

Graduate Handbook
Department of Sociology Syracuse University



302 Maxwell Hall
Syracuse, NY 13244
315-443-2346
315-443-4597—Fax
sociology@maxwell.syr.edu
<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/soc>
Updated May 25, 2021

Note: This handbook is an evolving document.
We are constantly making changes to keep up with new developments.

Introduction

Faculty and students in the Sociology Department at Syracuse University conduct novel and high-impact research in the areas of globalization, immigration and transnationalism; population and place, education and family; health, aging, and life course; disability, inequalities, and power, capital, and politics. Rigorous training in various theoretical traditions and qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods are hallmarks of our graduate training program.

Students are encouraged to work with faculty members not just in the Sociology department, but also throughout the University. Many students have taken courses in African American Studies, Education, Women's Studies, Anthropology, Public Health, and Public Administration.

Our aim is to prepare students for all aspects of their career: conducting, presenting, and publishing research, securing grant funding, teaching, and mentoring. We begin with a professional development seminar that provides students with the information they need to become fully prepared future scholars.

The Sociology Department offers core training in sociological issues, theory, and methods. The department also provides opportunities for joint degrees or collaborative study with numerous multi-disciplinary research centers at the prestigious Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs. These include the Center for Policy Research, the Aging Studies Institute, the Center for Aging and Policy Studies, the Lerner Center for Public Health Promotion, the Global Affairs Institute, the Alan K. Campbell Public Affairs Institute, and the Program on the Analysis and Resolution of Conflict.

The Sociology Department is located in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs and many of our faculty emphasize social policy and public sociology in their work. The Sociology faculty focus on these eight core areas of study:

1. Globalization, Immigration, and Transnational Studies

This focal area deals with the movement of people, goods, capital, ideas, political-economic systems, and cultures across national borders, the factors leading to such movement, as well as the outcomes of such movement.

2. Population and Place

Research in this area encompasses a range of theories, methods, and insights for understanding population processes, social structures, inequalities, and lived experiences across a range of geographic scales in the U.S. and internationally.

3. Inequalities

Faculty working in this area examine the causes and consequences of disparities based on race, ethnicity, class, education, gender, and sexuality across individuals, groups, and geographies.

4. Health, Aging & Life Course, Disability

Faculty working in this area examine social inequalities and life-course processes linked to aging, disability, health and health care, family relationships, care work, and welfare state policies.

5. Education and Family

Faculty in this focal group have interest in the sociological studies of education and family, in the areas of education stratification, care work and intergenerational relations.

6. Power, Capital, and Politics

Faculty in this broad cluster adopt critical approaches to the study of work and labor, state policies and practices, and the social consequences of technologies and contemporary science.

7. Theory

Faculty with a special interest in social theory focus on critical theories of power, colonialism, the body, hegemony, globalization, immigration, intersectionality, labor, social movements, and nationalism. Drawing on diverse bodies of scholarship including Marxist and Gramscian thought, Bourdieu's work on culture and capital, feminism and critical race theory, and postcolonial thought, faculty engage both sociological and interdisciplinary trajectories of theory.

8. Research Methods

We have several faculty members with deep expertise in qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods. During the PhD program, all graduate students take core courses in both qualitative and quantitative methods and then specialize in one or more methods through advanced coursework. Students learn the methods in the classroom and gain invaluable experience applying these methods through coursework and collaborations with faculty.

For more information on the eight focal areas and the faculty affiliated with each area, please refer to the website: (https://www.maxwell.syr.edu/soc/Faculty_Areas_of_Interest/)

This handbook provides general information, requirements, departmental and university policies and procedures, and resources; it is designed to help you make the most of your time at Syracuse University and negotiate the graduate program effectively and efficiently. It is meant to be a reference and a starting point. Upon arrival, you should assume responsibility for learning about the expectations and opportunities associated with graduate study in the Sociology Department.

For more information about the Sociology Department, you can go to the Sociology [Department Home page](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/soc/) (<http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/soc/>) or you can call the Sociology office at (315) 443-2347.

Admissions

Degrees offered

Although the Department offers both an MA and a Ph.D., the program only admits students who are pursuing the **Ph.D.** The distinction between the MA and Ph.D. lays in their goals, as stated in the Syracuse University Bulletin of the Graduate School.

The general goal of the MA program is: “the student achieves the levels of understanding, skill, and interest needed to become a lifelong *user* of systematic knowledge in their academic field.”

The general goal of the Ph.D. program is: “the student achieves the levels of understanding, skill, and interest needed to become a lifelong *contributor* to the systematic knowledge in their academic field.”

Application procedures

Students are admitted to the graduate program in the spring for study beginning in the fall semester. Students are not generally admitted for study beginning in the spring semester.

Applications are only accepted online. A complete online application can be found here: <https://www.syracuse.edu/admissions/graduate/apply/>

The application deadline is January 10th.

Complete applications include:

- Application form
- Three letters of recommendation
- GRE exam scores
- TOEFL exam scores, if appropriate
- Transcripts from previous academic study
- A personal statement describing the student’s major academic interests, why the student wishes to study in the Syracuse University Sociology program, and how the student’s area of interest fits the department’s areas of specialization
- Writing Sample

Transfer students

Students who have begun graduate study in sociology or related disciplines at other institutions are invited to transfer to Syracuse University. Students who have earned a Sociology Master’s degree comparable to that of Syracuse University may be admitted directly into the Ph.D. program after review by the graduate committee. Students with graduate work in related disciplines (e.g., other social sciences, women’s studies, gerontology, public health, policy studies) should discuss with the graduate director what courses and requirements have been fulfilled and the extent of transfer credit to be awarded. A maximum of 30 credit hours may be transferred. If the graduate committee grants approval to transfer your Master’s degree, you will then need to submit a petition to the Graduate Enrollment Management Center along with your transcript. The awarded degree must appear on the transcript.

Advising

Initially, an advisor is assigned to each incoming graduate student. This advisor is expected to help the student plan a course of study and give advice about topics such as courses, research resources, financial resources, degree requirements, research ideas, publishing, teaching, and other aspects of becoming a Sociologist and earning a Ph.D. This person remains the student's primary advisor until the student selects a different advisor (if they choose to do so), usually by the end of their second year.

