

Graduate Student Handbook

**Department of Sociology
The University of Memphis**

2024

* This document contains key information for graduate students in the Department of Sociology at the University of Memphis. Some information is drawn directly from the University's 2024–2025 *Graduate Catalog*. However, this document is not a substitute for the *Graduate Catalog*. For complete details on campus-wide policies and procedures that affect graduate students, consult the *Graduate Catalog* and the University of Memphis *Student Handbook*.

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Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Sociology, The University of Memphis

I. Graduate Program in Sociology

A. Introduction to the Program

The Department offers graduate studies leading to the Master of Arts degree in Sociology. Training in theory, research methods, and statistics is required of all students. In addition, the program offers a wide selection of courses in many substantive areas such as race, class, and gender studies; stratification; globalization and social change; family; deviance; organizations; religion; and medical sociology.

The program provides opportunities to develop skills and interests in specific specialty areas while obtaining a solid grounding in sociological theory and social science research methods. It also offers a high level of student-faculty interaction and the opportunity to participate in supervised research. The exposure to a full range of sociological specialties allows our graduates to apply to and be accepted by a wide range of Ph.D. programs. It is also appropriate for students who want to apply to law schools or other professional programs or work in areas of applied research.

Two degree options are available to students pursuing the Master's in Sociology:

1. A thesis program: 24 hours of graduate course work plus six hours of credit for writing a thesis.
2. A non-thesis program: 33 hours of graduate course work with both written and oral comprehensive examinations that cover sociological theory, research methods, and statistics.

B. Advising

Students are advised by the department's Graduate Coordinator who assists them in course planning and keeps them informed of departmental, college, and university requirements and policies. Students should consult with the Graduate Coordinator often.

II. Program Requirements

Students may choose between a thesis program or a non-thesis program. The requirements for each are listed below. All students, whether they select the thesis program or the non-thesis program, must take three required core courses:

- SOCI 6312: Intermediate Social Statistics
- SOCI 7210: Theory Seminar
- SOCI 7320: Seminar in Methods of Social Research

Students must earn a minimum grade of “B” (3.0) in each core course. *Students who earn less than a “B” in a core course must retake the course.* Graduate School policy states “No course may be repeated more than once to improve the grade. Only the grade earned in the second attempt will be included in the computation of the cumulative grade point average” (GPA). No more than two courses may be repeated to improve a grade (see the “Academic Regulations” section of the *Graduate Catalog*.)

A. Thesis Program

- 30 semester hours of graduate level work, which include 24–27 hours of course work and a minimum of three hours and a maximum of six hours of SOCI 7996: Thesis.
- Only six hours of course work can be at the 6000 level.
- No more than six semester hours of Directed Individual Study (SOCI 7912) can be applied to degree requirements.
- Only nine hours involving some combination of Directed Individual Study and courses outside of sociology may count toward degree requirements.
- The student must pass an oral thesis defense that counts as a thesis defense and a comprehensive exam.

B. Non-Thesis Program

- 33 semester hours of graduate course work, only six hours of which can be at the 6000 level.
- At least 27 semester hours of graduate course work must be in sociology.
- No more than six semester hours of Directed Individual Study (SOCI 7912) can be applied to degree requirements.
- Only nine hours involving some combination of Directed Individual Study and courses outside of sociology may count toward degree requirements.
- The student must pass a comprehensive examination that includes a written and an oral component. The exam covers sociological theory, sociological research methods, and statistics.

III. Graduate Curriculum

A. Course Cognates

Graduate level courses are listed at the 6000, 7000, and 8000 levels. Courses offered at the 6000 level are co-listed at the 4000 level and are open to graduate students and undergraduate students. Graduate students should enroll for these courses at the 6000 level. Requirements for graduate students in 4000/6000 level courses are more stringent than those for undergraduate students.

Many courses listed at the 7000 level are also co-listed at the 8000 level and are open only to graduate students. Master's level students should enroll for these courses at the 7000 level. PhD students enroll for them at the 8000 level.

