

# GRADUATE POLICY HANDBOOK

Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice  
University of Delaware

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Graduate Policy Handbook includes all policies and procedures pertinent to the graduate program in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice. The interpretation of these policies and procedures is the responsibility of the Graduate Policy Committee (GPC). Petitions for waivers of any requirements are the responsibility of, and must have the approval of, the GPC.

Deletions or modifications to the Graduate Policy Handbook become effective at the beginning of the following academic year. Students are subject to policies existing at the time of entrance into the program; if a change in policy is approved by the Faculty Senate while a graduate student is enrolled in the program, they may choose between the new policy or old policy regarding future expectations or requirements.

Students are also subject to all University policies regarding graduate education as detailed on the Graduate College website and in the Graduate Catalog of the University of Delaware.

This version of the Graduate Handbook includes all revisions made since the publication of the original in 1991.

### **Important:**

Requirements and other information are subject to change. Students are responsible for maintaining up to date information.

## **II. PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

The Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice offers a Master of Arts and a Doctor of Philosophy degree program in both Sociology and Criminology. The primary focus of these programs is the preparation of members of the next generation of sociologists and criminologists by emphasizing systematic training in theory and research methodology as well as teaching. These advanced education degrees are intended for persons interested in careers in academia, public service, or private enterprise. The Department has a large number of full-time distinguished faculty from the disciplines of Sociology, Philosophy, Law, Political Science, Criminology, History and Criminal Justice. This allows students to work closely with faculty members while preserving a reasonable breadth of interests. Thus, while both the Sociology and Criminology degrees rely on strong theoretical and methodological foundations, they also allow students to tailor a program that meets their individual needs.

## **III. REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION**

Prospective students should apply using the Graduate College online admission application. All admission and funding decisions are made by the GPC. All applicants are required to submit:

- Official transcript(s) showing the completion of prior undergraduate/graduate level degrees
- Resume
- Three letters of recommendation
- Statement of objectives
- Short writing sample
- International students only: TOEFL or IELTS scores, unless the student has completed an undergraduate- or graduate-level degree in an English-speaking country. To be considered for admission, we require students to have a minimum Internet-based TOEFL (iBT) score of 100, or a minimum band score of 7.5 on the IELTS. Scores more than two years old cannot be validated or

considered official.

- Optional: GRE scores

Applicants will be evaluated based on these required materials. The GPC may also consider a limited number of other factors, including GRE scores, challenging social, economic, educational, cultural or other life circumstances, quality of undergraduate program, undergraduate major, relevant work/field/research experience, publications and reports, presentations, or other work demonstrating the ability to do graduate study in the field.

International students may apply competitively to all of our full-time programs. Admission to the graduate program is selective and competitive based on the number of well-qualified applicants and the limits of available faculty and facilities. Those who meet minimum academic requirements are not guaranteed admission, nor are those who fail to meet those requirements necessarily precluded from admission if they offer other appropriate strengths. We offer Fall admission only.

## **IV. FINANCIAL AID**

### **A. Procedures for Awarding Funding**

Financial aid is available to graduate students in the form of teaching assistantships, research assistantships, tuition scholarships, and University fellowships. Assistantships and fellowships consist of tuition, a stipend for the September-May academic year, and benefits (e.g., medical insurance). Awards are competitive and merit based, and conditional on availability of funds. Funding decisions will be made with priority given to doctoral students.

All funding decisions are made by the GPC in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and the Department Chair. Continuing students without funding may petition the GPC to be considered for future funding. Letters of petition should be sent to the Chair of the GPC by the end of the Fall semester to be considered for funding for the following academic year. The GPC can also grant students one-semester assistantships (based on available funding as confirmed by the Department Chair) based on academic standing and other circumstances.

### **B. Procedures for Assigning Assistantships**

**Research Assistantships:** Appointments are made in consultation with the faculty member conducting the research, the DGS and the Department Chair. Faculty who anticipate funding for a research assistantship for the following academic year are encouraged to contact graduate students to inform them of possible research assistantship opportunities and to identify qualified students who wish to work on their projects. Faculty are also encouraged to consult with the DGS to identify proper candidates for research assistantships. Research assistantships on funded projects may be offered to students not currently funded by the University or Department.

**Teaching Assistantships:** Appointments are made by the DGS in consultation with the Department Chair each semester. Faculty are required to submit a request for a teaching assistant for each semester they are seeking an assistant specifying their expectations of the assistant (e.g., facilitation of classroom discussion, preparation, and grading of examinations).

The assignment of graduate students to faculty members should balance scholarly interests and professional objectives of the student and the teaching and research needs of the department. The DGS may change assignments as necessary and make additional assignments if new sources of funding become available.

### **C. Responsibilities of Funded Students**

Assistantships carry the expectation of twenty hours of service per week. University guidelines stipulate that

students holding assistantships are expected to give their full-time attention to graduate study and their assigned assistantship work during the fall and spring semesters. All students receiving financial aid must maintain a minimum of six (6) credits per semester and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.0. Students awarded assistantships must satisfactorily fulfill the requirements of their assignments. Faculty with assistants (either research or teaching) will submit an assessment to the DGS at the end of each semester concerning fulfillment of awarded assistantships. This information may be shared with the students in order to enhance their performance in the program.

#### **D. Limits on Funding**

Typically, eligibility for student funding is limited to 2 years of funding for students with a B.A. to earn the M.A. degree, and 4 additional years for these students to earn the Ph.D.; for students entering with a B.A. to earn the Ph.D. degree, eligibility typically ends after 6 years of funding; for students entering with an M.A. degree to earn the Ph.D., eligibility typically ends after 5 years of funding. The GPC may recommend extending these time frames on a case-by-case basis based on a student's progress towards their degree and individual circumstances.