In addition to their advisor, students are encouraged to talk to and work with Sociology faculty, other members of the Maxwell School, affiliated programs, and the University community.

When a student chooses a comprehensive exam and/or dissertation committee, this committee becomes the advising committee, and the chair of those committees becomes the student's advisor. The student should inform the Graduate Director and the Sociology Department office by letter or e-mail when a committee is formed or when a change is made so that the student's files can be updated. In addition, students should retain copies of all documents in their own files.

Program of Study

Students are expected to file a Program of Study with the Graduate Director during the first semester of their second year. Students entering with transfer credits should file during the first year in residence. A plan of study should be constructed in consultation with the student's advisor and indicate the intended courses to be taken in pursuit of advanced training in theory, methods, and two areas of specialization. Programs of Study are subject to review by the Graduate Committee and should be signed by the student, advisor, and Graduate Director. Students are also required to submit a copy of the Program of Study to the Graduate School. Students must file a corrected Program of Study with the Graduate School before any degree can be granted. Forms are available in the department office and the Graduate School's web site.

Degree Works

Degree Works is a web-based tool to help students and advisors monitor a student's progress toward degree completion. It is designed to facilitate academic advising, but is not intended to replace face-to-face advising.

Degree Works combines Syracuse University's degree requirements and the coursework a student has completed into an easy-to-read worksheet that helps to show a student what courses and requirements still need to be completed.

Students can access degree works through [MySlice](#).

To learn more about Degree Works: <https://dw.syr.edu/>

Annual Evaluation

Each year, each student completes a form (distributed by the Director of Graduate Studies) reviewing accomplishments of the past year and plans for the next year. The completion of this form serves multiple purposes.

Not only is it used by the Graduate Committee to determine whether a student is in good standing, but it also helps in determining departmental funding and teaching assignments. The review form is useful, too, in providing annual information to the department on graduate student accomplishments and specific markers of progress (i.e., completed comprehensive exams, defense of proposal, etc.), as well as in identifying areas of interest for future courses.

After completing their portion of the evaluation, students meet with their primary advisor to discuss their progress, accomplishments, and goals and plans for the next year. In addition, faculty members who have supervised the student as a graduate research or teaching assistant are asked to provide an evaluation of the student's work. Finally, the advisor writes an evaluation and lays out advice for the coming years. All of these parts of the evaluation are discussed by the advisor and student and forwarded to the Graduate Director by April 1. Copies of the form and letters are sent to the Graduate Committee and to the Sociology Department office, and are placed in the student's file.

Graduate Committee and Graduate Director

The Director of Graduate Studies

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) is a Sociology faculty member appointed by the department chair and usually serves a 3-year term. The DGS is responsible for overseeing all aspects of graduate training including, admissions, curriculum, advising, and program evaluation.

The Graduate Committee

The Graduate Committee consists of three faculty members and is chaired by the DGS. One or two graduate students also serve on this committee. The Graduate Committee has multiple responsibilities, including the management of the advising system and responding to individual advising problems raised by students or faculty.

The Graduate Committee also makes decisions regarding admissions, nominations for awards, recommended course offerings, and hears appeals and petitions.

The Department Chair, in consultation with the DGS, makes decisions regarding assistantships.

If disputes arise between students and their advisors (or advising committees), the Graduate Committee serves as a mediator or an "appeal board." If the student has not yet chosen a committee (and the Graduate Committee is therefore the advising committee), then the Department's Executive Committee handles disputes.

Petitions to the Graduate Committee

The Department recognizes that special circumstances may warrant exemption from one or more requirements. Any student may petition the Sociology Department Graduate Committee at any time for an exemption. The petition should state why the student wishes to be exempt from one or more of the requirements. Petition letters are to be submitted to the DGS. Students should ensure that copies of all petitions are placed in their department files and retain a copy of all petitions for their own records.

Degree Requirements

MA Requirements

The requirements for the M.A. degree are the completion of:

- 12 credit hours in four required courses with a grade of B or better; (see below)
- 6 credit hours in sociology courses numbered 600 or above;
- 12 additional graduate-course credit hours in sociology or related disciplines. Sociology 513 (Statistics for Social Science) may be used to satisfy part of this requirement;
- Zero credit hour Professional Development Seminar

Required courses cannot be covered by transfer credits. The four required courses for the MA (each carrying 3 credit hours) are:

Sociology 618 Introduction to Field
Research and Interviewing
Sociology 606 Quantitative Methods
Sociology 611 Sociological Theory
Sociology 714 Intermediate Social Statistics

Professional Development Seminar

All students in their first year of graduate study at Syracuse University are required to attend a zero-credit (zero-cost) colloquium organized by the department. This seminar series will cover topics such as forming committees, preparing for the comprehensive examination, publishing, and the job search, as well as topics that are requested by the students. While required for new students, any graduate student is welcome to attend any or all sessions.

Required courses cannot be covered by transfer credits. Descriptions of the four required courses and of SOC 513 are:

SOC 513: Statistics for Social Science. This course covers introductory statistics, measures of central tendency and dispersion, hypothesis testing, indices of association between variables, and the use of computers for data analysis. Emphasis is on the actual analysis of social science data using statistical principles. This course is not required, but the knowledge and skills taught in this course constitute a prerequisite for SOC 714. Students who have not had the equivalent of SOC 513 are expected to take the course or to study the material independently before taking SOC 714.

SOC 618: Introduction to Field Research and Interviewing. This course is concerned with various qualitative methods used by sociologists such as in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Students conduct research using these methods and consider their underlying assumptions and limitations.

SOC 606: Quantitative Methods. A graduate- level introduction to the underlying similarities and differences among the major sociological methodologies, this course focuses on the use of quantitative and/or deductive methods (survey, experimental, demographic).

SOC 611: Sociological Theory. This course covers aspects of classical and contemporary theory as well as alternate models of theory that exist in current sociological scholarship.

SOC 714: Intermediate Social Statistics. This course covers multivariate statistical methods concentrating on regression and the linear model; emphasis is on the analysis and interpretation of results using real social science data, and the similarities among various multivariate methods.