B. Course Offerings

Students should consult the University's online *Graduate Catalog* for current information on courses, course descriptions, credit hours, and prerequisites:

<https://catalog.memphis.edu/index.php>

The Department offers Directed Individual Study (DIS) courses that allow students to undertake advanced reading and/or research in special areas of interest. DIS courses are reserved for cases when the goals and content of study cannot be acquired in a specific course in the current Sociology curriculum.

Before taking a DIS course, students must receive the permission of a faculty member willing to supervise the DIS, the Graduate Coordinator, and the department Chair. The faculty member will prepare a contract for the course of study, which the faculty member and student should date and sign. The contract should be filed with the Graduate Coordinator for placement in the student's permanent file. The student and faculty member will also develop a syllabus for the course. Templates for the contract and syllabus can be obtained from the Graduate Coordinator.

Students receive grades of A–F or IP (in progress). Students cannot receive an incomplete ("I") for an unfinished DIS. If a student does not complete a DIS within one semester, the faculty member supervising the DIS may give the student an "F" or an "IP." If the student is given an "IP," the student must enroll for additional DIS credit hours the following semester. A grade of "IP" does not carry any quality points and is not included in computing the GPA (see the "Academic Regulations" section of the *Graduate Catalog*).

C. Course Scheduling

Required courses (SOC 6312: Intermediate Social Statistics, SOC 7210: Theory Seminar, and SOC 7320: Seminar in Methods of Social Research) should be taken as early in the student's program as possible. SOC 7210 and SOC 7320 are offered every fall semester, and SOC 6312 is offered every spring semester.

To ensure broad coverage of the discipline, the Department offers as many different courses as possible over four consecutive semesters (not counting summer sessions). Other than required courses, we rarely offer the same course more than once in a two-year period. Thus, students should enroll for desired electives as soon as they are offered, as these electives are unlikely to be offered again during their course of study.

IV. Policies and Procedures

A. Continuous Enrollment

Once accepted into the sociology graduate program, a student must enroll every semester thereafter (excluding summer sessions). If a student fails to do so, they must apply for readmission, which may or may not be granted. Readmitted students follow the rules and degree requirements listed in the most current *Graduate Catalog* (see the *Graduate Catalog* for additional information about readmission).

Students writing a thesis must enroll for at least one hour of thesis credit every fall and spring semester until the thesis is complete. Failure to do so will result in the student being charged tuition for each semester he or she did not enroll (see *Graduate Catalog*).

If a student completes a thesis during a summer term, they must be enrolled during that term (see the *Graduate Catalog* for exceptions to this policy).

B. Non-Degree Students Who Matriculate to the Sociology Master's Program

Students enrolled in graduate courses at the University of Memphis but who have not been accepted into a graduate program have graduate non-degree status. Non-degree students who decide to matriculate for a degree in sociology must apply to the Graduate School and meet all admissions requirements for the Graduate School and the Department of Sociology.

Non-degree students who are accepted into sociology's graduate program may apply 12 graduate credit hours earned while a non-degree student to degree requirements in sociology. However, at least six of these hours must be in graduate level sociology courses (excluding Directed Individual Studies hours). In addition, grades of "C+" or lower earned while a non-degree student will not be applied toward degree requirements in sociology.

Graduate School policy requires that "before registering for a second semester of graduate level coursework, the non-degree student must sign a release agreeing that additional coursework will not apply to degree programs" (see the *Graduate Catalog*).

Non-degree students cannot be awarded graduate assistantships.