Funded students are not required to apply for renewal of their financial aid. Student funding is renewed as long as a student remains in good standing in the program. "Good standing" is defined as strong performance in coursework, satisfactory fulfillment of their research/teaching assistantship duties, and timely progress toward completion of the degree. The DGS is in charge of monitoring student progress, in consultation with the GPC.

### **V. TRANSFER & WAIVER OF CREDIT**

Policies for transfer of graduate credit earned at another university: An official transcript is required. Credits used to complete other degrees may not be transferred into a degree at UD. A maximum of 9 credits earned at another U.S. institution may be applied to a graduate degree if not used to complete a previous degree. The student's grade must be "B" or better to be acceptable for transfer. Course completion date must be no older than 5 years. Credits but no grades or quality points will transfer. Credits from institutions outside the United States are not transferable to the University of Delaware unless permission to transfer is given by the Graduate College.

In cases of courses used to complete other degrees (e.g., an M.A. at another university), students may use those to *waive* a specific course requirement, rather than transfer such credits. When courses are waived, the credits still need to be earned at UD using other approved courses.

All petitions for transfer and waiver require the approval of the GPC. It is recommended that incoming students discuss with the DGS their intentions to petition the GPC as early in the program as possible. The DGS will advise students if any of their Master's level courses may be eligible for waiver for the department's course requirements and make suggestions for course enrollment. Students will need material (i.e., course syllabi, transcripts) to support their requests, which will be evaluated by the respective Comprehensive Exam Area Committee and approved by the GPC as well as the Graduate College.

### **VI. ADVISEMENT**

All students entering the program are assigned a Faculty Mentor and Graduate Student Peer Mentor for the first two years. Assignments are made by the DGS, attempting to match the academic interests of students and faculty.

The faculty mentor and student should plan and periodically review a plan of study that fulfills departmental requirement and provides comprehensive professional training. This plan of study should take account of students' backgrounds and available departmental resources. Final responsibility for course selection and the meeting of departmental requirements resides with the student.

## **VII. REGULATIONS REGARDING GRADUATE STATUS**

### **A. Definition of Full-time Status**

According to the Graduate College, *during fall and spring semesters, full-time status is a minimum of six graduate-level credits for students holding an assistantship or a tuition scholarship and a minimum of nine graduate level-credits for students holding a fellowship.* Please note, however, that to make normal progress through the program, it is typically necessary to take more than six credits per semester. *These courses must be for credit and must be maintained throughout the semester. Students with sustaining credit registration are considered as full-time by the University in any semester. Half-time status is eight graduate credits or less for students on non-contract graduate pay during the fall and spring semesters.*

### **B. Normal Progress and Time Limits for Completion of the Degrees**

**Normal Progress:** Students are expected to make continuing progress toward the completion of their graduate education. To assess their progress and professional development, each graduate student is required to submit a progress report to the DGS by April 15 each year. The report should cover the student's activities involving completion of required course work, area examinations, thesis or dissertation progress, professional engagement (publications, conference presentations, involvement in external funding activities, and participation in research projects other than the thesis or dissertation), teaching, and other relevant items. In addition, a letter from one faculty member of the student's choice should be submitted. Under ordinary circumstances we define "normal progress" in the following ways:

Full-time students entering the program with a B.A. are expected to complete their master's degree by the end of their second year in the program. Optimally, students continuing into the doctoral program are expected to complete the doctorate by the end of their sixth year in the program.

Optimally, full-time students entering the program with a M.A. from another program or university are expected to complete the doctorate by the end of their fifth year in the program.

### **C. Quality of Graduate Work**

Consistent with University regulations, a minimum "B" average (3.00) is required for certification of readiness to take comprehensive examinations and for conferral of a graduate degree. Students should consult the University Catalog for further information regarding graduate standing.

## **VIII. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER'S DEGREE (30 credits)**

### **A. Course Requirements**

Students have two M.A. options:

- Thesis Option (Sociology or Criminology)
- Examination Option (Sociology or Criminology)

All new students are required to attend monthly a non-credit pro-seminar during their first semester in the program.

**M.A. in Sociology:**

1) M.A. in Sociology with Thesis Option

Required courses (12 credits):

- SOCI 605 – Data Collection
- SOCI 606 – Qualitative Methodology
- SOCI 612 – Development of Sociological Theory
- SOCI 813 – Current Issues in Social Theory

One course (3 credits) from the following:

- SOCI 614 – Advanced Data Analysis OR
- SOCI 625 – Advanced Social Statistics OR
- SOCI 676 – Advanced Qualitative Methods OR
- PSYC 878 – Hierarchical Linear Modeling OR
- (another course approved by the department methods comprehensive exam committee)

Three elective courses (9 credits) from *at least* two substantive areas to assure breadth in sociology. Substantive areas are those listed in section “C. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams”:

- We encourage students to pursue courses outside of the department. However, no more than two of the elective courses outside of the department will count towards the degree.
- Independent studies do not count as elective courses.

SOCI 869 (6 credits): M.A. Thesis cannot be taken pass/fail — Candidates without a thesis committee may not accumulate more than three credits in SOCI 869. Six (6) credits need to be completed for this course. These credits may all be taken during one semester or divided between two terms.

2) M.A. in Sociology with Master’s Examination Option

If a student chooses not to pursue a thesis, they can complete the M.A. in Sociology with a Master’s Examination Option. However, this is for a terminal M.A. only.

