

Department of Sociology



Portland State
UNIVERSITY

Graduate Student Handbook

Updated Summer 2021

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Information for All Graduate Students

Graduate training in Sociology prioritizes community engagement and policy-relevant research focused on improving people's daily lives and society more broadly. Students focus on the integration of theory with a variety of quantitative and qualitative methodological approaches to study the dynamics of human behavior and social interaction in a variety of substantive areas of focus.

Our department has five primary areas of concentration: health and medicine; environmental sociology; sociology of education; sociology of gender; and law, criminology, and deviance. Faculty and students also conduct research in the areas of social movements; urban sociology; sociology of the family; sociology of sexualities; race/ethnicity; class/stratification; work and occupations; globalization; and food systems.

We offer two graduate programs: 1) A Non-Thesis M.S. program for students seeking to work in applied research or other positions requiring M.S.-level qualifications and a 2) Ph.D. program for students seeking careers in academia or applied research requiring Ph.D.-level qualifications.

Our programs

Non-Thesis M.S. Program

The Non-Thesis M.S. program requires coursework providing advanced training in qualitative and quantitative research methods as well as in theory and substantive areas. This degree is for students seeking to work in applied research or other positions requiring M.S.-level qualifications (this is not an appropriate track for students who may ultimately wish to pursue a Ph.D.). Current PSU Sociology majors can enter the Non-Thesis M.S. Program via the Bachelor's plus Master's pathway. B+M students can apply up to 20 credits of graduate coursework to both the Bachelor's and Master's degrees, which allows students to complete the M.S. degree in as little as one year after completing the Bachelor's degree.

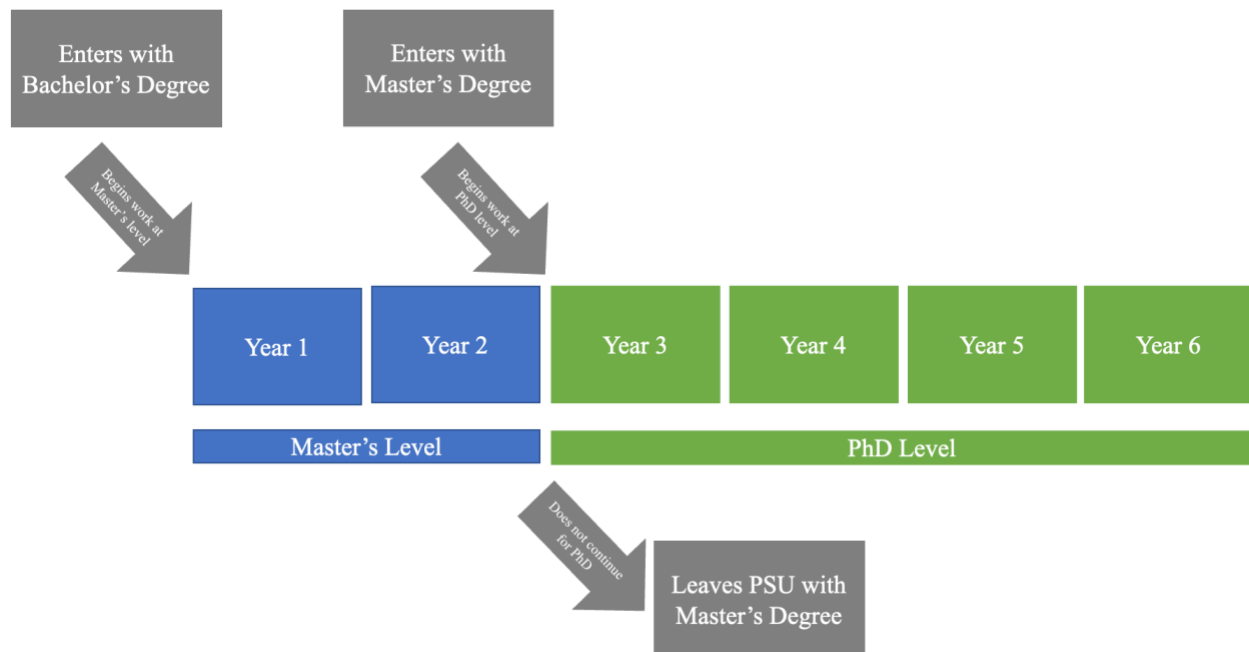
Internal applicants for the B+M program (PSU sociology majors) must complete an internal departmental application in order to begin taking graduate level coursework as an undergraduate. Internal departmental applications are accepted on a rolling basis and students can begin graduate work in any term after acceptance. Accepted B+M students must then apply to the graduate program through the online application system in their final term of their undergraduate program. These applications are also accepted on a rolling basis. When formally applying to the graduate program in the online application system, students should apply to the program **Sociology, M.S. – Bachelor's plus Master's**.

Applications from external applicants (students who have already earned a B.A./B.S) are accepted once per year and incoming students start in Fall term. In the online application system, students should apply to the program **Sociology, M.S. – Non-Thesis**.

Ph.D. Program

Our Ph.D. program is a combination M.S. and Ph.D. program in which students first complete M.S.-level work before continuing on to Ph.D.-level work. This program provides students with advanced training in qualitative and quantitative research methods as well as in theory and substantive areas. Students in this program design and implement their own research projects for the M.S. thesis and Ph.D. dissertation. Students graduating with a Ph.D. from our program find positions as faculty members at colleges and universities or take research focused jobs in the public or private sectors.

The Sociology Ph.D. Program



In years one and two of the program, students complete M.S.-level requirements, including courses in quantitative and qualitative research, sociological theory, and electives in substantive areas. M.S.-level work culminates in a thesis, in which each student designs and implements an original research project. Students who complete all M.S.-level requirements will earn a M.S. degree, whether or not they continue on for the Ph.D.

At the Ph.D. level (years three and beyond of the program), students take additional courses, complete a comprehensive exam in one of the five primary areas of concentration, and write a dissertation.

Applications are accepted once per year and incoming students start in Fall term. Students who enter with a M.S. degree in sociology or related social science field (from PSU or other institution) will begin work at the Ph.D. level (year three), although they may need to complete M.S.-level requirements if they did not complete equivalent requirements in their M.S. program. In the online application system, all students should apply to the program **Sociology, Ph.D.**

Comparison of Non-Thesis M.S. and Ph.D. Programs

There are important differences between the Non-Thesis M.S. and the Ph.D. programs; see table below.