Paper Option

Some students may choose to complete the Master's degree through the paper option. In this case, 6 hours of thesis credit may be substituted for part of the 12 additional graduate hours required. Students must also write an acceptable MA paper that must be approved by a committee of three faculty members, including at least two from the Sociology Department.

A "Typical" Schedule

A "typical" student's schedule for completing required courses might look as follows:

First Semester (Fall, first year) SOC 513

SOC 606

SOC 611

Second Semester (Spring) SOC 618

SOC 714

Elective

It is especially important that 513 and 611 be taken in the first semester so that students have the necessary foundation for further work. Most students find it useful to take 714 immediately after completing 513.

The department attempts to schedule required courses often enough so that students have the opportunity to take at least one elective each semester.

Granting MA degree

Generally, students entering without any credits will have completed the requirements for the MA degree by the end of their second year of study. The examinations or papers given at the end of each of the courses taken in fulfillment of MA requirements serve as the comprehensive exam for the MA degree. In order to be awarded the MA degree, students must submit an approved program of study to the Graduate School. Students who wish to be awarded the MA and to continue PhD study at Syracuse must request an internal admit from the Graduate School.

Ph.D. Requirements

Students who enter the program with a BA must meet the MA course requirements listed above in

addition to the Ph.D. requirements. For the Ph.D., students must complete a total of 72 credit hours beyond the BA, consisting of graded coursework and dissertation credit hours. A minimum of 45 hours of credit must be in graduate coursework. Coursework can include independent studies taken under the supervision of a faculty member and for which a grade is issued. In addition to the sociology courses required for the MA, all PhD students must take the courses described in the bullet points below, and earn a course grade of B or better in each course. Between 9 and 27 hours are allowed as dissertation credit hours

The requirements for the Ph.D. degree are:

At least 45 credit hours of graded graduate coursework (30 of these are from the MA)

- A breadth requirement of at least two substantive or theory courses (in addition to those required for the MA) with a SOC prefix of 600 or higher, with a course grade of B or better
- At least two additional courses with a prefix of 600 or higher (in addition to those required for the MA), from Sociology or a related discipline, with a course grade of B or better
- One advanced research methods class - either SOC 816, SOC 813, or another pre-approved SOC 800 course - with a course grade of B or better.
- At least 9 credit hours of dissertation
- A total of 72 graduate-level credit hours
- The comprehensive examination
- The dissertation

Selecting Coursework

Students choose their courses in consultation with their advisors. As stated above, all PhD students are required to take one advanced research methods course (SOC 813 or another pre-approved SOC 800 course), with a grade of B or better:

SOC 816: Advanced Seminar: Ethnography (Prerequisite SOC 618 or equivalent).

SOC 813: Issues in Multivariate Analysis (Prerequisite: SOC 714 or equivalent).

Some special methods courses, offered as **SOC 800**, may be taken to satisfy this requirement; students should consult with the instructors of these courses and the Chair of the Graduate Committee

Transferring Coursework

Students who enter the program with a MA in Sociology from another institution equivalent to an MA degree from Syracuse University are allowed to transfer up to 30 credits towards their Ph.D. degree, subject to approval by the Syracuse University Graduate School and Sociology Department.

Students entering the program with a Master's Degree in a discipline other than Sociology may be able to transfer some credits from courses that are applicable to the Sociology MA degree at Syracuse University. These transfers are subject to approval by the Syracuse University Graduate School and Sociology Department.

The number of coursework credits that are transferred cannot exceed the number taken at Syracuse. For example, students transferring 30 credits are also required to take at least 30 credits of graded coursework at Syracuse University. Credits cannot be counted towards more than two degrees (for example, if counted toward the transfer degree and Syracuse University MA then they cannot also count towards the Syracuse University PhD).

Students generally cannot transfer any of the four required MA courses (SOC 618, 606, 611, 714). In rare cases, exceptions may be made by the DGS.

The Comprehensive Examination

Purpose of the Comprehensive Exam This exam is the culmination of a student's coursework and serves as a transition to the dissertation. Preparing for the exam helps students to (1) synthesize, organize, and analyze knowledge gained through coursework and reading of the literature; (2) develop mastery in a focal area; (3) establish expertise in the area of their dissertation; (4) hone skills related to course development; and (5) prepare for the job market and for independent research and teaching.

Structure of the Comprehensive Exam and Committee

The exam includes two sections. One section is in a departmental focal area. The second section is in a departmental focal area or a student's area of choice. A comprehensive exam committee consists of three faculty chosen by the candidate. The student generally works with their advisor to identify the other two faculty members for the committee. The chair and one faculty member serve as faculty leaders for one section each. The third faculty member will be a reader for both sections. All three faculty members will read the two sections.

Procedure

The advisor serves as chair of the exam committee. The chair coordinates the administration of the exam with the student and the other two faculty, including informing the department and the student of the results. At least two faculty on the comprehensive exam committee must be members of the SU Sociology department (including affiliated faculty). The chair of the comprehensive exam committee must be a Sociology faculty member. Students who wish to name an affiliated or outside faculty member as chair must petition the graduate committee in writing for approval. The student and the chair/advisor should inform the DGS about the composition of the exam committee as soon as it is formed.

Timing of the Exam

Students should form their comprehensive exam committee by the beginning of their third academic year and take the exam when coursework is completed. At the end of the semester in which coursework is completed, students should fill out a comprehensive exam committee form (available in the department) listing the names of the chair and the two other members, have the form signed by the committee members and the DGS, and file it in the department. This form must be filed before the comprehensive exam can be scheduled. Students who have not successfully

completed exams within 12 months after finishing their coursework risk losing their eligibility for funding and teaching positions in the department.

Preparation for the Exam

Students should initiate meetings with committee members about a year in advance to prepare for the comprehensive exams.

Students should read widely in their areas of interest. They should work closely with faculty committee members to develop reading lists and possible areas for questions for the exam. Preparation for the exams may include creating reading lists, summarizing readings, writing critical essays, developing conceptual frameworks for organizing the literature, or other analytic activities as arranged by the student and the committee members. Faculty will derive the questions for the exam from the agreed upon reading lists and these preparatory efforts.