C. Academic Probation and Departmental Review

A graduate student whose cumulative GPA in sociology drops below 3.00 will be placed on departmental review. Being on departmental review at the conclusion of a subsequent semester may result in suspension. Conditions under which continuation in the program beyond two or more semesters on departmental review will be granted must be

recommended by the department's Graduate Committee and the department Chair. If, in the opinion of the Graduate Committee, the Chair, the College of Arts and Sciences' Associate Dean of Graduate Programs and Research, and the Vice Provost for Graduate Programs, the student is not making satisfactory progress toward degree completion, the student will be dismissed from the degree program. Students are ineligible for graduate assistantships while on departmental review but may apply/reapply for an assistantship once their departmental review status has been removed.

D. Incomplete Grades

According to Graduate School policy, students must complete the requirements to remove a grade of "I" (incomplete) within the next major term in which it was received. An incomplete not removed within one semester changes to an "F." If unusual circumstances prevent the student from removing the "I" within the next major term, the faculty member may grant an extension. It is the student's responsibility to request an extension.

Students who receive an "I" that changes to an "F" may submit a written request to the Graduate Committee for a grade change. The request must be made after the student has completed requirements for the course and must spell out the reasons why the student was unable to complete the requirements for the course prior to the "I" becoming an "F." In addition, the request must be made within one year of the beginning of the semester or term in which the student enrolled in the course. If the faculty member who gave the student the "I" and the Graduate Committee agree that extraordinary circumstances prevented the student from completing requirements for the course before the "I" changed to an "F," they will recommend to the department Chair that the student's "F" be changed. If the Chair agrees with the recommendation of the faculty member and the Graduate Committee, the Chair will recommend to the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate Studies that the student's grade be changed.

E. Course Load Restrictions

Graduate students generally are not permitted to take more than 15 semester hours during regular sessions or more than 12 semester hours during summer sessions.

University-funded graduate assistants must register for at least nine hours of credit per semester. Students in their terminal semester may take fewer than nine hours and still be considered full-time students for reasons of funding and visa requirements. Requests to take more than 15 semester hours require the approval of the Graduate Coordinator. Courses graded "U" or "S" do not count toward degree requirements.

F. Time Limitations

According to Graduate School policy, "For a master's degree all coursework needs to be completed within eight years."

Students may request the option of validating old courses as described in the Academic Regulations section of the *Graduate Catalog*:

<https://catalog.memphis.edu/content.php?catoid=32&navoid=1900#time-limitations-and-course-validation>

The course validation form can be accessed at:

<https://umwa.memphis.edu/creditbyexam/index.php/main>

The department also has the option of submitting a form to the graduate school to waive validation.

G. Classroom Conduct

The University of Memphis' "Graduate Student Rights and Responsibilities" document states that students have a responsibility to "behave in a professional and appropriate manner in class." The Department of Sociology expects all students to take this responsibility seriously. Students should familiarize themselves with the entire document, which can be accessed at:

https://www.memphis.edu/gsa/about/rights_and_responsibilities.php

The Department expects students to attend all class meetings and encourages students to attend departmental activities/events (e.g., research presentations, social gatherings, etc.).

H. Academic Misconduct

The Department of Sociology does not tolerate any form of academic misconduct (cheating, plagiarizing, forgery, or falsification). Students should familiarize themselves with the University's definition of academic misconduct, which can be found in:

<https://www.memphis.edu/osa/students/academic-misconduct.php>

They should also familiarize themselves with:

- The Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities:
<https://www.memphis.edu/osa/students/code-of-rights.php>
- Procedures for academic discipline:
https://www.memphis.edu/osa/faculty/academic_misconduct.php

To ensure the academic integrity of students' written work, sociology professors may require students to submit their written work to <https://turnitin.com/>, which uses an online database to determine the "originality" of written work.

V. Graduate Student Resources

A. Financial Aid

The University Financial Aid Office (103 Wilder Tower, 901-678-4825) provides information on a variety of forms of financial support (loans, scholarships, etc.). Visit their website <https://www.memphis.edu/financialaid> for additional information.

B. Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Assistantships. The Department of Sociology awards full-time and part-time graduate assistantships to its most qualified applicants. Full-time assistantships require 20 hours of work per week in the department, pay a monthly stipend for eight months, and include a full tuition and fee waiver (including out-of-state or international tuition, if applicable). Part-time assistantships require 10 hours of work per week, pay a monthly stipend for eight months, and include a waiver of half the student's tuition and fees. Students who receive full-time or part-time assistantships must enroll for nine graduate credit hours per semester, maintain satisfactory work performance, and maintain a GPA of 3.0 or higher.

Students awarded an assistantship when they first enter our program typically remain on the assistantship for four consecutive semesters (excluding summer terms). Students awarded an assistantship after completing one, two, or three semesters of coursework in our program typically remain on the assistantship for three, two, or one semester, respectively.

Graduate assistant duties include assisting faculty members with scholarly activities and research. Faculty and students will be guided by the American Sociological Association's Code of Ethics for issues in professional work. The guidelines appear on the ASA website at: <https://www.asanet.org/about/ethics/>

Assistantships are designed to enhance the student's scholarly and professional development. All activities of graduate assistants are to be carried out under the supervision and direction of faculty. Specific tasks vary. Scholarly activities may include but are not limited to the following:

- Library research: conducting literature searches; obtaining copies of published articles, books, or government documents; information gathering from the Internet
- Data collection and management
- Data analysis
- Preparation of papers and presentations for professional meetings
- Using and/or developing technology to assist classroom instruction
- Proctoring exams
- Opportunities to guest lecture

Graduate assistants are expected to:

- Complete assignments thoroughly and in a timely manner
- Maintain communication with the department office, the Graduate Coordinator, and the assigned faculty member

Work Study. Students who apply for a graduate assistantship should also apply for work study support through the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Graduate assistants who apply and qualify for this support *earn more* as graduate assistants than students who do not apply.

To receive priority consideration for work study support, students should apply by March 1 for the fall semester and by October 1 for the spring semester. The University's Financial Aid website (<https://www.memphis.edu/financialaid/>) explains how to begin the process. You can access the electronic form at <https://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa>

GA and Work Study Contracts. GA and work study contracts should reach the Graduate School by early August and MUST reach the Graduate School by the 4th day of classes. *It is the student's responsibility to sign her/his contract in a timely manner.* Students who do not sign their contracts in time to be turned in to the Graduate School by the 4th day of classes *will not receive tuition and fees waivers.*

C. Teaching Assistantships

Teaching Assistantships. Students who have taken the required graduate theory, methods, and statistics courses; who have a total of at least 18 hours of graduate coursework in sociology; and who have a 3.3 or higher graduate level GPA may apply for a teaching assistantship (TA). Students apply by having a faculty member write a letter to the Graduate Committee that spells out why the student is qualified to teach. Students who are awarded a TA teach one section of Introductory Sociology per semester. Prior to teaching the course for the first time, students must:

- attend a department-sponsored teaching workshop,
- attend a university-sponsored teaching workshop,
- draft a course syllabus and other materials (the syllabus will be reviewed by one or more faculty members and returned to the student for changes),
- attend several meetings of an Introductory Sociology class taught by an experienced teacher,
- become familiar with the Department of Sociology's *Handbook for Adjunct Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants* (which can be obtained from the Department's Administrative Assistant) and with teaching policies and procedures as described in the *Faculty Handbook*,
- agree to have a faculty member attend several of the student's class meetings and give the student feedback on his/her teaching.

Students who teach their own courses should rank their teaching responsibilities among their highest priorities. Such practices as cancelling class without finding a substitute, arriving to class late, letting class out early, being unprepared for class, and failing to grade student tests and assignments in a timely manner are unacceptable. A more complete list of TA responsibilities can be found in the Department's *Handbook for Adjunct Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants* and the *Faculty Handbook*. Students who are unable to give teaching responsibilities high priority should not apply for teaching assistantships.

