides the faculty member's written assessment of the student's progress in the graduate program. Faculty work supervisors—if any—are also required to report progress for students on Graduate Teaching Assistantships and Graduate Research Assistantships.

All graduate students' files are reviewed to evaluate progress in the program and eligibility for funding. The files contain course grades, qualifying/specialty examination grades, Plans of Study records, Advisors' Reports, Chairs' Reports, and Supervisors' Reports. Advisors and faculty members who have worked with students submit evaluations of students. The faculty evaluations address class performance, teaching effectiveness, assessment of the student's strengths and weaknesses, and progress toward the degree. Teaching evaluations, performance of duties, presentations at professional meetings, and publications are taken into account in funding decisions.

Criteria for the evaluation of current students without funding include initial admission information (GRE scores, pre-admission GPA, recommendation letters), performance in the program and faculty evaluations. The student's annual report of activities and the Advisor's Report document progress since entering the program. Thus, students should meet regularly with their advisors to assure that they have all the supportive information necessary for making funding recommendations.

All graduate students will receive a written summary of their evaluation, which they must sign and return to the Director of Graduate Studies. The student's signature confirms

only that they have received the evaluation. It does not confer agreement with the assessment.

Other Evaluations

In compliance with University requirements, students learning objectives (SLOs) have been established by the faculty for M.A. and Ph.D. program students. These SLOs include knowledge of sociological theory; knowledge of sociological methods; effective communication of research results; design and implementation of independent research and effective teaching. In meeting the reporting requirements for these SLOs, the faculty have created various rubrics to evaluate students. As of August 2014, faculty are still considering how and when to convey the results of these evaluations to individual graduate students.

Human Subjects Review

Graduate students whose research outside of course work uses human subjects are required to submit the appropriate forms to UT's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for approval prior to data collection. Note that research completed for a course still needs IRB approval if part or all of the work is presented in a public forum such as posted online, presented at a professional meeting, or submitted for review. Students should consult with their thesis/dissertation advisor on the human subject review process.

GRADUATE FACULTY

Professors

- Sherry Cable* (Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University, 1985) Environmental Sociology, Social Movements. scable@utk.edu
- Harry F. Dahms* (Ph.D. New School for Social Research, 1993) Theory, Globalization, Comparative-Historical Sociology. hdahms@utk.edu
- R. Scott Frey* (Ph.D. Colorado State, 1980) Environmental Sociology, Development, Comparative-Historical Sociology. rfrey2@utk.edu
- Asafa Jalata* (Ph.D. SUNY-Binghamton, 1990) Political Economy, Race/Ethnic Minority Relations, Development. ajalata@utk.edu
- Robert E. Jones* (Ph.D. Washington State, 1990) Environmental Sociology, Survey Analysis. mountain@utk.edu
- Lois Presser* (Ph.D. Cincinnati, 2002) Criminology, Corrections, Qualitative Methods, Narrative. lpresser@utk.edu
- Jon Shefner* (Ph.D. University of California-Davis, 1997) Political Economy, Social Movements, Development. jshfner@utk.edu

Associate Professors

- Stephanie Bohon* (Ph.D. Pennsylvania State University, 1998) Social and Applied Demography, Research Methods, Latino Migration, and Ethnic Economies. sbohon@utk.edu
- Michelle Brown* (Ph.D. Indiana University Bloomington, 2003) Criminology, Law and Society, Visual Criminology Carceral Studies. mbrow121@utk.edu
- Paul K. Gellert* (Ph.D. Wisconsin-Madison, 1998) Environmental Sociology, Political Economy, Comparative-Historical Sociology. pgellert@utk.edu

Assistant Professors

- Michelle Christian* (Ph.D. Duke, 2011) Globalization and Political economy, Racial stratification, Labor, Tourism, mchris20@utk.edu
- Robert Duran* (Ph.D. University of Colorado, Boulder, 2006....) Criminology, Urban Ethnography, Racial and Ethnic Inequality, rduran@utk.edu
- Victor Ray* (Ph.D., Duke, 2014) Race and Ethnicity, Gender, Stratification, Qualitative Methods, vray3@utk.edu
- Information on Christine goes here*

Adjunct Faculty

- Chen, Chien-fei* (Ph.D Washington State University, 2009) Social Psychology, Social Impact of Energy and Environmental Issues Social Networks, Norms and Health cchen26@utk.edu

APPENDIXES

Pertinent Graduate Student Web Pages

- Best Practices in Teaching
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/training-and-mentorship/bpit/>
- Center for International Education
<http://web.utk.edu/~globe/index.php>
- Counseling Center
<http://counselingcenter.utk.edu/>
- Electronic Submission of Theses and Dissertations (Guide)
<http://web.utk.edu/~thesis/files/Trace ETD uploading guide.pdf>
- Funding, Fellowships, Assistantships for Graduate Students
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/gradfund.shtml>
- Graduate School
<http://gradschool.utk.edu>
- Graduate Catalog
<http://catalog.utk.edu/index.php>
- Graduate Student Appeals Procedure
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/documents/2016/02/student-appeals-procedures.pdf>
- Graduate Student Senate
<http://web.utk.edu/~gss>
- Graduate and International Admissions
<http://graduateadmissions.utk.edu/>
- International House
<http://web.utk.edu/~ihouse>
- Judicial Affairs
<http://web.utk.edu/~osja/>
- Office of Equity and Diversity
<http://oed.utk.edu>
- Multicultural Student Life/Black Cultural Center
<http://multicultural.utk.edu/>
- Research Compliance/Research with Human Subjects
<http://research.utk.edu/compliance/>
- Thesis/Dissertation Website
<http://web.utk.edu/~thesis/>
- Library Website for Graduate Students
<http://libguides.utk.edu/graduate>
- Office of Information Technology (OIT)
<http://oit.utk.edu>

Forms and Additional Resources

All forms are available on the Graduate School Website

<http://gradschool.utk.edu/gradforms.shtml> . Current URL links are provided below.

- Graduate Student Travel Award Forms
<http://gss.utk.edu/travel-awards/>
- Graduate Student Senate Website
<http://web.utk.edu/~gss/>

Master's student forms

- Admission to Candidacy Application - Master's Degree
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/admission-to-candidacy-masters-or-specialist-degree/>
- Graduation Application - found on MyUTK / "Student Records" / "Apply to Graduate"
- Revision to Candidacy Application - Master's
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/revised-admission-to-candidacy/>
Report of Final Examination <http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/report-of-final-examination-masters/>
- Thesis Approval Form
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/thesisdissertation-approval/>

Doctoral student forms

- Admission to Candidacy Application - Doctoral Degree
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/admission-to-candidacy-doctoral-degree/>
- Graduation Application - found on MyUTK / "Student Records" / "Apply to Graduate"
- Doctoral Committee Appointment Form
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/doctoral-committee-form/>
- Revision to Admission to Candidacy Application – Doctoral
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/revised-admission-to-candidacy-doctoral-degree/>
- Scheduling Defense of Dissertation Form
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/schedule-of-dissertation-defense/>
- Request for a Concurrent Master's Degree
<http://gradschool.utk.edu/forms-central/request-for-concurrent-masters-degree/>