The student's final readings list for each focal area should contain roughly 100 articles (the number will vary depending on the number of books vs. articles included). Faculty-generated lists for the focal areas are available on Blackboard in the Comprehensive Exam folder.

At least $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ of each student's reading list should contain readings from the faculty-generated lists and/or selected by the particular faculty leader of that section. Students will add readings to the list that reflect their dissertation topic, in consultation with their committee chair and other committee members with expertise in that area. Students should share their final reading list, which includes all of their additions with their exam committee members.

Structure of the Exam

Students take the examination during one calendar week. Students must begin the exam sometime within the first seven days of the fall or spring semester. Students who need a different date should petition the Graduate director.

Students will not be given their exam questions prior to the exam. The student will receive all questions for the exam at the beginning of the 7-day span and will answer the questions and polish their essays during that time. It is expected that students will spend approximately 15 hours on each section (i.e., for each of the two areas) of the exam, and submit no more than 30 double-spaced typed pages per section (not including bibliography). The responses to the exam are submitted, usually electronically, to the committee chair at the end of the 7 days. If students have special circumstances that make this time frame difficult, accommodations can be arranged in advance of the exam in consultation with the DGS. All three committee members are expected to read and provide feedback on each section of the exam. The committee chair will work with the committee members to evaluate and generate feedback on each portion of the exam. The committee chair will inform the student of the outcome of the exam within two weeks. If that timeline is not feasible for committee members, they must inform the committee chair and the student in advance and, in consultation with the student, will determine a new deadline.

The possible outcomes for each section (focal area) of the exam are pass, revise, or fail. Students must pass all sections of the exam in accordance with the process described below to be advanced to Ph.D. candidacy. In the case of disagreement among the faculty, determination of the outcome

will be decided by the leader of the respective section.

A pass indicates that the section of the exam was adequately completed and demonstrates competency in the subject matter. A revise signals that the question was not adequately addressed, and the committee seeks clarification of and elaboration on the ideas presented in the answer. A fail indicates that the answer is sufficiently inadequate to raise serious questions regarding the student's competency in the subject matter. A fail should also be given when the answer was incomplete or not turned in, except in the case of extenuating circumstances (e.g., serious illness or injury of the student or serious illness, injury, or death of a loved one). Students should notify their committee chair of such circumstances immediately. The chair will consult with the DGS to determine the conditions for an extension.

Any academic integrity violation, whether from academic dishonesty or academic negligence, will result in a fail for the section of the exam that contains the violation. In cases of academic dishonesty, additional sanctions may be applied in accordance with the university's academic integrity policy.

The penalty for any act of academic dishonesty on the comprehensive exam by a graduate student will be determined according to university policy, but may include suspension or expulsion from the university. Accordingly, all academic dishonesty allegations involving graduate students must be referred to a hearing panel for resolution ([Academic Integrity Policy can be found here: http://class.syr.edu/academic-integrity/](http://class.syr.edu/academic-integrity/))

In the case of a revise on one or more sections during the first attempt at the exam, the student must complete all revisions within one month after the student is notified of the results of the exam. The possible outcomes for each section of the revision are pass or fail.

Students who receive a fail on one or more section(s) of the first exam will meet with their comprehensive exam committee members to discuss the exam, devise a strategy to prepare and retake the section(s) of the exam that they failed and establish a timeline for taking the second exam.

The second attempt at the exam will contain new questions based on the originally-approved reading list for the first attempt and must be completed over a 7-day period within three months of receiving the final results of the first attempt. If this three-month timeframe is not feasible, the committee chair will consult with the DGS to determine the conditions for an extension. It is expected that the composition of the comprehensive exam committee will remain the same throughout the exam process.

The possible outcomes of the second-attempt exam are pass, revise, or fail. If a revise is received on one or more sections of the exam, the student must complete all revisions within one month after the student is notified of the results of the second-attempt exam. The possible outcomes of the revision are pass or fail. Students who receive a fail on any section of the second-attempt exam at any point in the process will be terminated from the program.

Dissertation Process

"The dissertation is the culmination of a program of advanced study leading to the doctoral degree. It is to be prepared by the student and should embody the result of original research that constitutes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge within a given field. It is expected to possess a unity of theme, provide evidence of originality and critical judgment, and exhibit creditable literary quality worthy of publication." (From Syracuse University, Academic Rules and Regulations, sec. 47.8)

In the dissertation, the student must show command of a major theoretical issue in sociology and control of the empirical and theoretical literature relevant to the research topic. The student is expected to demonstrate high-grade competence in research procedures, including design, analysis, and evaluation. The purpose of the doctoral dissertation is to allow the student to demonstrate competence in research and inquiry. The dissertation must be an original work that modifies or expands upon what is currently known about the topic.

The dissertation will engage most of the student's time and energy for a year or more. It will also define a professional identity in the early stages of a career. Thus, a dissertation topic should be developed with care. Ideally, students work closely with faculty mentors, so the interests and skills of department faculty should be a consideration in choosing a topic.

When the student has completed all requirements for the Ph.D. except the dissertation, the doctoral "student" is advanced to candidacy and becomes a "Ph.D. candidate." (In informal parlance, this status is sometimes referred to as ABD, for "all but the dissertation.")

The Dissertation Committee Frequently the comprehensive examination committee evolves into the dissertation committee. Successful students generally begin to constitute a dissertation committee while completing the required coursework, before taking the comprehensive exam.

Coursework in the department provides one avenue for forming relationships with faculty; students are also encouraged to visit with other faculty members to discuss research interests and plans. Beginning such consultation during the second or third year of coursework provides information about faculty interests and availability and aids students in refining research topics.

In forming a committee, the student should normally first seek a faculty member who will agree to serve as dissertation chair, and then consult with that person regarding additional committee members. The committee has a total of five committee members. Up to two members of the committee may be from other departments, but the dissertation advisor must be a Sociology faculty member. Only one committee member may be from outside of Syracuse University. Students who wish to name an affiliated faculty member as chair must petition the graduate committee in writing for approval. Students are encouraged to consult the DGS about the composition of their committee.

On forming the dissertation committee, students should fill out a dissertation exam committee form (available in the department) listing the names of the chair and the other four members, have the form signed by the committee members and the DGS, and file it in the department. This form

must be filed before a proposal defense can be scheduled.