D. Travel to Professional Meetings

We strongly encourage our graduate students to present their research in professional settings. Subject to availability of funds, students may request travel funds if they present a research paper or poster at an appropriate professional association conference. Students can apply for additional travel funds through:

- Travel Enrichment Funds awarded by The University of Memphis: https://www.memphis.edu/cas/faculty-resources/research_grants_funding/travel_enrichment_fund.php
- The Graduate Student Association: <https://www.memphis.edu/gsa/travel/>

E. Support for Thesis and Other Student Research

To carry out thesis projects, students may need financial assistance to cover the costs of such things as supplies and data sets. The Department makes every attempt to provide financial support for these projects.

The University of Memphis is a member of the Inter-University Consortium on Political and Social Research (ICPSR) (<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/web/pages/>). This resource gives students access to a wide range of data sets that can be used for thesis and independent research projects. Students also have access to a large number of public-use online data sets not included in ICPSR (see Appendix B).

A computer lab with a wide array of current software programs is located in Clement Hall room 219 and available for student use. Students also have free access to software programs (such as SPSS, Stata, SAS, etc.) through the university's umApps service: <https://www.memphis.edu/umtech/solutions/umapps.php>

F. Student Paper Award

Every year we have a graduate student paper award. The papers are judged by the Graduate Committee on their originality, organization, substantive content, and written competence. The winner is encouraged to submit their paper for presentation at a professional conference.

VI. Procedures for Writing a Master's Thesis

A. Thesis Committee

Students who plan to write a thesis must first select a committee Chair. Together the student and Chair will select at least two faculty members to compose a thesis committee. Each committee member must hold graduate faculty status as a full member, associate member, or external member. Full or associate graduate faculty may chair committees. Only one external graduate faculty member may serve as a committee member.

One member of the committee may be from a department other than sociology. However, the student should have a good reason for including a non-sociologist on their committee (e.g., the non-sociologist has specialty area expertise or methodological or statistical skills relevant to the student's thesis project). If a non-sociologist can contribute to the student's thesis research, including them on the committee *is not discouraged*.

Once the student has selected a thesis committee, they should submit a **Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee Appointment Form** to the College Director of Graduate Studies. A copy should also be given to the Department of Sociology's Graduate Coordinator for placement in the student's permanent file. Ideally, full-time students should file this form before their third semester of coursework. The form can be completed and signed electronically with Etrieve SoftDocs:

<https://memphiscentral.etrieve.cloud/Index#/form/408>

B. Thesis Proposal Defense and Selecting the Thesis/Non-Thesis Option

Full-time students who select the thesis option should defend their thesis proposal *in their third semester of coursework* (See Appendix C for resources that will assist students in writing a proposal). **Any student who has not defended a proposal after accumulating 33 credit hours will automatically be assigned to the non-thesis option and will be expected to take the written and oral comprehensive exam as soon as possible.** Courses graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory ("S/U") do not count in the 33 hours, but thesis hours do.

After students successfully defend their proposal, they must file the **Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Defense Form** with the College Director of Graduate Studies. **Upon submission of a copy to the Graduate Coordinator, the student has formally selected the "thesis option."** Students are assumed to be on the non-thesis track until they submit this form. The form can be accessed by going to:

https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/pdfs/forms/tdproposal_newupdate.pdf

If a student decides to change from the thesis option to the non-thesis option, they must inform the Graduate Coordinator in writing of the change and submit the necessary Graduate School form. Any thesis hours the student has accumulated will not count toward the 33 hours of coursework needed for the non-thesis option.

C. Thesis Preparation and Defense

Students should familiarize themselves with the **Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Guide** (https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/td-prep.php) as soon as they start work on their thesis. This Guide contains information on thesis formatting (e.g., requirements for the Table of Contents, margins, type of paper, table formats, etc.) that must be followed to meet Graduate School requirements. The “Resources for Graduate Students” section of Appendix C includes resources that will assist students in writing their thesis.