Required courses (12 credits):

- SOCI 605 – Data Collection
- SOCI 606 – Qualitative Methodology
- SOCI 612 – Development of Sociological Theory
- SOCI 813 – Current Issues in Social Theory

One course (3 credits) from the following:

- SOCI 614 – Advanced Data Analysis OR
- SOCI 625 – Advanced Social Statistics OR
- SOCI 676 – Advanced Qualitative Methods OR
- PSYC 878 – Hierarchical Linear Modeling OR
- (another course approved by the department methods comprehensive exam committee)

Five elective courses (15 credits) from *at least* two substantive areas to assure breadth in sociology. Substantive areas are those listed in section “C. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams”:

- We encourage students to pursue courses outside of the department. However, no more than two of the elective courses outside of the department will count towards the degree.
- Independent studies do not count as elective courses.

## **M.A. in Criminology:**

### **1) M.A. in Criminology with Thesis Option**

Required courses (12 credits):

- SOCI 605 – Data Collection
- SOCI 606 – Qualitative Methodology
- SOCI 612 – Development of Sociological Theory
- SOCI 835 – Theoretical Criminology I

One course (3 credits) from the following:

- SOCI 614 – Advanced Data Analysis OR
- SOCI 625 – Advanced Social Statistics OR
- SOCI 676 – Advanced Qualitative Methods OR
- PSYC 878 – Hierarchical Linear Modeling OR
- (another course approved by the department methods comprehensive exam committee)

Three elective courses (9 credits) in which the student invokes criminological-, law and society-, or criminal justice–related work from *at least* two substantive areas to assure breadth in criminology. Substantive areas are those listed in section “C. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams”:

- We encourage students to pursue courses outside of the department. However, no more than two of the elective courses outside of the department will count towards the degree.
- Independent studies do not count as elective courses.

SOCI 869 (6 credits): M.A. Thesis cannot be taken pass/fail — Candidates without a thesis committee may not accumulate more than three credits in SOCI 869. Six (6) credits need to be completed for this course. These credits may all be taken during one semester, or divided between two terms.

### **2) M.A. in Criminology with Master’s Examination Option**

If a student chooses not to pursue a thesis, they can complete the M.A. in Criminology with a Master’s Examination Option. However, this is for a terminal M.A. only.

Required courses (12 credits):

- SOCI 605 – Data Collection
- SOCI 606 – Qualitative Methodology
- SOCI 612 – Development of Sociological Theory
- SOCI 835 – Theoretical Criminology I

One course (3 credits) from the following:

- SOCI 614 – Advanced Data Analysis OR
- SOCI 625 – Advanced Social Statistics OR
- SOCI 676 – Advanced Qualitative Methods OR
- PSYC 878 – Hierarchical Linear Modeling OR
- (another course approved by the department methods comprehensive exam committee)

Five elective courses (15 credits) in which the student invokes criminological-, law and society-, or criminal justice–related work from *at least* two substantive areas to assure breadth in criminology. Substantive areas are those listed in section “C. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams”:

- We encourage students to pursue courses outside of the department. However, no more than two of the elective courses outside of the department will count towards

- the degree.
- Independent studies do not count as elective courses.

## **B. Master's Thesis**

The thesis is encouraged to be in the form of a scholarly journal article. With advice of the thesis committee each student will select a journal most appropriate to their area of interest and write a paper of the type normally considered by that journal.

Each thesis will adhere to a particular journal's page limits, bibliographic format, manner of data presentation, etc. Where appropriate, students are encouraged to develop their thesis from research conducted for their course work, or from faculty members' data bases.

### **1. Thesis Proposal Procedures**

It is the responsibility of the student to form an M.A. thesis committee consisting of a Chairperson who is a member of the faculty of the department of Sociology and Criminal Justice and two additional members (one of whom may be from an outside department).

Upon obtaining the written consent of all potential members, the student notifies the DGS by memo of the composition of the Thesis Committee.

The M.A. proposal defense is strongly recommended; the process for an M.A. proposal defense follows that of the Ph.D. proposal defense (below). Upon subsequent approval of the M.A. proposal by the committee, students provide one copy for their file (approved and signed by all members of the committee). The chair of the Thesis Committee shall notify the GPC and the DGS and all members of the faculty by memo of the existence of the signed proposal as well as the proposed thesis title.

### **2. Oral Defense of the Master's Thesis**

All requirements for the Master's degree must be completed prior to defending the thesis.

The oral defense is administered by the Thesis Committee. The student shall be responsible for notifying the faculty ten (10) days prior to the scheduled defense and to see that a copy of the thesis is on file in the departmental office 10 days prior to the scheduled defense.

Any faculty member of the department may attend the defense if desired, but the right of voting is reserved to members of the thesis committee.

A majority vote of the committee is required for any action. The thesis and oral defense will be evaluated as a combined effort. There are three possible outcomes: Pass, Conditional Outcome, and Fail. In the case of failure, the oral defense may be repeated within one semester of the first attempt.

It is the responsibility of the Chairperson of the Thesis Committee to notify the DGS in writing of the outcome.

Successful candidates need to provide copies of the completed thesis to the Graduate College, and one copy for the departmental archives and one copy for the Chairperson of the Thesis Committee. Students should consult with the Graduate College regarding regulations for graduate theses.

## **C. Examination Option**

Candidates for the Master's degree must take the Master's examination prior to completion of their fourth semester in the program. Students considering the examination option must notify the DGS to express the intent to take the examination the semester prior to taking the exam.



Examinations are written, and a maximum of three hours per exam is allowed. Successful completion of the Master's examination requires passing the exam in two areas outlined below. Upon completion of the written examinations, an oral examination may be required at the option of the Area Examination Committee.

Candidates for the master's degree are examined in:

- I. Theory or methods,
- II. One additional area of expertise from the standing areas of specialization offered in the department.