The Dissertation Proposal

The student's plan for a dissertation must be presented in a written proposal. The proposal should state the topic to be investigated and explain its theoretical significance for sociology. A survey of relevant literature and comments on the sources of data and methodological procedures to be used should also be included.

The student should consult with committee members while preparing the document, and then schedule a meeting of the full 5 member committee to discuss and approve the proposal. This oral defense of the proposal is of an informal nature and is in effect a conference between the student and their dissertation committee. This proposal hearing provides an important opportunity for all involved to clarify and agree upon their expectations for the proposed research. The student may also want to discuss with the committee how each member will be involved during the course of research and writing.

When the dissertation proposal is approved, each committee member should sign the cover page, and the proposal should be deposited in the student's departmental file.

Projects that involve human research subjects should be approved by the University's Institutional Review Board, as required by Public Law 93-348 (1974). Contact the SU Office of Research Integrity and Protections at 443-3013, orip@syr.edu, or their website (<https://researchintegrity.syr.edu/>) for information and to obtain the required forms.

Work on the Dissertation

Good progress on the dissertation is most likely when the student consults frequently with the dissertation chair and other committee members as needed. Students should plan to meet regularly with their advisors. They should submit draft versions of dissertation chapters to those committee members most involved with the project and expect to receive timely feedback. Difficulties of various sorts can interfere with efficient progress on the dissertation, and students should keep their advisors well informed about any such setbacks.

Changes in the composition of the committee may be made in the course of work on the dissertation if the student or advisor feels they are necessary. The student should work closely with the advisor in thinking about these changes. The DGS is available for consultation about such changes.

The Dissertation Defense

Each student is required to orally defend their dissertation before the five members of the dissertation committee and a faculty member, selected by the Graduate School, from outside the Department of Sociology. The student and the dissertation committee jointly decide the time for the oral defense. A request for oral defense must be made formally, through the Graduate School office several weeks before the actual examination, in accord with Graduate School rules outlined in section 47.9 of Academic Rules and Regulations. **The graduate school requires that a minimum of four of the five faculty committee members be present at the dissertation defense. The outside chair must also be physically present at the defense.**

Advertising Dissertation Defenses

All dissertation defenses must be publicly announced on the department email list at least one week in advance, with a note that the defense is open to graduate students and faculty, with the exception of private questioning and voting which is closed and includes only the dissertation committee, including the outside chair.

Distinction Guidelines

Prior to the defense, the advisor should obtain a blank copy of the Dissertation Distinction Form, to be completed by the advisor and representative from the graduate school following a dissertation defense. The department may award a dissertation distinction according to the following department policy, also outlined on the defense outcome form.

Department Policy on the Awarding of Distinction (to be read out loud by the representative of the Graduate School):

At the time of their dissertation defense, each candidate is considered for the honor of graduating "with distinction." Distinction is reserved for candidates who demonstrate truly exceptional performance in their writing, research, and theoretical contribution, as well as their oral defense. A determination of distinction requires a unanimous favorable vote from all committee members (the representative of the Graduate School is not accorded a vote in this matter).

The result of the vote will be reported by the advisor to the student and the department chair. The department chair will inform the department when a student has earned distinction.

Work with Graduate School

The student works with an official from the Graduate School to ensure that all requirements have been met before the defense. Each semester, the Graduate School issues a list of essential deadlines for preparing and submitting dissertations. Students who hope to graduate in a given semester should consult this calendar early in the semester, and take care to meet the relevant deadlines.

Guidelines on Satisfactory Progress

This section is intended to clarify the faculty's general expectations for satisfactory progress in the program, and to indicate to students the kinds of factors that may be considered by the graduate committee in determining whether a student is in good standing.

To be in good standing, students are expected to complete the required number of credit hours per year and meet the grade requirements. They must also keep to the timetables for selecting an advisor, completing coursework, taking the comprehensive exam, defending the dissertation proposal, and completing the dissertation. Students in good standing are expected to file all

required paperwork on time, including the annual reviews, plan of study, comprehensive exam committee form, and dissertation committee form. *A student must be in good standing to be eligible for funding from the department, including graduate assistantships, teaching opportunities, summer funding, conference or research travel, and departmental awards.*

Grades

Students must maintain a cumulative grade point average of 3.33. No more than two grades below B- are permitted. If a student's cumulative grade point average falls below 3.33 over the course of an academic year, the student will be placed on probationary status and their progress will be evaluated at the next annual review. If the student has not succeeded in bringing up their grade by then, the student will not be in good standing until the GPA is raised to the required level.

Students must receive grades of B or higher in the four required M.A. level courses, the required advanced methods course, and the two PhD.-level breadth requirements. Students who do not meet these requirements will not be in good standing.

Grades of "incomplete" should be requested only under the conditions outlined in University regulations (see Syracuse University Bulletin, Academic Rules and Regulations, section 5.2.2), and should be completed as soon as possible. Students with multiple incompletes or missing grades will not be in good standing until all incomplete and missing grades are assigned final grades.

Comprehensive Exams

The department strongly encourages students to take the comprehensive exam as soon as they finish their coursework. Full-time should take their comprehensive exams within 12 months of completing coursework. Students who do not take comprehensive exams within 12 months of their coursework will be placed on probationary status. Students on probation will have one semester to take the exam. After that point, students will not be in good standing until the comprehensive exam has been successfully completed.

Dissertation Proposal Defense Students should complete their dissertation proposal defense within 6 months of completing their comprehensive exams. If students do not successfully defend their dissertation proposal within 6 months of completing the comprehensive exams, students will be placed on probationary status. Students on probation will have one semester to successfully defend their dissertation proposal. After that point, students will not be in good standing until the dissertation proposal is successfully defended. According to Syracuse University Graduate School requirements, students must advance to candidacy (i.e., obtain ABD status) within 7 years of matriculation into the doctoral program. If a student has exceeded the 7-year limit for achieving ABD status, the student must register for GRD 991 (Doctoral Mentoring), which requires a minimum of one credit hour per semester, each fall and spring semester until ABD status is achieved. If the student fails to register for GRD 991, for a given term, the graduate school will administratively withdraw the student from the program.