Comparison of Non-Thesis M.S. and Ph.D. Programs

	Non-Thesis M.S. Program	Ph.D. Program
Career goals	Careers in applied research or other positions requiring M.S.-level qualifications	Careers in academia or applied research requiring Ph.D.-level qualifications
Areas of graduate training	Research design Quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis Sociological theory Broad training across substantive areas in sociology Professional development topics related to applied careers	All areas included in Non-Thesis M.S. <i>and</i> Experience implementing research projects (thesis and dissertation) Expertise in one of five areas of concentration Professional development topics related to academic careers
Time to completion for full time students	Two years	Two years for M.S.-level work plus an additional three to five years to complete the Ph.D.
Credits required	45 for M.S.	54 for M.S. and 54 for Ph.D.
Requirements	<i>M.S. requirements</i> Six required courses (24 credits) Five electives (24 credits) One term of Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	<i>M.S.-level requirements</i> Four required courses (16 credits) Six electives (24 credits) Six terms of Professionalization Seminar (6 credits) Thesis (8 credits) <i>Ph.D.-level requirements</i> Two required courses (8 credits) Four electives (16 credits) Three terms of Professionalization Seminar (3 credits) Comprehensive exam Dissertation (27 credits)
Eligible for funding from the department?	No	Yes
Eligible to continue on for the Ph.D. from the M.S.?	No	Yes
Eligible for credit towards both a Bachelor's and Master's?	Yes, via B+M pathway into the program	No

Request to Change Programs

Students may request to change from one sociology graduate program to the other. Students should submit this request via email to the Graduate Director. Permission to change programs is at the discretion of the graduate committee.

A student in the Ph.D. program who enters at year one can request to change to the Non-Thesis M.S. program at any point. However, this means that the student cannot continue on to do Ph.D.-level work in the PSU sociology program.

A student in the Non-Thesis M.S. program can request to change to the Ph.D. program. This request will require careful review by the graduate committee and consultation with other faculty members. If a student is permitted to change to the Ph.D. program, they would need to complete all the M.S.-level requirements for the Ph.D. program, including a thesis and six terms of Professionalization Seminar, prior to completing the process to request to continue from the M.S. to the Ph.D. Approval to change programs is separate from approval to continue on from the M.S. to the Ph.D.

Students who may want to pursue a Ph.D. (at PSU or elsewhere) at any point in the future should pursue the Ph.D. program rather than the Non-Thesis M.S. program.

Who's Who

Who's who

Role	Description
Graduate Director	Upon entering the graduate program, students may or may not be familiar with a specific faculty member with whom they may like to work, and thus may find it difficult to ask questions and receive advice from the faculty. The Graduate Director is a faculty member specifically assigned to aid students during their time at PSU. Students may seek advice on coursework planning, thesis and dissertation content and procedures, and other questions about the program as a whole.
Associate Graduate Director	The Associate Graduate Director is the primary contact for graduate students in the Non-Thesis M.S. program and also provides support to students in the Ph.D. program. The Associate Graduate Director is a member of the Graduate Committee and will serve as the Graduate Director once the current Graduate Director steps down.
Graduate Committee	The Graduate Committee consists of the Graduate Director (Chair of the Graduate Committee), Associate Graduate Director, and additional sociology faculty. The Graduate Committee is responsible for overseeing admissions to the graduate program, conducting annual reviews of current graduate students, and overseeing the policies and processes related to the graduate program.
PSU Graduate School	Formerly the Office of Graduate Studies, the Graduate School is the campus office where all forms, policies, and information regarding degree requirements can be found.

Who's who (continued)

Research and Graduate Studies (RGS)	The PSU Graduate School is housed within Research and Graduate Studies.
Initial Faculty Advisor	Each student will be assigned an initial faculty advisor upon entering the program. Students are required to meet with this advisor at least once a term until they select a Thesis/Dissertation Chair. Once a student chooses a Thesis/Dissertation Chair, that person becomes their primary mentor (in some cases, this individual may be the initial faculty advisor).
Thesis/Dissertation Chair	The Thesis/Dissertation Chair role includes providing guidance in regards to the student's progress through the program, helping the student in selecting appropriate elective courses, supervising their research, and determining when Ph.D. students are ready to schedule comprehensive examinations. The role also includes assisting in the selection of the thesis/dissertation committee, preparation of the thesis/dissertation proposal, and completion of the thesis/dissertation.
Department Admin	Bahar Jaberi is the administrative lead who works with graduate students. Questions about course requirements, university forms and policies, and other administrative questions can be directed to Bahar.
Graduate Student Representative	The sociology graduate student body determines their representative. This representative is the liaison between grad students and faculty and is invited to attend faculty meetings.
Department Chair	The Department Chair is a liaison between faculty, staff, and the broader university. They also serve as the head of the Sociology Department and as such are the final Departmental word on such concerns as appointments, discipline, and employment concerns. If you have specific questions or grievances, it usually best to discuss these with the Graduate Director before reaching out to the Chair.

Coursework

Class Enrollment and Registration

Graduate students will enroll in 500-level and 600-level courses. All graduate coursework must be taken for a letter grade (A-F).

There are two different procedures for enrolling in courses. The enrollment for most courses is to be completed through online enrollment on [Banweb](#), under the Student Tab. For Thesis/Dissertation Credits, Reading and Conference, and Research Credits, the student should initiate registration on the [By-Arrangement Dashboard](#).

See Appendix for suggested coursework and milestone plans.

Graduate Student Grade Requirements

Graduate students must achieve a B or higher grade. Any student who receives a grade of B- or lower grade must retake the course, which they can do only once. In no case will a student be permitted to begin their comprehensive examinations without first meeting the above grade requirements in core courses. No graduate courses may be taken Pass/No Pass except for the Professionalization Seminar.

Electives

Elective courses offer opportunities for students to tailor their skills in a particular area of concentration (e.g., medical sociology, education). Students are encouraged to discuss appropriate electives with their initial faculty advisor, their Thesis or Dissertation Chair (if one has been chosen), or with the Graduate Director if they are unsure of what coursework to take.