Standing exam committees are responsible for constructing and evaluating examinations. Reading lists are to be provided at least one semester prior to the scheduled examinations. The reading lists should include, at minimum, the readings from the two most recent course syllabi in each area (e.g., SOCI605 and SOCI614 for Methods) and any further content recommended by the standing exam committees.

Grading – Possible outcomes are: Pass, Conditional Outcome, and Fail. It is the responsibility of the Chairpersons of the examinations committees to notify the student and the DGS in writing of the action taken by the examination committee within ten days of the exam. Within one week of notification of the grade on the master's examination, students will receive a detailed evaluation in writing from the chair of the examination committees. For conditional outcomes, students are required to complete additional work within one month of formal notification of the committee's decision. If the committee is satisfied with the quality of the work, the student will receive a grade of Pass. If the committee is not satisfied with the quality of the work, the student will receive a grade of Fail.

If students receive a failing grade, they may retake the exam within two months of the original exam date. Only one repeat of the exam in any area of expertise is permitted. Failure on a repeat examination is a permanent failure for that area and shall result in dismissal from the program.

## **IX. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE**

### **A. Admission to the Doctoral Program**

Please refer to the Admissions procedures outlined above ("III. Requirements for Admission"). Note that a master's degree is not required for entrance into the program. *However, for students without a prior master's degree who were initially admitted to the doctoral program, they will earn a M.A. embedded within the Ph.D. program and upon successful completion of a master's thesis.* For students entering the doctoral program with a previously earned master's degree, their prior courses will be assessed by the GPC, as outlined under the "V. Transfer & Waiver of Credit" section above. Completion of a thesis for those students entering with a master's degree will not be required.

If students are initially admitted to the Master's program (*not* the doctoral program), after successfully defending an M.A. thesis, they may apply to the doctoral program in Criminology or Sociology by submitting a dossier to the GPC. The dossier should include: a cv, a letter detailing reasons for obtaining the Ph.D. in Sociology or Criminology and an outline of your intended course of study, three letters of recommendation one of which shall be a letter from the Master's thesis advisor evaluating past graduate performance and future potential for doctoral work. This dossier should be submitted by the same deadline that the M.A. thesis is due to the Graduate Office. The minimum GPA in all graduate course work should be a 3.5 but the GPC may evaluate the GPA in light of other criteria such as course difficulty. Passage of the Master's thesis is also required. Students should submit a 'change of classification' form to the Graduate College.

Regulations of the Graduate College require one continuous academic year of full-time residency for the Ph.D.

## **B. Course Requirements**

### **Ph.D. in Sociology (46 credits)**

Students are encouraged to: take a broad array of courses, go beyond these minimum course requirements in order to pursue additional learning opportunities and consider courses outside the department.

Required courses (16 credits):

- SOCI 605 – Data Collection and Analysis
- SOCI 614 – Advanced Data Analysis
- SOCI 606 – Qualitative Methodology
- SOCI 612 – Development of Sociological Theory
- SOCI 813 – Current Issues in Social Theory
- SOCI 698 – Teaching Social Science (1 credit)

One course (3 credits) from the following:

- SOCI 625 – Advanced Social Statistics OR
- PSYC 878 – Hierarchical Linear Modeling OR
- SOCI 676 – Advanced Qualitative Methodology OR
- (another course approved by the department methods comprehensive exam committee)

At least six elective courses (at least 18 credits). *At least* two of these courses must be in a substantive area to assure breadth in sociology. Substantive areas are those listed in section “C.

Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams”:

- We encourage students to pursue courses outside of the department. However, no more than two of the elective courses outside of the department will count towards the degree.
- Independent studies do not count as elective courses.

Two Comprehensive Exams: Written Exam in one area and Qualifying Paper in another area.

SOCI 969 (9 credits): Dissertation

### **Ph.D. in Criminology (46 credits)**

Students are encouraged to: take a broad array of courses, go beyond these minimum course requirements in order to pursue additional learning opportunities, and consider courses outside the department.

Required courses (19 credits):

- SOCI 605 – Data Collection and Analysis
- SOCI 614 – Data Analysis
- SOCI 606 – Qualitative Methodology
- SOCI 612 – Development of Sociological Theory
- SOCI 835 – Theoretical Criminology I
- SOCI 836 – Application of Criminological Theory and Empirical Tests
- SOCI 698 – Teaching Social Science (1 credit)

One course (3 credits) from the following:

- SOCI 625 – Advanced Social Statistics (Highly Recommended) OR
- PSYC 878 – Hierarchical Linear Modeling OR
- SOCI 676 – Advanced Qualitative Methodology OR

- (another course approved by the department methods comprehensive exam committee)

At least five elective courses (at least 15 credits) in which the student invokes criminological-, law and society-, or criminal justice–related work from *at least* two substantive areas to assure breadth in criminology. Substantive areas are those listed in section “C. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams”:

- It is **HIGHLY RECOMMENDED** that students take SOCI837: Criminology and Systems of Criminal Justice within their elective selections.
- We encourage students to pursue courses outside of the department. However, no more than two of the elective courses outside of the department will count towards the degree.
- Independent studies do not count as elective courses.

Two Comprehensive Exams: Written exam in one area and Qualifying Paper in another area. One of the two areas needs to be Criminology.