Dissertation Defense

Once students achieve ABD status, they have 5 years to complete their PhD. If a student does not complete their degree within 5 years of reaching ABD status, they will not be in good standing in the department, and the student must register for GRD 991 (Doctoral Mentoring) for one credit each fall and spring semester until they complete their doctoral degree. If the student fails to register for GRD 991 for a given term, the graduate school will administratively withdraw the student from the program.

Under extenuating circumstance, students can petition the department for a one semester exemption from GRD 991. The petition will need to include a brief explanation for the request. The petition will be reviewed by the advisor and department chair. If approved, the signed petition is forwarded to the Graduate School for review. The student will remain in good standing during the exemption period.

Withdrawal/Leave of absence

A withdraw/leave of absence form must be completed for students leaving the program before degree completion. Students may initiate a leave of absence that is one semester only, undecided length, or permanent (will not return). The 7-year to ABD and 5-year to degree completion clocks do not stop while the student is on a leave of absence. A student who is not in good standing in the program for more than two successive semesters may be administratively withdrawn from the program if during the annual review the graduate committee, in consultation with the committee chair and department chair, determines they are not making progress toward degree completion. Students who are administratively withdrawn from the program may petition to be readmitted into the program. The petition must include a plan for making progress toward degree completion that contains dates for applicable milestones (e.g., proposal defense, data collection completion, dissertation draft submitted to dissertation chair, dissertation submitted to committee, tentative defense date). The readmittance petition has to be approved by the dissertation committee chair and the department chair before it is sent to the Registrar's Office.

Policy on Financial Assistance

A limited number of fellowships and assistantships are allocated to qualified incoming students and to advanced students who are making good progress toward the Ph.D. Once an award is made, the Department attempts to continue support for at least four academic years (starting with when the student matriculated) at the assistantship level with a fifth-year that may include employment as PTI or other category assuming that the student continues to make satisfactory progress towards degree requirements. matriculation.

Students who receive full departmental funding may not undertake additional employment during the academic year unless they have received written permission from the chair of the department and Syracuse University.

At the completion of their funding, the department aids students in seeking employment such as evening and summer teaching or part-time work at local colleges, and faculty members assist with

the preparation of research proposals to appropriate funding agencies. Dissertation fellowships are available through departmental and University-wide competitions, and funding agencies outside the University offer dissertation funding as well. In addition, students may find research support through faculty research projects, teaching assistantships in other departments, and other graduate research activities.

Summer Teaching

Given that we want students to have opportunities to gain teaching experience but do not want to delay student progress on their dissertation because of heavy teaching responsibilities, the department policy is that students should only teach one summer course in either the department or Summer College. Students who would like to teach more than one summer course may petition the department chair. The availability of summer teaching within the department depends on the department's course schedule, budgetary considerations, and student teaching interests.

University Policy and Professional Conduct

Graduate students in the department are expected to abide by general University policies. The Department and University place strong emphasis on quality education for undergraduate students and expect graduate teaching assistants to abide by the highest standards of professional conduct in the classroom. Teaching assistants should be aware of expectations regarding appropriate relationships with students, as outlined during the TA orientation program.

All graduate students should become familiar with the guidelines for professional conduct and community civility, including policies dealing with academic honesty and plagiarism, sexual harassment, discrimination, and the rights and responsibilities of students and teachers.

Graduate students who have been found by an Academic Integrity Panel to have committed academic dishonesty are not in good standing and are at risk of having funding terminated immediately.

Students are encouraged to read the student handbook, which discusses most of these issues. In addition, the Maxwell School has developed a Code of Conduct for the Maxwell Graduate Community. You can access it at: [Maxwell Code of Conduct \(http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/deans.aspx?id=6_442450980\)](http://www.maxwell.syr.edu/deans.aspx?id=6_442450980)

University Policy on Sexual Harassment The following statements are taken from the Syracuse University Student Handbook 2010- 2011.

University Policy and the Law

The *Syracuse University Sexual Harassment Policy*, which covers activity both on- and off- campus, provides the following definition of sexual harassment:

Unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that relates to the gender or sexual identity of an individual and that has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating or hostile environment for student, work, or social living.

Institutions of higher learning across the country have adopted similar policies in response to court actions that recognize two forms of sexual harassment under Title VII of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964*:

Quid Pro Quo—The “quid pro quo” (literally, “this for that”) claim involves harassment in which the supervisor or teacher demands sexual favors in exchange for job or academic benefits over which that person has some control or influence.

Hostile environment—The “hostile environment” claim involves unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature that creates an intimidating environment for study, work, or social living. This claim includes intentional behavior, as well as behavior that has the reasonably foreseeable effect of interfering with an individual’s ability to work or study.

This policy is consistent with the University’s strong commitment to academic freedom and to social interaction between faculty members and students. Both inside and outside the classroom, the University welcomes discussion of controversial subjects and expression of ideas with which some or most members of the community strongly disagree.

Protection against Reprisals

A member of the University community has every right to take action against sexual harassment without penalty or retaliation. It is University policy that reprisals against persons who initiate or support action against sexual harassment are strictly forbidden and will be grounds for severe disciplinary action. It is University policy to respond promptly and sensitively to all complaints of sexual harassment. Complaints against students should be made to Office of Judicial Affairs at 310 Steele Hall, 443-3728. Complaints against faculty should be directed to the University Senate Committee on Academic Freedom, Tenure, and Professional Ethics at the University Senate Office, 443-2254. Complaints against staff should be made to the Associate Vice President for Human Resources at Skytop Office Building, 443-4042.

University Policy on Discrimination The following statement is taken from the Syracuse University Student Handbook 2010-2011.

Students have the right not to be discriminated against by any agent or organization of Syracuse University for reasons of age, creed, ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, marital status, political or social affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. In their individual roles as members of student organizations, students have the responsibility not to discriminate against others.

Policy Statement for Students with Disabilities

Syracuse University is an educational community that values diversity and seeks to promote meaningful access to educational opportunity for all its students. Syracuse University is committed

to full compliance with Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, the *Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*, and its own *Statement of Student Rights and Responsibilities*, which provides in relevant part that:

Students have the right not to be discriminated against by any agent or organization of Syracuse University for reasons of... disability.... In their individual roles as members of student organizations, students have the responsibility not to discriminate against others.