By-Arrangement Courses

By-arrangement courses, including Reading and Conference courses, are independent studies of a topic to be determined in consultation with a faculty member who has agreed to work with a student. A by-arrangement course (offered between one and four credits) requires the consent of the faculty member who grades and supervises it. By-arrangement courses may not be used in place of theory or methods courses or for preparation of the thesis (503 credits should be utilized for this). Students should decide with faculty in the term prior to requesting the by-arrangement course to ensure the desired faculty is available and willing to oversee the course.

Graduate Certificates

Graduate Certificates are a linked series of approved graduate-level courses, which constitute a coherent body of study within a discipline. Sociology students are encouraged to consider certificate programs that overlap with sociology courses, such as the Gender, Race, and Nations Graduate certificate; the Graduate Certificate in Sustainable Food Systems; Certificate of Innovation in College Teaching; and the Sustainability Graduate Certificate. Students can count courses towards both a graduate certificate and a sociology degree.

Transfer Credit

Students who have received their M.S. degree at a different university than PSU, or from a different discipline than Sociology, will have to fill out a [GO-21D](#), Proposed Transfer Credits. This form is required whenever transfer credit is requested. Approval of the GO-21D early in the student's program is recommended, so the student will have sufficient time to complete any additional course work which may be necessary for their program.

An official transcript in a sealed (closed) envelope from the originating institution must be attached if it is not already on file in the Office of Graduate Admissions. The GO-21D form will ensure that the students in the Ph.D. program have all the requirements for the M.S. degree behind them in order to proceed with their Ph.D. Candidacy. This is a university requirement and is the reason

why students who have received their degrees from a different discipline than Sociology must take the required core M.S.-level courses.

Approved graduate transfer courses from other institutions not entered on PSU transcripts do not count towards the overall PSU GPA. Transfer courses *are* used to calculate Sociology (and grad certificate) GPAs.

Substitutions for Required Graduate Work

All graduate program requirements must be completed, substituted, or waived. Students who have completed previous graduate work, whether or not they received a degree, and who wish to have this work meet program requirements, may meet with the Graduate Director to make this request. Students can request to substitute required courses with equivalent courses from other departments at PSU and/or other institutions. Substitutions or waivers are approved on a course-by-course basis at the discretion of the Graduate Director, who may consult with faculty teaching the relevant course. Be aware that approval of the petition constitutes a waiver of a required course, not a waiver of required credits – students will still need to take the required number of credits for the program. The Graduate Director or the department's administrative staff are responsible to report these waivers through the Graduate School's "DARS Exceptions Form."

Student Behavior

Student Conduct Code

Students are expected to adhere to the PSU [Student Conduct Code](#). Student conduct will be monitored on a case-by-case basis through students' yearly progress reports to the Graduate Director as well as feedback from students' GTA supervisors and Thesis/Dissertation Chairs. Violations of the student code of conduct can result in consequences up to and including dismissal from the program.

Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to adhere to the highest levels of academic honesty. PSU has a formal process for handling [academic misconduct](#). Academic misconduct will result in consequences, up to and including dismissal from the program.

Sexual Misconduct

Students are expected to adhere to the [PSU policy on sexual misconduct](#). Violations of the sexual misconduct policy may result in consequences up to and including dismissal from the program.

Students who experience sexual misconduct from other PSU students, faculty, or staff have a variety of options for formal reporting, if they so choose (see [policy linked above](#)). Students may also discuss any concerns with the Graduate Director and/or Department Chair.

Satisfactory Academic Progress

All students are expected to maintain progress toward their degree by successfully completing the required coursework with a grade of B or higher.

The following are considered markers of unsatisfactory progress:

- Failing to complete core sociology courses on time; it is advisable to refer to the suggested coursework plan in this handbook regarding core coursework expectations.
- Receiving one grade of B- or lower in any course.
- Having more than one outstanding I, W, X grade.
- Failing to revise an incomplete (I) grade within one year (The Incomplete will become part of the permanent record for a graduate course if not resolved in one year).
- Engaging in academic dishonesty. Guidelines about what constitutes academic misconduct can be found online via [Enrollment Management & Student Affairs](#).
- Violations of the Student Code of Conduct, as determined by the Dean of Student Life.
- Failing to enroll in at least one credit hour: Any quarter of the regular academic year (Fall, Winter or Spring) during which a student is not enrolled for at least one credit hour requires a formal leave of absence from the department. Failure to do so can result in termination from the program.

If a student is determined to be out of Satisfactory Academic Compliance due to one or more of the markers above, they will be required to meet with the Graduate Director and the Associate Graduate Director. At this required meeting, the student and faculty members will develop a detailed plan in which the student can once again make satisfactory progress and resolve outstanding issues. This meeting should result in an agreement approved by the student that includes a detailed timeline for improvement and which also sets a date for a second follow up review and assessment. Should the student fail to make progress on this plan by the second review, they can be dismissed from the program.

Note: There are additional reasons for dismissal that are under the purview of Research and Graduate Studies. These may include failure to complete work within university time limits, having a cumulative GPA below 3.0, or failing required comprehensive exams or defenses. For more information, please see the [Research and Graduate Studies webpage on Academic Standing](#). See also the [PSU policy](#) on incomplete grades.

Additional Policies

Human Subjects Research Application

All students must apply for review of their research with human subjects by Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Subjects Research Review Committee (HRPP). Research conducted for courses and not intended for publication does not require IRB approval. For thesis and dissertation research, the IRB application must be made *after* approval of the proposal, but ***prior to*** conducting the study or analyzing data that have already been collected. Students should begin preparing their

IRB application materials prior to thesis or dissertation proposal approval to ensure a timely review.

Residency Requirements

Portland State University's Research and Graduate Studies has a residency requirement. Residence credit is defined as credit taken at PSU after formal admission to a graduate degree program. Residency requirements are intended to ensure that students work in close association with other graduate scholars in the intellectual environment of PSU. These residency requirements cannot be waived by the sociology department. In a M.S. program, to meet the residency requirement a student must earn a minimum of two-thirds of the credits applied to the degree after formal admission to a M.S. degree program at PSU.