SOCI 969 (9 credits): Dissertation

### **C. Ph.D. Comprehensive Exams**

Candidates for the doctoral degree must be certified in two specialized areas of expertise. The department offers specialization in the following areas of expertise:

1. Criminology
2. Disasters and the Environment
3. Gender
4. Health
5. Law and Society
6. Methods
7. Race
8. Sociological Theory

Doctoral students in our department must pass a written exam in one area of expertise and write a qualifying paper with a passing grade in the other area. Students may determine which of their two areas of expertise will be fulfilled via the written exam and which will be fulfilled via the qualifying paper; it is strongly recommended that students seek the advice of a faculty mentor in making this decision. Students are required to take either their written exam or their qualifying paper in one of the standing areas of expertise offered by the department. If the candidate wishes to be certified in a specialized area not listed above (for which there is no standing exam committee), they may petition to do so after securing the agreement of three (3) faculty members willing to serve as examiners in that area by providing reading lists, constructing and evaluating written exams, evaluating qualifying papers and conducting oral defenses, and other certification requirements. The GPC must review and approve the petition (which should list the committee members, area, and reading list) of the student in the semester prior to when the written exam will take place or the qualifying paper will be submitted, at the latest, and inform the DGS and the Chairperson of the department of its decision.

#### **1. Pre-requisites and Schedule of Examinations**

Students are required to declare their intent to take a written exam or write the qualifying paper, in writing, within the first two weeks of the previous semester to the DGS who will notify the relevant exam committee. The committee will schedule an interview with the student to explore their level of preparedness and will work with the student to reach an agreement on the supplemental area and reading list (written exam option) or the paper topic and supplemental reading list (qualifying paper option) before the end of that semester.

**IMPORTANT:** Students must complete all Ph.D. course requirements, including any outstanding incomplete grades, before they are eligible to take Ph.D. examinations. [This excludes the one-credit teaching seminar]. If students wish to request an exception to this rule, they can file a petition with the GPC.

Students are encouraged to complete both the written exam and qualifying paper during the first two semesters immediately after they complete course requirements. Students have the option of completing both exams during the same semester.

Any graduate student who may need disability-related accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). Contact DSS by phone: 302-831-4643; fax: 302-831-3261; website: [www.udel.edu/dss](http://www.udel.edu/dss); email: [dssoffice@udel.edu](mailto:dssoffice@udel.edu); or visit 240 Academy Street, Alison Hall Suite 130 during business hours (8-5 M-F).

## ***2. Exam Committees***

There is one committee for each standing area of expertise (listed above). Exam committees are responsible for preparing reading lists, overseeing the respective curriculum in this area, and providing students with written guidelines to aid them in the preparation for examinations. Exam committees are responsible for designing the specific certification requirements for their particular area of expertise, preparing written exam questions, reading and evaluating written exams, reading and evaluating qualifying papers, and conducting and evaluating the oral defense.

Published reading lists are reviewed and revised as necessary, usually on a regular cycle of every two (2) years; reading lists are to trend toward equality in length across comprehensive exam areas and committees should make them available online and in the sociology office to students at the beginning of the academic year. The GPC will oversee these requirements.

The Chair of the Department appoints members of exam committees and their chairs. Committees are composed of at least three (3) members of the faculty, but committees may consult other members of the faculty with competence in the area during the preparation of reading lists and the exam process.

## ***3. Scope of the Examinations***

Minimal preparation for comprehensive examinations includes mastery of material on the reading lists provided by exam committees. However, reading lists are merely guidelines and should not be considered as the sole basis. Exam committees are responsible for clarifying the goals of reading lists, with specific attention to whether such lists represent “minimal” or “exhaustive” definitions of the core literature. For each area of expertise, the candidate is expected to be: up-to-date with the literature in the field at the time of the examination, able to discuss the most important controversies, issues and problems (in both theory and methodology) that exist in the field, and capable of evaluating existing theory and methodology and suggesting new direction of effort.

## ***4. Written Exam***

A written exam in any given area of expertise, e.g., Gender, will be offered once per semester, on a date to be determined by the DGS in consultation with the exam committee chairs the prior semester. The written exam is typically given early in the term (about three weeks after the start of any semester). Written exams will be administered to students in a common room with a maximum 6-hour time allotment and proctored by a faculty member. Failure to attend the written exam will constitute a failure, unless it is due to special circumstances as determined to be adequate by the Exam Committee in consultation with the DGS (see UD’s excused absence policy for guidance), in which case the student should consult with the Exam Committee and the DGS about the possibility of scheduling a make-up exam.

Students are provided with a copy of the area's reading list along with their exam. Additionally, one week before the written exam, students may submit one page of supplemental references (citations only, *not* annotations) to the Chair of the Area Committee. This document may be printed on the front and back in any size font. This one-page citation list would then be printed along with the area reading list and provided to the student in the envelope with their exam.

### **5. Qualifying Paper**

In addition to the written exam in one area of expertise, students must write a qualifying paper in the other area. Qualifying papers will be due on a date to be determined by the DGS in consultation with the exam committee chairs the semester prior. The due date is typically given towards the end of the term (about 12 weeks after the start of any semester). Students are free to submit any time before the deadline, as long as it is within that same semester. Failure to submit a topic, supplemental reading list, or paper on time (or a submission deemed acceptable by the Exam Committee), or to attend the oral defense, will constitute a failure, unless it is due to special circumstances as determined to be adequate by the Exam Committee in consultation with the DGS (see UD's excused absence policy for guidance).

The qualifying paper should focus on specific issues within the literature, foundational pieces on the topic, and conclude with more specificity and application of the material relevant to the student's interests within the broad area of study. It is up to the student, in consultation with the Exam Committee, to identify the paper topic and to ensure that it covers an appropriate breadth of material. Students are expected to develop their own supplemental reading list to supplement the Exam Committee's reading list with sources appropriate for their more specific topic (for example, by drawing on reference lists from published articles). The Exam Committee must approve the topic and scope of the qualifying paper, as well as the supplemental reading list. Member of the Exam Committee cannot read or provide feedback on paper drafts, though they can discuss and answer specific questions (either individually, or as a full committee). The qualifying paper should not be a dissertation proposal or the literature review of the proposal; rather, it intends to evaluate students' critical thinking/analytic skills. A good model is found in the articles published in refereed journals such as *Sociological Compass*. The paper must reflect the student's own work rather than work in collaboration with co-authors or faculty mentors.