Syracuse University provides reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities to afford an opportunity for their full participation in the University's educational programs and activities. Although Syracuse University is not required by law to fundamentally alter the nature of its academic or other programs or services, the University will provide reasonable accommodations. All members of the University community are responsible for promoting compliance with this policy. Students seeking reasonable accommodations should contact:

Office of Disability Services
804 University Avenue, Room 309
(315) 443-4498 (voice) or (315) 443-1371 (TDD)

Student Activities

Graduate students participate in departmental governance and collegial activities with faculty and other students. Recent student-initiated activities have included brown-bag presentations and writing workshops. Students learn much from one another, and often form study groups for exam preparation or dissertation support. Current students may want to review recent dissertations completed in sociology.

Professional socialization

Students are strongly encouraged to participate actively in departmental activities, to participate in professional associations, and to seek publication opportunities. Students should seek advice and support in these activities from faculty members with similar interests. The American Sociological Association and other regional or more specialized organizations (see the section "Resources, Professional Organizations," later in this handbook) generally offer low-cost student memberships.

The Future Professoriate Program

The Future Professoriate Program was developed in the late 1980s as part of the TA Training Program to help graduate students develop their skills as effective instructors. The two main goals of the program are "to prepare graduate students for their teaching responsibilities as future members of the professoriate and to effect a change in faculty culture by fostering recognition of the importance of teaching as a dimension of graduate education."

Students usually begin the program as a teaching assistant their first year, working closely with faculty mentors. Once they have some basic experience, and usually after they have completed

their coursework, students advance to become a teaching associate. During this time they continue to work with a mentor, developing additional skills while teaching independently. Throughout this process, the student documents his/her progress through the creation of a portfolio. This portfolio becomes the basis for earning the Future Professoriate Certificate and is a useful tool to have for the job market.

Committees

Within the Sociology Department

Our department has a strong commitment to meeting the needs of its students. We seriously listen to, as well as integrate, their ideas and suggestions into all levels of the workings of the department. Students must be in good academic standing to participate. Students hold elected positions on the following committees:

Graduate Committee

The purpose of this committee is to address issues related to graduate students, including support and admissions, as well as curriculum needs and changes. Elected student participants may serve for one to three years, as long as they are interested and are active members.

Graduate Student Department Representative

Two students also serve in this position and are elected on a yearly rotating basis. These students are responsible for representing the entire sociology graduate student body at all faculty meetings, to vote on issues in the meetings, to relay important information to the graduate students and to organize student meetings when necessary. While these students will not be present during faculty reviews, tenure, and/or promotion meetings, they will present student feedback at the beginning of these meetings and then leave prior to discussion of the faculty under review.

Outside of the Sociology Department These external committees offer unique experiences, from learning how a government works (GSO or University Senate) to viewing academic operations outside of the department (tenure and promotion committee). Following is a brief list of what our students have done in the past, but there are many other committees at Syracuse University that may be of interest. Serving on an external committee is also a good way to meet others outside the department.

Graduate Student Organization (GSO)

The Graduate Student Organization is a student-run, governmental body that advocates for the needs and concerns of graduate students. Graduate students can participate in GSO as a department representative or as a senator-at-large. Through GSO, graduate students have the ability to participate in various committees across campus, including the University Senate and the Board of Trustees, ensuring that graduate student concerns are heard.

University Senate

This is a governing body for the University as a whole and consists of administrators, faculty, and

students. Students can serve either through the GSO or as elected members. Those interested should contact Teresa Gilman, Senate Recorder, at 443-3152 for further information.

Tenure and Promotion Committee

This committee evaluates and recommends faculty members throughout the University for tenure and/or promotion. It provides an excellent opportunity for graduate students to learn how this process works, as well as to meet faculty and graduate students in other disciplines throughout the University.

Interested students are interviewed for this committee and serve for one academic year.

Student Groups and Organizations There is a wide variety of student-run groups and organizations within and outside of the University. The basement of Schine Student Union houses the offices of many of these groups. We recommend students start there for information on existing organizations or on how to start your own group.

Additional Resources and Opportunities

Departmental

Computer Resources

All students are entitled to University computer accounts. Department news and discussions are posted on community listservs. Each Maxwell Graduate student receives an e-mail account. While students are usually added automatically to the departmental listservs, notifying the department secretary of their preferred user ID (e-mail address) will ensure that they are added “officially” and accurately.

Computers are available for student use in the department’s resource lab. To access the computers one must log on to the Maxwell computer system. Students should use their Maxwell user ID and password when logging on to any computer on the Maxwell network.

Copying, Printing, and Supplies

Photocopying is generally limited to material directly related to the student’s duties; modest copying for personal use is usually permitted with prior approval from the department office.

The Resource Room and Kitchen

The Resource Room (Maxwell 321) is part of the Sociology Department. Students are welcomed and encouraged to use it. When prioritization of its use is necessary, preference is given to sociology students doing assignments in sociology courses. Similarly, the department’s kitchen (also copy room) is available to all department members.

Grad Bays

There are two grad bays for Sociology Graduate students in Eggers (044 and 046). Each student is assigned a desk. Computers, printers and a scanner are available for your use. TA’s should use this space for office hours.

University-Wide Resources

Interdisciplinary Study

Many sociology students participate in the activities of other departments and programs such as the Program for the Advancement of Research on Conflict and Collaboration (**PARCC**), Women and Gender Studies (WGS), African-American Studies, International Relations, and others. PARCC and WGS offer graduate certificate programs for students who concentrate in those areas of study. The department encourages students to take advantage of resources elsewhere in the University; at the same time, students should maintain regular contact with their department advisor.

Library Carrels

Doctoral students who have successfully completed their qualifying exams and have been admitted to candidacy can apply for a private library carrel. If you are a TA, you may have special loan privileges; check the Professional Development section of the Graduate School website for specific information.

Awards and Recognition

Students should be aware of opportunities for special recognition including the Outstanding Teaching Assistant Awards given each year and the highly competitive Teaching Fellow Program.