In a Ph.D. program, the residency requirement can be satisfied in one of the following ways:

- Three terms of full-time enrollment (minimum nine graduate credits applicable to the degree program each term) during the first two years after admission to the program. This may include one or more summer terms.
- Six terms of part-time enrollment (minimum one graduate credit applicable to the degree program each term) during the first two years after admission to the program. This may include one or more summer terms.
- A Ph.D. student who was enrolled in the same major at PSU, and whose matriculation to the Ph.D. program immediately follows (within one calendar year) the M.S. degree program, may fulfill the residency requirement during the period in which the student was enrolled in the M.S. program.

Leave of Absence and Deferred Admissions Policies

A student admitted to the graduate program may petition for a leave of absence. A leave of absence is granted for a specific period of time, up to a maximum of three terms (excluding summer). Students may request a second leave of absence, also for a maximum of three terms. A leave of absence:

- Provides a guarantee that a student will be allowed to return to the graduate program at the agreed-upon time;
- Exempts the student from the continuous enrollment requirements (applicable only to advanced Ph.D. students);
- Does not constitute a waiver of the time limit for completion of a graduate program nor the one-year limit for completion of a course.

It is the student's responsibility to drop or withdraw from all courses as well as notify other appropriate offices on campus of their leave status (e.g., Financial Aid.). [A completed leave of absence request](#) must be submitted to Research and Graduate Studies no later than the Friday of the second week of the term for which the leave should take effect. A leave of absence will not be approved retroactively.

Graduate students accepted into the program who have not yet matriculated should submit their requests for a deferred admission to the Graduate Committee.

Application for Graduation

Students must file an online application for graduation with the Graduate School by the stated deadline listed on the [Graduate School website](#).

Office Space in Sociology

Graduate student office space is assigned by the graduate student representative(s). The Graduate Director will provide grad representative(s) with the available offices for the year after conferring with the Department Admin. The graduate representative(s) will provide office assignments to the Department Admin who will make key requests. Office keys will be given to students each fall; key replacement fee is \$50 per key if keys are lost.

Relationships Between Faculty and Graduate Students

Graduate students may choose to socialize with faculty at department sponsored and extra-departmental events. Professional and mentorship arrangements sometimes evolve into close personal relationships that are positive experiences for both graduate students and faculty. However, given the unequal power dynamic that exists between faculty and graduate students, these types of close relationships (especially romantic/sexual relationships) can occasionally become negative experiences for graduate students and may negatively impact their education. Before pursuing close relationships (especially romantic/sexual relationships), graduate students should consider the potential negative consequences; for example, the potential for discomfort if a falling out occurs; negative consequences of real or perceived favoritism; and negative consequences of some individuals' beliefs that close relationships (especially romantic/sexual relationships) between students and faculty are inappropriate.

Per PSU policy, a faculty member who engages in a sexual/romantic relationship with a student will not hold a supervisory position over that student; the faculty member *will not*: 1) supervise that student in a TA or RA capacity; 2) grade that student's work in courses (grading must be performed by another faculty member), 3) serve on that student's thesis, comprehensive exam, or dissertation committee; or 4) participate in evaluations of the student related to continuation in the program or funding. Faculty members will decline future supervisory positions over that student for the length of the student's time in the program. The faculty member has the primary responsibility for reporting the consensual relationship; however, all parties to a consensual relationship are responsible for disclosing the relationship to their supervisor (usually the Department Chair).

If, at any time, graduate students experience any discomfort with any aspect of their personal relationship with a faculty member, they should discuss the issues with 1) the faculty member (if they feel comfortable doing so); and/or 2) the Graduate Director (if the faculty member is not the Graduate Director); and/or 3) the Associate Graduate Director (if the faculty member is the Graduate Director). The department will make every effort to ensure that disclosing issues about personal relationships with faculty will not negatively impact the student's education.

Non-Thesis M.S. Program

External applicants

The PSU Sociology department admits a small cohort of graduate students to our Non-Thesis M.S. program each fall. To apply, students will submit a formal application to the program **Sociology, M.S. – Non-Thesis**.

A Bachelor's degree is required for application to this graduate program. Students who do not have a Bachelor's degree in sociology may be accepted into the program, but may be required to take Sociological Theory (SOC 301 and 302), Social Statistics (SOC 396), and Sociological Methods (SOC 397 and 398) unless they can demonstrate that they have taken equivalent coursework.

Internal applicants (Bachelor's + Master's Pathway)

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Current PSU undergraduate sociology majors can apply to the Non-Thesis M.S. via the B+M pathway as follows:

1. Attend info session (or watch information session [video](#)).
2. Complete an advising appointment with Kris Lucht Adams (socadvising@pdx.edu) or Ben Alberts (balberts@pdx.edu). Review with these advisors whether or not the admission criteria are met before completing the initial application process.
3. Complete an [initial application](#) which includes:
 - The date of the advising meeting with Kris Lucht Adams or Ben Alberts. Note: Initial applications will not be reviewed without a meeting with Kris or Ben.
 - The names of two PSU Sociology instructors who have agreed to support the application. Students may list any instructors they have taken a sociology course with at PSU. Note: See the list of instructors on the [department website](#) (note that not all instructors are listed here). The Graduate Committee will confirm with instructors that they support the application so students should ensure that they email or meet with the instructors prior to submitting this form!
 - A description of the applicant's career goals. Note that the Sociology B+M program prepares graduates for social science research careers in government, the non-profit sector, and private industry. The B+M is a terminal non-thesis Master's degree. Students interested in a Ph.D. in Sociology should not apply to the B+M program; rather, students should apply to Sociology Ph.D. programs in the fall of their final year of undergraduate coursework.
4. The Sociology Department will determine eligibility for the B+M program (based on a review of the initial application, standing (e.g., junior, senior), GPAs, and coursework). The Department will notify the applicant via email whether or not we have accepted the initial application. If the initial application is accepted, an invitation to participate in the B+M program will be forthcoming and graduate level coursework may begin.

5. The term prior to the applicant's Bachelor's graduation, the applicant will submit a formal application to the program **Sociology, M.S. – Bachelor's plus Master's**. The application fee will be waived.

For more information, email socadvising@pdx.edu to set up an appointment.

Coursework

Student in the Non-Thesis M.S. Program will take a minimum of 45 graduate credit hours, including 25 credits in core sociology courses (as outlined below) and 20 elective credits (12 of which may be taken in a department other than sociology).