After the student turns in the qualifying paper, the exam committee will meet with the student (within three weeks after the qualifying paper due date) to conduct an oral defense. The student will be asked to briefly present the paper, after which the Exam Committee members will ask questions related to: (1) Specific issues arising from their reading of the paper, and (2) How the paper topic relates to other literature/theories/topics in the broader subfield (e.g., as discussed in the readings on the Exam Committee's reading list). The Exam Committee members will consider both the paper and the oral defense when deciding the student's final grade.

### **6. Grading**

Chairs of the committees are responsible for notifying students of their exam results within three (3) weeks after the written exam date (written exam option) or the oral defense date (qualifying paper option). Committee Chairs are also required to notify the Department Administrative Assistant to the graduate program, the DGS and the GPC of the results of examinations.

The outcome of written exams and qualifying papers is determined by majority vote. There are four possible outcomes: Pass with distinction, Pass, Conditional outcome, Fail. Within one week of formal notification of the grade, students will receive a detailed evaluation in writing from the chair of the exam committee.

Conditional Outcomes: In the case of the written exam, a conditional outcome is given when the student failed one of the three questions. In the case of the qualifying paper, this results when the paper submission

and/or oral defense does not meet the standards of a passing grade but can be improved to a passable grade. The Exam Committee should decide and specify which part(s) need to be improved, the paper submission and/or oral defense, and should provide specific directions in the decision letter on how it should be improved. Students receiving a conditional outcome grade are required to complete additional work within two months of formal notification of the committee's decision (this includes completing the oral defense, if applicable). Failure to complete/submit the additional work will constitute a failure, unless it is due to special circumstances determined by the Exam Committee in consultation with the DGS. If the committee is satisfied with the quality of the work, the student will receive a grade of Pass. If the committee is not satisfied with the quality of the work, the student will receive a grade of Fail. Either a Pass or a Fail will be the final outcome of the exam.

**Failing Outcomes:** In the case of the written exam, a failing grade is given when the student failed two or more of the three questions. In the case of the qualifying paper, this result is given when the paper submission and/or oral defense does not meet the standards of a passing grade and cannot be reasonably revised/improved within the same semester to a passable grade. In the case of a failing grade, the student must retake the written exam or rewrite the qualifying paper and retake the oral defense in the following semester. In the case of the qualifying paper, students are not expected to 'start over' in a new area, but should revise the original submission, considering the comments of the Exam Committee. Students who fail a written exam or qualifying paper, or any part thereof, may request a re-reading from the original examination committee. This request should be submitted within 20 days of the student receiving the detailed written evaluation. If the student believes the qualifying paper and/or oral defense were not graded according to Graduate Policy procedures, or that the grade was inappropriate for some other reasons, the student should share with the Exam Committee what procedures/rules they believe were not followed, when requesting the re-reading and the Exam Committee should consider and address the specific point(s) raised by the student in their re-reading. If the student is not satisfied with the final committee decision, they may appeal to the Department Chair. At any time in the process, a student can move to the Graduate College appeals process, following the university policy on grade grievance (<https://www1.udel.edu/stuguide/23-24/grade-grievance.html>).

## ***7. Repeats of Examinations***

Only one repeat of an exam in any area of expertise is permitted. Failure on a repeat written exam or qualifying paper is a permanent failure for that area. Because students in the Criminology degree program are required to take the written exam or qualifying paper in Criminology, permanent failure in the Criminology area for these students results in dismissal from that degree and other options must be pursued. Three failures of Ph.D. written exams or qualifying papers in any combination shall result in dismissal from the program.

### **D. Admission to candidacy**

Formal Ph.D. candidacy follows the approval of the dissertation proposal. Procedures for admission to Ph.D. candidacy are as specified by the Graduate College. Admission to candidacy must be obtained before the deadlines specified in the academic calendar. Responsibility for seeing that admission is secured at the proper time rests with the student but must include the recommendation of the student's dissertation committee and the chairperson of the department. Students must complete and submit the required form.

### **E. Doctoral Dissertations**

#### ***1. Dissertation Committees***

It is the responsibility of the student to form a four-person Ph.D. dissertation committee, consisting of a chairperson(s), who must be a member of the department, and three additional members, two from within the department and one from an outside department (either external or internal to the University of Delaware). Faculty on joint appointments in the Department of Sociology and Criminal Justice are considered to be inside members of the department for the purposes of dissertation committees. Students who make timely progress are expected to have their topic, chairperson(s), and internal committee members confirmed in

writing by the end of the semester after the semester in which they pass their last comprehensive exam.

After obtaining the written agreement of all members of the committee, the student must notify the DGS about the formation of the committee. Subsequent changes in the composition of the dissertation committee also require notification to the DGS. Overlap in membership between the GPC and the dissertation committee does not require those involved to disqualify themselves.

Candidates without an approved dissertation committee may not enroll for more than three credits of dissertation research (SOC 964).

## **2. Dissertation Proposals**

It is required that students hold a dissertation proposal defense with their committee. Such a defense can be conducted either in person or via a telephone/video meeting. Dissertation proposals should be worked out with the advice of the dissertation committee. The student makes a copy of the proposal available to the departmental faculty at least 10 business days in advance of the scheduled dissertation proposal defense date.

The Committee Chair communicates final approval of the proposal to the DGS. A signed copy of the proposal is placed in the student's permanent file.

The student is responsible for initiating the paperwork necessary for admission to formal candidacy by the Graduate College. (Please consult the Graduate Catalog for specific time schedules).