Financial Resources

Travel Grants to Professional Meetings The Sociology Department is able to support travel up to a maximum of \$700 per student per academic year for (1) a conference for students who are on the conference program as an author, presenter, discussant, or invited speaker, or (2) advanced sociological training seminar in which the student is enrolled. SU requires all travel reimbursed by any University funds to be **pre-approved** by the department chair well in advance of travel. Requests must include specific names, dates, and locations of events, titles of papers, titles of sessions, etc. In addition, expenditures for entertainment, including meals, for guests or business contacts, are non-reimbursable unless deemed necessary for the attainment of the purposes of the trip and reasonable. Only coach flights and moderately priced hotels and meals will be reimbursed. Documentation of pre-approval and original receipts for all expenses must be kept for two years in the department for routine audits.

Funds for Research

The Sociology Department is not in a position to routinely fund graduate student research. However, depending upon the budget situation at any given time, the department may be able to assist with such things as copying costs, limited mailings, and limited telephone costs.

The Maxwell Dean's office provides a small number of competitive grants (the Roscoe Martin Fund) to assist in dissertation research. These are awarded each year and students can apply for them several times.

The Department awards one dissertation award each year. To be eligible, nominees must have defended their proposal. The Graduate Committee solicits nominations for the award in February or March.

Awards offered by Syracuse University

The Sociology Department awards a University Fellowship each year and the graduate school offers an African American Fellowship.

Women and Gender Studies and some other departments throughout SU offer graduate assistantships as well.

Professional Organizations

Graduate students are encouraged to join professional organizations, which often have reduced membership rates for students.

National:

American Sociological Association (ASA)

1430 K St., Suite 600, Washington, DC 20005;

(2<http://www.asnet.org/02>) 383-9005; [ASA Home page \(http://www.asnet.org/\)](http://www.asnet.org/)

Association of Black Sociologists (ABS) 3473 S. Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr. #495 Chicago, IL 60616; (202) 365-1759

[ABS Home page \(http://associationofblacksociologists.org/\)](http://associationofblacksociologists.org/)

Society for the Study of Social Problems [SSSP Home page \(http://www.sssp1.org/\)](http://www.sssp1.org/)

Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) [SWS Home page \(http://www.socwomen.org/\)](http://www.socwomen.org/)

Regional:

Eastern Sociological Society (ESS)

William Patterson University 300 Pompton Rd.

Wayne, NJ 07470

(973) 720-3689, ess@wpunj.edu

NY State Sociological Association (NYSSA)

newyorksociologist.org

Additional Reference Sources:

Pauline Bart and Linda Frankel, *The Student Sociologist's Handbook* (4th ed.), Random House, 1986.

Howard S. Becker, *Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or article*, University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Lawrence F. Locke, Waneen Wyrick Spriduso and Stephen J. Silverman, *Proposals that Work: A Guide for Planning Dissertations and Grant Proposals* (2nd ed.), Sage Publications, 1987.

David Sternberg, *How to Complete and Survive a Doctoral Dissertation*, St. Martin's Press, 1981.

Other Useful Information

Often Used Phone Numbers

Arts & Sciences (College of) 443-2207

Athletic Tickets – Carrier Dome 443-2121

Bookstore (Schine) 443-9900

Bursar 443-2444
Career Services –Schine 443-3616
Classroom Presentation Services 443-5660
Counseling Center 443-4715
Credit Union 443-2603
Daily Orange 443-2314
Disability Resources 443-4498
Financial Aid 443-1513
Medical Clinic 443-2666
Ambulance Emergency 443-4299
Hendricks’s Chapel 443-2901
I.D. Card Services 443-2726
Information 443-1870
Information Technology 443-2677
International Student Services 443-2457
Judicial Affairs 443-3728
Library Hours 443-3561
Reference & Information 443-2093
Maxwell School 443-3272
Parking Services 443-4652
Public Safety 443-2224
Recreation Services 443-4386
Registrar’s Office 443-2422
Schine Student Center Box Office 443-4517
General Information 443-1985
Sociology Department 443-2346
Student Legal Services 443-4532
Syracuse Stage 443-4008
Transcript Office 443-2422
Veteran Resources 443-4357

Parking

To park in Syracuse University lots, students (and all others) need permits. Permit rates vary depending on time periods and lots. Please contact Parking and Transit Services at Skytop Office Building for further information. Street parking is often available if you arrive before 8:30 a.m. or 9:00 a.m. The Centro bus line costs \$2 per one-way fare. There is a free zone for Syracuse University students, which is approximately within two miles of the main campus. Contact Centro or the Information Desk at Schine Student Center for more details.

Payroll and Benefits

Payroll

Students holding assistantships receive their pay twice a month, on the 15th and again on the last day of the month. Direct deposit is available; students wishing to take advantage of this option can make arrangements on “My Slice”.

Health Insurance Benefits

Unless students have an outside source of health insurance, such as through a parent or spouse, they must enroll in one of the university’s health insurance plans. There are two types of health insurance plans available to students at SU – the Student Health Insurance Plan and the Employee Health Insurance Plan.

The SU Student Health Insurance Plan: All full- time students, regardless of funding source (e.g., TA, RA, PTI, fellowship) are eligible for the student health insurance plan. It costs \$1672 per year (in 2017-2018). Students on a fellowship receive a subsidy of about \$870 (in 2017-2018) to help pay for the plan. The SU Bursar’s office bills the student for this amount up front, but you can also sign up for a payment plan through the Bursar’s office. The student health insurance covers medical but not dental or vision. Students can see providers outside the university health center and either inside or outside the US.

The SU Employee Health Insurance Plan: Full- time students who are employed as RA’s or TA’s are eligible for the employee health insurance plan. It costs roughly \$1450 per year (in 2017-2018). Instead of paying this amount up front like student health insurance, a portion of the amount is deducted from each paycheck during the academic year. The employee plan covers medical, dental, and vision. Students can see providers outside the university health center and either inside or outside the US.

For questions about student health insurance, students can contact SU Health Insurance at 315-443-9019, located at 111 Waverley Avenue.

For questions about employee health insurance (for TAs/GAs), students can contact SU Human Resources at 315-443-4042 and press 1.

Other Fees

All full-time students (9 credits or more) are required to pay a health fee and a student activity fee each semester.