Non-Thesis M.S. Requirements

Core M.S. Courses	Credits
SOC 590 Social Research Strategies	4
SOC 591 Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology	4
SOC 592 Qualitative Methods	4
SOC 593 Quantitative Methods	4
SOC 537 Qualitative Data Analysis	4
SOC 595 Advanced Quantitative Methods	4
SOC 507 Professionalization Seminar	1
Electives <i>At least eight credits in sociology</i>	20
45 Total Credit Hours	

See Appendix for suggested coursework plans.

Ph.D. Program

Admissions

The PSU Sociology department admits a small cohort of graduate students to our Ph.D. program each fall. In the online application system, students should apply to the program **Sociology, Ph.D.** regardless of whether they currently have a Bachelor's or Master's degree.

A Bachelor's degree is required for application to the graduate program. Students who do not have a Bachelor's degree in sociology may be accepted into the program, but may be required to take Sociological Theory (SOC 301 and 302), Social Statistics (SOC 396), and Sociological Methods (SOC 397 and 398) unless they can demonstrate that they have taken equivalent coursework.

The department also considers applicants who have a M.S. degree from another discipline and/or university and wish to obtain a Ph.D. in sociology. These students will be expected to demonstrate they have either taken equivalent coursework or complete the requirements for a Sociology M.S. degree at PSU before beginning Ph.D. work.

Coursework

At the M.S. level, students will take a minimum of 54 graduate credit hours, including 22 credits in core sociology courses (as outlined below), 24 elective credits (12 of which may be taken in a department other than sociology), and eight thesis credits. Elective courses outside sociology must be approved by the student's Thesis Chair. Thesis credit hours (SOC 503) are to be taken with the student's Thesis Chair. *Students must be registered for at least one credit hour during the term in which the thesis is defended.*

Students may take up to four credits of by-arrangement coursework prior to obtaining their M.S. degree. After four credits of by-arrangement coursework, up to four additional credits of by-arrangement coursework for students working on their M.S. degree may be requested via written proposal to the Graduate Committee.

M.S.-level coursework

Core Courses	Credits
SOC 590 Social Research Strategies	4
SOC 591 Theoretical Perspectives in Sociology	4
SOC 592 Qualitative Methods	4
SOC 593 Quantitative Methods	4
SOC 507 Professionalization Seminar <i>Must be taken six terms for a total of six credits</i>	6
Electives <i>At least 12 credits in sociology</i>	24
SOC 503 Thesis Credits	8
54 Total Credit Hours	

Ph.D.-level coursework

Core Courses	Credits
SOC 637 Qualitative Data Analysis	4
SOC 695 Advanced Quantitative Methods	4
SOC 607 Professionalization Seminar <i>Must be taken three terms for a total of three credits</i>	3
SOC 600-level Inequality Elective <i>Choose from: SOC 628 Gender Inequality; SOC 665 Environmental Sociology; SOC 679 Food, Justice, and Social Movements; SOC 684 Social Inequality; SOC 685 Medical Sociology; SOC 686 Topics in Health and Inequality; SOC 687 International Health Inequalities; SOC 688 Social Sustainability Theory and Practice; SOC 698 Globalization Seminar; An alternative sociology elective in inequality may be counted with approval of the department</i>	4
Electives <i>At least four credits in sociology</i>	12
SOC 603 Dissertation Credits <i>This includes comprehensive exam, proposal, research credits</i>	27
54 Total Credit Hours	

Qualitative Data Analysis and Advanced Quantitative Methods are not required courses at the M.S. level. However, students who intend to complete a quantitative M.S. thesis are encouraged to take Advanced Quant Methods, and students who are completing a qualitative thesis are encouraged to take Qualitative Data Analysis.

Candidates for the Ph.D. in Sociology must earn a minimum of 54 hours in graduate coursework including 15 credits in core sociology courses, 12 elective credits (8 may be taken in other departments), and 27 dissertation credits. A minimum of 81 credits beyond the Bachelor's degree is required for a Ph.D. Graduate students working on Ph.D.-level coursework are expected to enroll in 600-level courses.

During the entire time they are in the program, Ph.D. students must enroll in a minimum of one hour of graduate credit per quarter (not including summer) or apply for a leave of absence; deviations from this requirement must be approved by the department.

See Appendix for suggested coursework and milestone plans.

Thesis

The department considers the M.S. thesis to be an important learning experience. M.S.-level theses can employ quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. Students are expected to demonstrate the capacity to plan and conduct research that is of sufficient quality to produce a manuscript for a peer-reviewed journal.

Thesis Committees

The student is free to select any full-time departmental faculty member as their Thesis Committee Chair, provided that the faculty member is willing and able to serve. By the end of winter term of the first year, students should have confirmed their Thesis Committee Chair and thesis committee members.

Students are required to have at least two, but no more than three, committee members in addition to one's Thesis Committee Chair. The following rules apply in choosing committee members:

1. Two committee members (the Thesis Committee Chair and one other person) must be regular, full-time PSU faculty within the Sociology department, tenured or tenure-track, assistant professor or higher in rank.
2. A third committee member (in addition to the Chair and one other person) may be Fixed-Term or tenured/tenure track faculty from any department within PSU.
3. A fourth optional committee member may be a faculty member from any other institution as long as the requirements are met for the first three members.

It is the student's responsibility to ask faculty members to chair or serve on their thesis committee. Faculty members may agree or decline to serve. Faculty members may offer advice regarding committee members; however, the make-up of the thesis committee is the student's choice. Faculty members on sabbatical may continue to participate as committee members only if able and willing.

to attend committee meetings. Otherwise, they should be replaced. Final approval of the thesis committee occurs by approval of the GO-16M form.

Students may also choose to change their Thesis Committee Chair or thesis committee members if necessary. Any changes to committee membership after its approval by the PSU Graduate School must be re-approved. The Thesis Committee Chair and committee of record are the faculty whose names appear on the final thesis form ([GO -16M](#)).

For more information regarding committee member stipulations, see [Form GO-16M](#) (typically due to the Graduate School in early March of the second year). As the requirements and deadlines change, it is the student's responsibility to follow the [PSU Graduate School guidelines](#) or visit the Graduate School office with questions.

Thesis Proposal

After the student and the thesis committee have agreed upon the thesis topic, the student prepares a formal written thesis proposal. Proposal format is determined by the Thesis Committee Chair. The internal [Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Template](#) can be used to begin the proposal. Students should confirm the necessary contents and formatting of their proposal with their Chair.