When the student has completed their thesis to the satisfaction of their Thesis Committee Chair, their Committee Chair should schedule a thesis defense meeting *with all Graduate School thesis deadlines in mind*. The Graduate Coordinator will keep students and faculty informed of these deadlines, but ultimately *it is the student’s responsibility and their Committee Chair’s responsibility to be aware of all Graduate School deadlines*. These deadlines are posted at:

https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation.php

The oral Thesis Defense counts as *both a thesis defense and a comprehensive exam*. During the defense, students are asked broad questions covering the breadth of coursework as well as the thesis content.

After the student’s thesis defense, both a **Comprehensive Exam Results Form** (<https://memphiscentral.etrive.cloud/#/form/390>) and a **Thesis Defense Results Form** (<https://memphiscentral.etrive.cloud/#/form/335>) must be electronically signed and submitted using Etrieve SoftDocs. Copies of these forms should also be submitted to the Department of Sociology’s Graduate Coordinator for placement in the student’s permanent file.

The **Thesis/Dissertation Checklist** must be submitted to the Graduate School with the defended and corrected copy of the thesis. Both the student and the major professor must check all applicable items and sign at the bottom. The Checklist can be accessed at https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/pdfs/forms/td_checklist2023.pdf

D. Timeline for Thesis Option Students

Full-time students who select the thesis option should meet the following deadlines to ensure timely completion of the thesis. The Graduate Coordinator will make adjustments to these deadlines for part-time students.

1. Select a Thesis Committee and turn in the **Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee Form** before the beginning of the third semester of study (before enrolling for more than 18 hours of coursework that count toward degree requirements).

2. (For students collecting their own data) – Gain Institutional Review Board (human rights) approval for the thesis after submitting the Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee form and before defending the thesis proposal. Before applying for IRB approval, students should review the learning modules at the Education in Responsible Conduct in Research website. Applicants for IRB approval need to provide documentation that they have reviewed these modules. For more information, go to the IRB website:
<https://www.memphis.edu/research/researchers/compliance/irb/index.php>
3. Defend the Thesis Proposal during the third semester of coursework and by the end of the third semester at the latest (before completing 27 hours of coursework that count toward degree requirements). Any student who has not defended a thesis proposal after 33 credit hours will automatically be assigned to the non-thesis option. Courses graded satisfactory/unsatisfactory (“S/U”) do not count in the 33 hours, but thesis hours do.
4. Defend the thesis during the fourth semester of coursework.

VII. Protocol for the Administration and Evaluation of Comprehensive Examinations

A. Administration of Comprehensive Examinations

Students who write a thesis do not take comprehensive exams. As mentioned above, the oral thesis defense counts as both a thesis defense and as a comprehensive exam for students who select the thesis option. During the thesis oral defense, students are asked general questions covering the breadth of coursework as well as specific questions regarding the thesis content.

Students who select the non-thesis option are required to take a comprehensive examination that includes a take-home, open-book, written component and an oral component. The exam covers sociological theory, research methods, and statistics. The student will not be expected to answer all the questions on the examination but will be given options to select or omit certain questions. A bank of questions previously asked on the exams, along with some other potential questions, will be made available. However, there is no guarantee that all, or even any of the questions on a particular examination will be drawn from the bank.

The examination will be distributed on a Wednesday and will be due by noon, a week from the following Friday (about 10 days later). Examinations are to be turned in electronically in Microsoft Word format. Supplementary materials, such as output from statistical or graphing programs may be turned in as appendices either in their native format or as PDF files. Such materials should be carefully cross-referenced in the Microsoft Word document. Students are required to work independently. The Comprehensive Examination will be administered and evaluated by the Sociology Graduate Faculty (See Section IX). During the oral defense, committee members may ask any question. However, questions typically focus on apparent deficiencies in the student's written answers. Thus, students are strongly encouraged to prepare for the oral defense by studying material they believe could help them strengthen their written answers.