## **3. The Ph.D. Dissertation**

Students are expected to prepare copies of the dissertation for the departmental archives, the chair of the committee, and those required by the Graduate College.

The bibliographic format and style of the dissertation must conform to the standards of the Graduate College.

## **4. Oral Defense of Dissertation**

An oral defense of the dissertation is required. It is administered by the dissertation committee. The student is responsible for notifying the faculty 10 days prior to the scheduled examination and to see that a copy of the dissertation is on file in the department office 10 days prior to the scheduled defense. The oral defense is open to the public, though the right of voting is reserved to the dissertation committee.

All other requirements for the degree must be completed before the oral defense of dissertation can be scheduled.

Grading is limited to Pass or Fail, and a majority vote is required for any action. It is the responsibility of the chairperson of the dissertation committee to notify the DGS of the decision of the dissertation committee.

# **X. PROGRAM EDUCATIONAL GOALS**

**A graduate of our M.A. in the Criminology program will be able to:**

*Articulate the central theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts of the discipline.*

*Apply criminological theories and methods to conduct research on complex questions and societal problems.*

*Demonstrate a capacity to communicate research findings to academic, policy, and lay audiences.*

*Incorporate ethical principles and practices into their subsequent work environment.*

*Recognize the cultural basis of criminology and acknowledge their own standpoint, with respect for the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.*

*Employ social science research and strategies to resolve challenges and empower people, and advocate for social justice and equity.*

**A graduate of our M.A. in the Sociology program will be able to:**

*Articulate the central theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts of the discipline.*

*Apply sociological theories and methods to conduct research on complex questions and societal problems.*

*Demonstrate a capacity to communicate research findings to academic, policy, and lay audiences.*

*Incorporate ethical principles and practices into their subsequent work environment.*

*Recognize the cultural basis of sociology and acknowledge their own standpoint, with respect for the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.*

*Employ social science research and strategies to resolve challenges and empower people, and advocate for social justice and equity.*

**A graduate of our Ph.D. in the Criminology program will be able to:**

*Articulate and possess a critical analysis of the central theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts of the discipline.*

*Demonstrate a mastery of multiple methodologies to conduct research on complex questions and social problems.*

*Demonstrate a capacity to communicate research findings to academic, policy, and lay audiences.*

*Conduct independent and collaborative research that is publishable in the criminological discipline's core peer-reviewed journals and/or as an academic book.*

*Establish competency in teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels and a commitment to advancing pedagogical knowledge within one's own teaching.*

*Incorporate ethical principles and practices into their research and teaching.*

*Recognize the cultural basis of criminology and acknowledge their own standpoint, with respect for the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.*

*Employ social science research strategies to resolve challenges and empower people, and advocate for social justice and equity.*

*Appreciate the landscape and professional norms of pursuing an academic, government, or non-profit sector career in the criminology discipline.*

**A graduate of our Ph.D. in the Sociology program will be able to:**

*Articulate and possess a critical analysis of the central theories, perspectives, principles, and concepts of the discipline.*

*Demonstrate a mastery of multiple methodologies to conduct research on complex questions and social problems.*

*Demonstrate a capacity to communicate research findings to academic, policy, and lay audiences.*

*Conduct independent and collaborative research that is publishable in the sociological discipline's core peer-reviewed journals and/or as an academic book.*

*Establish competency in teaching at the undergraduate and graduate levels and a commitment to advancing pedagogical knowledge within one's own teaching.*

*Incorporate ethical principles and practices into their research and teaching.*

*Recognize the cultural basis of sociology and acknowledge their own standpoint, with respect for the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion.*

*Employ social science research strategies to resolve challenges and empower people, and advocate for social justice and equity.*

*Appreciate the landscape and professional norms of pursuing an academic, government, or non-profit sector career in the sociology discipline.*

## **XI. INSTRUCTIONAL EDUCATION FOR TEACHING ASSISTANTS**



The majority of graduate students in Sociology and Criminology are pursuing Ph.D.'s in preparation for a career in higher education. Therefore, we are committed to providing our students with a broad and systematic set of instructional experiences as an integral part of their graduate education.

This will normally include the following elements:

**A. TA Orientation:**

All incoming students holding a teaching assistantship are required to participate in the Teaching Assistant Orientation organized by the Graduate College.

**B. Mentoring Experiences:**

All faculty have accumulated a storehouse of knowledge and skills that they can and should share with students as part of an "every faculty as mentor" approach to the teaching enterprise. Therefore, faculty supervising TAs are expected to offer students meaningful introductory instructional experiences commensurate with students' experience and ability. Included among the suggested activities are preparing exams, handling review sessions, developing a lecture or a seminar session, developing a rubric and assisting with grading. We envision a process of planning, supervision and feedback for each of these activities.

**C. Instruction in Teaching Techniques:**

All Ph.D. students are required to enroll in a one-semester, one-credit Pass-Fail course in teaching techniques (SOCI 698: Teaching Social Science or UNIV 601: Pedagogy or UNIV 600: Learning). It will focus on some of the central elements in course preparation and instruction, instructional philosophy, textbook evaluation, selection of reading assignments, syllabus preparation, managing large and small classes, developing lecture outlines and student evaluation techniques.

**D. Individual Courses:**

Students who have completed all course requirements and the comprehensive exams and are in good academic standing may be given the opportunity to teach undergraduate courses independently, depending on availability of departmental funding. Students are expected to discuss their intentions with their dissertation advisor (or faculty mentor). The availability of such an assignment depends on funding, as determined by the Department Chair; specific assignments are decided by Associate Chairs in consultation with the DGS. Students have the responsibility of enlisting the cooperation of a faculty mentor of their choice to provide advice and assist in assessing their effectiveness.