At any time during this process, members of the committee may meet informally (at the request of the student or any committee member) to discuss, come to consensus on, or solve any problems related to the proposal. When the Thesis Committee Chair deems the proposal ready, it is distributed to committee members, who are given at least two weeks to read the proposal. Once committee members read, provide comments, and approve the proposal, the student begins their research. The approval of the proposal must be made formally using the [Thesis Proposal Approval Form](#) that must be submitted to the Graduate Director and Department Chair.

If the proposed thesis project includes human subjects, the student must have their research approved by the Institutional Review Board before beginning data collection. Students will have varying degrees of risk involved in their projects, and must submit the appropriate forms to IRB (even an exempt project requires a waiver/exempt form). Students should consult with their Thesis/Dissertation Chair about the IRB process and plan ahead, as this process can take several weeks.

Proposals are ideally completed and approved by the thesis committee by the end of the spring term of the first year. Students may not register for SOC 503 (thesis credits) until their thesis proposal is approved by their committee. Students are encouraged to complete data collection over the summer between the first and second years in the program and to write the thesis during their second year in the program. The thesis proposal does not require an oral defense.

Thesis Preparation

Students should work with their committee and Thesis Committee Chair closely in order to determine the appropriate literature, theories, and data that will be relevant. The research design and quality of the research must be appropriate for publication in a peer reviewed journal. The

preferred format of the thesis will be a peer-reviewed journal article manuscript (8,000-11,000 words). The Thesis Chair may request or require an alternative format. The thesis must be formatted according to [Graduate School requirements](#).

Thesis Defense

The oral component of the thesis is what is commonly referred to as “the defense.” The defense is not scheduled until the Thesis Committee Chair has determined that the student is ready to defend; this determination will be made upon review of the draft of the thesis and in consultation with the student’s thesis committee. The personal need of a student to finish by a certain date is not a consideration in this decision. The final oral thesis defense is normally held during the final term of the program. The oral defense is conducted by the student’s entire thesis committee.

No less than two weeks prior to the thesis defense, the student must give the committee a final draft of the thesis, which should include all components required by the Graduate School and Thesis Committee. The student should check with their committee for their preferences regarding a digital or hard copy draft.

The defense is an opportunity for the student to share their research with the department and is open to the general public. One week prior to the defense, the student must send via e-mail an announcement to the departmental admin to forward to all Sociology faculty and graduate students, announcing the date, time, room number, title of the thesis, name of the Thesis Committee Chair, and names of the thesis committee members, including the institutional affiliation of any committee members who are not regular Sociology faculty.

According to [PSU policy](#), it is expected that all appointed members of a thesis or dissertation committee should be physically present for both the proposal and final defense. However, it is permissible for committee members and/or the student to participate remotely under the following conditions:

- All committee members and the student must agree to the remote participation in advance.
- The student is responsible for contacting all members about the possibility of remote participation and must make all the necessary arrangements.
- All remote connections are expected to be both audio and visual; audio-only connection is acceptable for regular committee members (but not the student or Chair) if video is not possible.
- Visual aids or other materials must be distributed to remote participants in advance.
- If the student or any of the committee members have a disability that will be impacted by remote participation, accommodations will be provided. Arrangements must be made in advance through the Disability Resource Center for students or Human Resources for faculty.
- All committee members must participate in the entire meeting, discussion, presentation, and evaluation.
- If the Chair of the committee will be remotely participating in the defense, another member of the committee who will be physically present at the defense must be

designated to conduct the meeting. This should be arranged in advance and communicated to all committee members when planning for remote participation. If the entire committee is participating remotely, the Chair will conduct the meeting.

- If there are technical difficulties, the meeting must be rescheduled.

At the defense, the student first orally presents their research findings and then committee members ask the student questions and promote discussion. After the committee members have concluded their questions, the Thesis Committee Chair will ask for questions from the other attendees. Following the question-and-answer session, the student and any non-committee members leave the room. The committee then discusses the thesis and the oral defense and determines: 1) whether the student has passed the oral exam, and 2) whether the thesis is accepted as written or requires revision. Passing of the final oral examination requires approval of a majority of the committee. If the oral examination is not passed, the department has the option of either requiring a second oral defense or of disqualifying the candidate from the M.S. program.

The written component of the defense is the final thesis itself. Approval of the thesis by the Thesis Committee Chair and committee indicates that the written portion of the defense is passed. If the committee does not accept the version of the thesis submitted prior to the oral defense, the student and Thesis Committee Chair are provided with feedback on which sections of the thesis must be revised. Any revisions of the thesis discussed at the final oral defense must be incorporated by the student to the satisfaction of the committee before final approval is given to the written thesis. The Thesis Committee Chair communicates the necessary revisions to the student. Committee members tell the Thesis Committee Chair at the defense if they require continued oversight of the final draft or if the Thesis Committee Chair is solely empowered to approve the final draft.

Please Note: students must be enrolled for at least one credit while they are working on their thesis and in the quarter they have the thesis defense. The defense for a M.S. thesis has two categories: oral and written. [Thesis defense deadlines](#) are determined by the PSU Graduate School. In order to qualify for a Spring graduation, students will typically need to pass an oral thesis defense in early May and submit an electronic version of their thesis before the end of May. Options to graduate in other academic terms are available; see the Graduate School website for alternative deadlines. Students may not defend their thesis until their [GO-16M form](#) (for approval of the thesis committee) is approved by the PSU Graduate School.

Thesis Submission

All approved theses must be submitted in the PSU Graduate School's Electronic Thesis and Dissertation (ETD) format. This formatting is very specific and must be followed in order to submit the final thesis online and qualify for graduation. Students are advised to utilize the ETD format *early* on in their thesis writing process in order to avoid last minute reformatting issues. Full instructions for [ETD requirements](#) are on the PSU Graduate School webpage, as well as a [formatting checklist](#). The final thesis or dissertation should be submitted via electronic submission.

Note: Check Graduate School and University deadlines; faculty members are typically off contract and may not be available for defenses over the summer.

On the [deadlines page](#), please pay particular attention to deadline dates for the following:

- GO-16M submission by department
- Application for the Degree
- Thesis Defense
- Thesis Submission
- GO-17D submission by the department

Evaluation for Continuation to Ph.D.