Upon completion of the oral defense, a **Comprehensive Exam Results** form must be electronically completed and signed using Etrieve SoftDocs:

<https://memphiscentral.etrieve.cloud/#!/form/390>

It is the responsibility of the Comprehensive Exam Committee to submit this form to both the College Director of Graduate Studies and to the Department's Graduate Coordinator.

Comprehensive exams are scheduled by the Graduate Coordinator and are typically offered twice a year (late October and early April). Students usually take the exam in their last semester of coursework. Typically, the oral defense is held on a Friday approximately one to two weeks after the written component has been turned in. The date for the administration of the written component, the date the written component is due, and the

date orals will be held will be announced early each semester. Students planning to take the Comprehensive Exam in a particular semester must inform the Graduate Coordinator in writing no later than the Friday of the first full week of classes.

B. Evaluation of Comprehensive Examinations

A departmental Comprehensive Examination Committee writes and evaluates the comprehensive examination. The departmental Comprehensive Examination Committee will be comprised of three members of the graduate faculty. The Chair of the Committee will rotate among the members of the graduate faculty.

The student's overall performance on the written and oral components of the exam must be acceptable to the Examination Committee. A favorable vote by a majority of the committee members is needed for the student to pass the examination. However, the student's Committee may decide that the student needs to revise sections of the written exam it deems to be deficient. The Committee decides how much time to give the student to complete the re-write and whether a second oral defense is needed.

VIII. Procedures and Criteria for Graduation

A. Admission to Candidacy

The following University requirements must be met during the semester the student graduates:

- Students must 1. apply to graduate and 2. submit the Master's Degree Candidacy form *by the deadline* set by the Graduate School. Instructions on how to apply for graduation and complete the Master's Degree Candidacy form can be found here: https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation.php
- The Master's Degree Candidacy form must be electronically completed and signed using Etrieve Softdocs: <https://memphiscentral.etrieve.cloud/#/form/357>
- The deadline to apply to graduate and submit the candidacy form typically occurs during the second week of the fall and spring semesters. Graduate School policy states, "We strongly recommend that you send the candidacy form to your departmental advisor at least 1–2 weeks prior to the submission deadline so that the form will reach the Graduation Analyst by the required deadlines. Any received after the deadline will NOT be approved."
- The Graduate Coordinator will keep students informed of all deadlines related to graduation. Ultimately, however, *it is the student's responsibility to know and meet these deadlines*. The deadlines can be found at: https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool-archive/current_students/graduation_information/graduation_deadlines.php
- Graduate School policy requires that the student's graduate-level GPA is 3.0 or higher at the time the Application to Graduate is filed (see the *Graduate Catalog*). Grades of "D" or "F" do not count toward graduate degree requirements but are computed in the GPA. No more than seven hours of "C+," "C," or "C-" count toward degree requirements. Courses which are graded "U" or "S" do not count toward degree requirements.

B. Enrollment Requirements

Students must be enrolled during the semester they defend the thesis. In addition, they must be enrolled during the semester they intend to graduate, regardless of when the comprehensive exam was taken. However, if students defend their thesis after the spring deadline and before the first summer school session starts, they may graduate in August without enrolling for summer semester.

IX. Sociology Graduate Faculty

Full Members

WESLEY JAMES, *Professor*, PhD (2009), Mississippi State University

JOSEPH LARISCY, *Associate Professor*, PhD (2013), University of Texas at Austin

SUNAH LAYBOURN, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2018), University of Maryland

JENI LOFTUS, *Associate Professor*, PhD (2004), Indiana University

GRETCHEN PETERSON, *Professor*, PhD (2000), University of Arizona

CAROL RAMBO, *Professor*, PhD (1993), University of Florida

JUNMIN WANG, *Professor*, PhD (2007), New York University

Associate Members

JOANNA BOUDREAUX, *Assistant Professor of Teaching*, PhD (2022), University of Memphis

SIMRANJIT KHALSA, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2020), Rice University