## **XII. ADDENDUM**

**A. Independent Studies (SOCI 666)**

Independent study courses are not required. Rather, they are designed to provide students with the opportunity to take a course in an area or on a topic that is not offered by the Department but which is crucial to their area(s) of specialization.

**B. Pre-candidacy Credits (SOCI 964)**

Pre-candidacy credits are taken in preparation for the dissertation. They are taken after all required coursework has been completed but when students have not yet passed their comprehensive examinations and have not yet had their proposal approved. Students may enroll for anywhere from 3 to 12 credits. Pre-candidacy credits are not required. If the student registered in Pre-Candidacy is admitted to candidacy before the end of the free drop/add period of the next semester, the registration in Pre-Candidacy Study (964) for the preceding semester may be changed to Doctoral dissertation (SOC 969). Once a student has passed their comprehensive examinations and has an approved proposal on file, Pre-Candidacy credits can be used as

Doctoral Dissertation credits as described in the previous sentence. In order to do so, the student must contact the Associate Provost in the Graduate College. While these are not independent studies, a student must enroll using a faculty member's supervised study number. It is typical that a student will enroll with the faculty member who will be chairing their dissertation. The grading for this course is Pass/Fail.

### **C. Dissertation Credits (SOCI 969)**

Once a student has passed their comprehensive examinations and has an approved proposal on file, they enroll for 9 dissertation credits. While these are not independent studies, a student must enroll using a faculty member's supervised study number with the faculty member who is chairing their dissertation. A student may enroll for all nine credits in one semester. A student who wishes to enroll in 6 one semester and 3 in another must augment those 3 dissertation credits with 3 more credits from another source including: A course, an independent study, or 3 additional dissertation credits in order to maintain full-time status. The grading for this course is Pass/Fail.

### **D. Doctoral Sustaining (UNIV 999)**

Doctoral sustaining is for students who are ABD. They will have passed their comprehensive examinations, have an approved proposal on file, and have all 9 dissertation credits completed. Enrolling for doctoral sustaining implies that a student is working full-time on their dissertation and confers full-time status on that student.

### **E. Forms**

Below is a list of the forms that students must complete as they progress through the program. Copies of the forms are available in the Departmental office and online.

**Important:** Students are responsible for the submission of all forms. Dates and deadlines can be found on the Graduate College homepage ([www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/grad](http://www.udel.edu/academics/colleges/grad)) under "CURRENT STUDENTS."

1. "Application for Advanced Degree" form. Submitted in the semester you plan to graduate. Students completing the M.A. degree who intend to continue in the Ph.D. program must fill out and attach the "Change of Classification" form. (To graduate as M.A. and as Ph.D.)
2. "Supervisory Committee Notification" form. Submitted to Department when members of the M.A. thesis committee or Ph.D. dissertation committee have been formally selected and agreed to serve.
3. "Dissertation Committee Confirmation" form. Submitted to the Graduate College after successful completion of the comprehensive examinations when members of the defense committee have been formally selected and agreed to serve.
4. "Recommendation for Candidacy" form. Submitted after dissertation proposal has been approved.
5. "Doctoral Dissertation Defense Notification" form. Submitted prior to a defense.
6. "Dissertation Defense Certification" form. Submitted after the defense.

### **F. Appeals**

Students may appeal decisions of the GPC following this procedure:

1. Petition the GPC for reconsideration by adding additional information that the applicant feels may be significant.
2. In the event the GPC does not change its decision, students may petition the full faculty. A 3/4 vote is required to overrule the GPC.

Students who allege they have been aggrieved because of perceived discrimination or because a member of the University community fails to follow published University or Departmental procedures should utilize the Student Grievance Procedure stipulated by University policy. Please see policies and resources in sections G and H of this Addendum.

## **G. Non-Discrimination Statement**

July 2016

The University of Delaware does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, veteran status, gender identity or expression, or sexual orientation, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in its employment, educational programs and activities, admissions policies, and scholarship and loan programs as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. The University of Delaware also prohibits unlawful harassment including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

For inquiries or complaints related to Title IX, please contact:

Director, Institutional Equity & Title IX

Coordinator 305 Hullihen Hall

Newark, DE 19716

(302) 831-8063

[titleixcoordinator@udel.edu](mailto:titleixcoordinator@udel.edu)

For complaints related to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and/or the Americans with Disabilities Act, please contact:

Director, Office of Disability Support Services

Alison Hall, Suite 130,

Newark, DE 19716

(302) 831-4643

For complaints related to Title VII and age discrimination, please contact:

Director, Employee Relations

Department of Human Resources

413 Academy Street

Newark, DE 19716

(302) 831-2171

OR contact the U.S. Department of Education - Office for Civil Rights

(<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/index.html>).

Abridged Version – The University of Delaware is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and Title IX institution. For the University's complete non-discrimination statement, please visit <http://www.udel.edu/home/legal-notice/>

## **H. Resources**

Several resources are available for students who seek help with academic and personal needs, including:

- Center for Counseling and Student Development
- Office of Disability Support Services
  - Any graduate student who may need disability-related accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Support Services (DSS). Contact DSS by phone: 302-831-4643; fax: 302-831-3261; website: [www.udel.edu/dss](http://www.udel.edu/dss); email: [dssoffice@udel.edu](mailto:dssoffice@udel.edu); or visit 240 Academy Street, Alison Hall Suite 130 during business hours (8-5 M-F)

- Center for Black Culture
- Office of Equity and Inclusion
- University Writing Center
- Center for Teaching & Assessment of Learning
- Research Office
- Graduate College
- Student Guide to University Policies.

Students should also be aware of University policies on behavior, including academic honesty, which can be found in the student guide to university policies. Note that graduate students who supervise undergraduates through TA or RA responsibilities may also be held to standards of the faculty handbook.