Successful completion of the M.S. does not guarantee that students will be permitted to continue on for the Ph.D. Students who wish to continue should submit the [Request for Continuation to Ph.D.](#) to the Graduate Director by January 30 in year two (that is, before the completion of the M.S.).

The evaluation procedures for continuation to the Ph.D. are as follows:

1. **Thesis Committee Feedback:** Once the Request for Continuation to Ph.D. Form is submitted, the Graduate Director solicits feedback from the student's Thesis Chair and thesis committee regarding performance and program continuation. These comments are added to the student's completed form.
2. **General Performance Review:** The Graduate Director next adds additional comments on TA/RA feedback and any other relevant information about the student's progress to the Continuation Request Form.
3. **The Graduate Committee Recommendation:** Once the Graduate Director compiles thesis committee comments and other relevant performance information, the Graduate Committee reviews all requests and makes a recommendation to the faculty regarding whether the student should be allowed to continue on to the Ph.D. This recommendation is based on:
 - a. Student and committee report on the progress of the thesis (generally must be completed by the end of Spring term; extenuating circumstances may dictate a later completion date).
 - b. Committee report on the quality of the thesis, indicating the work has the potential to be publishable and that the student is ready for Ph.D.-level work.
 - c. Willingness and availability of faculty to work with the student; at least one Sociology faculty member who (tentatively) would agree to be Dissertation Chair; at least one additional Sociology faculty member who (tentatively) would agree to serve on the committee.
 - d. Ability of the department to support proposed dissertation project.
 - e. Faculty and Graduate Director report on student's overall performance and behavior in the graduate program.
 - f. Graduate Director's report on faculty evaluations of TA work (for students requesting funding).

4. Faculty Discussion: After receiving this recommendation, the Graduate Director will communicate the Graduate Committee recommendations to the faculty at a faculty meeting, at which point any concerns or issues regarding student performance may be discussed.
5. The Graduate Committee will make the final determination and will also decide whether the student should be awarded funding. Continuing students will be accepted pending successful completion of the thesis.

Comprehensive Exam

The primary purposes of the comprehensive exam are for students to demonstrate a mastery of the literature in the student's area of concentration and to sharpen academic writing skills and processes. Students are encouraged to choose a comprehensive exam area related to their potential dissertation topic. All required courses must be completed before taking the exam. Students are encouraged to take the exam in their third year in the program. Ph.D. students must pass comp exams within seven years if entering with a Bachelor's degree or five years if entering with a Master's degree. Students not passing the comprehensive exam by this point will be dismissed from the program. Students must pass the exam before scheduling their dissertation proposal defense.

Comprehensive examination committees are based on subject area and consist of three faculty members, at least two of who have a specialty in the selected area of concentration. Core faculty members in the student's area of concentration determine the makeup of a given committee. Currently offered exam areas are listed alongside core faculty in the table below:

Comp Exam Area	Core Faculty
Health and Medicine	Shafer, Thompson, Woo
Environmental Sociology	Jaffee, Lubitow
Sociology of Education	Shifrer, Wilkinson
Sociology of Gender	Jackson, Kelly, Lubitow, Shafer, Thompson, Wilkinson
Law, Criminology, and Deviance (LCD)	Roussell, Thompson

Students who wish to take a comp exam in an alternative sociological subfield area should discuss their request with the Graduate Director. These requests will be granted under the following conditions: 1) two faculty with expertise in the proposed area are willing and able to develop a reading list in the time frame requested by the student; 2) one additional faculty member plus the two core faculty are willing and able to constitute a comp committee to develop exam questions and grade the exam in the timeframe requested by the student; and 3) an elective in the proposed area is scheduled *or* one of the three faculty members on the comp committee is willing and able to do a by-arrangement course with the student to cover core readings in the proposed area in the timeframe requested by the student.

Exam Preparation

The department recommends that students take the graduate level elective course in their exam area; if that is not possible, the student may request to take reading and conference credits with one of the core faculty in the area of their exam. Students are advised to meet with their primary advisor (their expected Dissertation Chair) in order to prepare for the exam. This advisor can help by recommending supplemental readings and making suggestions about how best to prepare for the exam.

Generally, students should complete the readings on their core and supplemental exam reading list and take notes on what they have read. Students should use their own notes and have all texts available for reference and citation when they take the exam. Students may ask the core faculty in their area for practice questions; however, providing questions and reviewing practice essays is at the discretion of individual faculty members.

Exam Timing

Comprehensive exams are offered three times per year, in the fall, winter and spring terms. In consultation with their expected Dissertation Chair, students should choose an area of concentration from the areas listed below. After selecting an area of concentration, students should send an email request to the Graduate Director indicating what term and what topic they have selected *no less than three months* before they plan to take the exam.

Reading List

After students receive permission to take the exam from the Graduate Director and the comprehensive exam committee is formed, students may begin the process of updating the core reading list for their exam concentration area in consultation with the comprehensive exam committee. Comprehensive area exam reading lists are developed and revised by the core faculty in each area of concentration; comprehensive exam committees may choose to request that students propose additional reading selections related to their specific area(s) of interest to be added to the core reading list.

Core reading lists are routinely updated and posted on the Sociology Department [website](#). Past comprehensive exam questions and students' exam answers are not made generally available by the faculty but may be requested from students who have taken past exams.

Exam Administration

The comprehensive exams are take-home. Students will receive their exam from the office coordinator by email at 9:00 a.m. of the first day of the examination period. The exam must be returned to the office administrator by 9:00 a.m. on day fourteen of the examination period.

Students with relevant Disability Resource Center (DRC) accommodations register with the DRC prior to scheduling the comprehensive exam.

The examination committee will provide a set of specific instructions to accompany each examination. All comprehensive exams will consist of two written essays of approximately 15-20 pages of double-spaced writing per question. Exams should therefore result in approximately 30 to 40 double-spaced pages with size 12 font and 1-inch margins, not including references.

Exam Scoring

The faculty members on the comprehensive exam committee will read the exam and provide written feedback to the student within two weeks of exam completion. Much like a revise and resubmit process for peer-review journal articles, students will have two weeks from the time they receive these comments to: 1) revise their exam per the written feedback they receive; and 2) write a memo detailing how they addressed this feedback. The faculty committee will then have two weeks to provide the student with an exam grade. Students who make satisfactory revisions to their work will receive a passing grade on their exam. Students who do not effectively respond to feedback will receive a failing grade on the exam and will be asked to retake the exam at a later time.