ANTHONY STONE, *Assistant Professor*, PhD (2023), University of Cincinnati

X. Appendix

A. Graduate Student Forms and Links

Graduation Deadlines and Forms

- [Graduation Deadlines](#)
- [Apply to Graduate](#)
- [Master's Degree Candidacy](#)
- [Cap & Gown Order Form](#)
- [Comprehensive Exam Results Form](#)

Thesis Information and Forms

- [Thesis/Dissertation Faculty Committee Appointment form](#)
- [Thesis/Dissertation Preparation Guide](#)
- [Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Defense Form](#)
- [Thesis/Dissertation Defense Results Form](#)
- [Thesis/Dissertation Checklist](#)
- [UofM Institutional Review Board](#)
- [Comprehensive list of online forms of the Graduate School](#)

Application Forms

- [Graduate School application](#)
- [Application for Graduate Admission/Assistantship in Sociology](#)
- [Federal Government FAFSA website](#) (Click to apply for federal student aid and select work study option)
- How to Apply for [Travel Funds](#) through the Graduate Student Association
- [Travel Enrichment Fund](#)

Other Links

- [2024–2025 Graduate School Catalog](#)

B. Data Sets Students Can Use for Thesis or Other Research

[Inter-university Consortium of Political and Social Research \(ICPSR\)](#)

[Integrated Public-Use Microdata Series \(IPUMS\)](#)

U.S. Census Bureau

[Decennial Census](#)

[Current Population Survey](#)

[American Community Survey](#)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

[CDC Wonder](#)

[Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System \(BRFSS\)](#)

National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS)

[Vital Statistics](#)

[National Health and Nutrition Survey \(NHANES\)](#)

[National Health Interview Survey \(NHIS\)](#)

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES)

[Early Childhood Longitudinal Survey \(Kindergarten Cohort\) ECLS](#)

[Early Childhood Longitudinal Survey \(Birth Cohort\) ECLS](#)

[Education Longitudinal Study of 2002--ELS](#)

[High School and Beyond \(HS&B\)](#)

[National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 \(NELS\)](#)

Other data sources

[Association of Religion Data Archives \(ARDA\)](#)

[General Social Survey \(GSS\)](#)

[National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent to Adult Health \(AddHealth\)](#)

[Panel Study of Income Dynamics](#)

C. Resources for Graduate Students

Professional Associations

Conferences regularly attended by UofM faculty and students:

[Southern Sociological Society \(SSS\)](#)
[Southern Demographic Association \(SDA\)](#)
[American Sociological Association \(ASA\)](#)
[Population Association of America \(PAA\)](#)

Other professional associations:

[Association of Black Sociologists \(ABS\)](#)
[Eastern Sociological Society \(ESS\)](#)
[Mid-South Sociological Association \(MSSA\)](#)
[Midwest Sociological Society \(MSS\)](#)
[North Central Sociological Association \(NCSA\)](#)
[Pacific Sociological Association \(PSA\)](#)
[Sociologists for Women in Society \(SWS\)](#)
[Society for the Study of Social Problems \(SSSP\)](#)
[Society for the Study of Symbolic Interaction \(SSSI\)](#)
[Southwestern Sociological Association \(SSA\)](#)

Developing and Completing a Master's Thesis

Schnaiberg, Allan. 2005. Mentoring graduate students: Going beyond the formal role structure. *The American Sociologist*, 36(2), 28–42.

Burawoy, Michael. 2005. Combat in the dissertation zone. *The American Sociologist*, 36(2), 43–56.

Levine, S. Joseph. (2022). Writing and presenting your thesis or dissertation.
<https://www.learnerassociates.net/dissthes/>

Searching the Literature and Writing a Literature Review

The University of Memphis Online Library
<https://www.memphis.edu/libraries/>

Databases A–Z
<https://sierra.memphis.edu/search~S4/y>

Journals
<https://sierra.memphis.edu/search~S4/s>