Dissertation

The dissertation must be original research designed and carried out by the student. It is the culminating empirical project of the student's Ph.D. program. Students must complete a minimum of 27 credits of dissertation work (usually nine credits each term for three terms). Note that tuition remissions through GRAs can only be given during terms when the student is registered for full-time credit (9 credits).

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee consists of a Dissertation Chair and additional committee members. Dissertation committees must have a minimum of four and maximum of six members. At least one of the committee members in addition to the Dissertation Chair must be a tenure track/tenured faculty in the Sociology Department. If a committee member is not a member of the Portland State Faculty, students must submit a copy of their CV with the [GO-16D](#) form. No proposal defense is valid without a dissertation committee approved by the PSU Graduate School.

Dissertation Proposal

The proposed research must be appropriate for a Ph.D. in Sociology and meet University requirements. Students should obtain and consult a copy of the PSU Research and Graduate Studies requirements for a dissertation, available [online](#).

As an alternative to a traditional dissertation, with the approval of their dissertation committee, students have the option of writing three publishable papers with a shared topic/theme. For the final dissertation, these three papers must (per RGS requirements) be tied together with an introduction and conclusion. The intro and conclusion should explain how these papers fit together, what they share, and what is different in each paper. These papers may be co-authored with faculty,

including dissertation committee members and/or Dissertation Chair, but the student must be the first author on all three papers. Please note that there are different [ETD formatting](#) requirements for multi-paper dissertations; please refer to the Research and Graduate Studies ETD page.

Proposal format is determined by the Dissertation Committee Chair. The internal [Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Template](#) or [Three Paper Dissertation Proposal Template](#) can be used to begin the proposal. Confirm the necessary contents and formatting of the proposal with the Chair.

When Research and Graduate Studies responds with an approved [GO-16D](#) form, and when the Dissertation Chair determines that the student is prepared, the student is given permission to schedule their proposal defense. The student must be registered for at least one dissertation credit during the term in which they defend their dissertation proposal. The first step is for the student and the dissertation committee to agree on the date and time. Two hours will be needed for the proposal defense.

According to [PSU policy](#), it is expected that all appointed members of a thesis or dissertation committee should be physically present for both the proposal and final defense. However, it is permissible for committee members and/or the student to participate remotely under certain conditions.

The defense is open to the public, although the committee may also meet privately with the student for additional questioning and discussion. The student may be required to make additional changes in the proposal, as per recommendations by the committee members.

When committee members are satisfied that the student's proposal merits approval, they sign the [GO-23](#), Doctoral Request for Advancement to Candidacy form which is found on the Research and Graduate Studies website, and the student can proceed with the dissertation research, pending Human Subjects Research Review Committee Approval as necessary.

Advancement to Candidacy

To be advanced to candidacy, students must have:

- Completed all required courses;
- Submitted the GO-21D if M.S. degree is either in a degree other than Sociology, or from a different institution;
- Passed the comprehensive exam (and ensured that the department has filed the comprehensive exam report to Research and Graduate Studies);
- Passed the dissertation proposal defense;
- Received Human Subjects Research Review Committee Approval;
- Met the requirements for advancement to candidacy established by Research and Graduate Studies. The department submits the GO-23, Doctoral Request for Advancement to Candidacy form.

University policy states that a student can graduate in a minimum of four months and a maximum of five years following advancement to candidacy. Ph.D. Candidacy is sometimes referred to as being “ABD,” standing for “All But Dissertation.”

Dissertation Defense

Students must be aware of deadlines that Research and Graduate Studies has on their website specific to that particular year. Planning ahead helps allow the time for required revisions.

On the [deadlines page](#), please pay particular attention to deadline dates for the following:

- Application for the Degree
- Dissertation Defense
- Dissertation Submission
- GO-17D submission by the department

The defense is not scheduled until the Dissertation Committee Chair has determined that the student is ready to defend; this determination will be made upon review of the draft of the dissertation and in consultation with the student’s Dissertation Committee. The personal need of a student to finish by a certain date is not a consideration in this decision. The dissertation defense is normally held during the final term of the program. The oral defense is conducted by the student’s entire committee.

No less than two weeks prior to the thesis defense, the student must give their dissertation committee a final draft of the dissertation which should include all components required by Research and Graduate Studies. The student should check with their committee for their preferences regarding a digital or hard copy draft.

The defense is an open meeting where the students have the opportunity to share their research with the department and is open to the general public. One week prior to the defense, the student must send via e-mail an announcement to the departmental admin to forward to all Sociology faculty and graduate students, announcing the date, time, room number, title of the thesis, name of the Thesis Committee Chair, and names of the thesis committee members, including the institutional affiliation of any committee members who are not regular Sociology faculty.

According to [PSU policy](#), it is expected that all appointed members of a thesis or dissertation committee should be physically present for both the proposal and final defense. However, it is permissible for committee members and/or the student to participate remotely under certain conditions.

If a committee member is unable to participate in a dissertation defense on short notice, a proxy must be appointed by Research and Graduate Studies in advance of the defense. The oral presentation of the dissertation project should not exceed 40 minutes. Following this presentation, the committee members are given the opportunity to question the candidate. During this discussion, the candidate must defend the dissertation as a worthy contribution to knowledge in the field and must demonstrate mastery of the field of specialization as it is related to the dissertation. The purpose of the questioning and discussion is to further illuminate, for the

candidate and the committee, the significance and limitations of the research, as well as to demonstrate that the candidate has met the high standards of the university for the award of the Ph.D. degree. The committee may also choose to meet privately with the candidate for additional discussion and questioning.

Following questions and discussions, the student and all non-committee members leave the room while the committee confers and votes. Each appointed member has a vote. For dissertation approval, there can be no more than one dissenting vote. The committee may pass the student subject to the completion of specified minor modifications to the dissertation. If the final oral examination is not satisfactory, the committee may recommend a second oral defense (following a minimum three-month waiting period per [university guidelines](#)).

Note: During the term in which the Dissertation defense occurs, the student must be enrolled for a minimum of one credit hour. The final defense of the dissertation may be held no later than five weeks prior to the conferring of the degree. A GO-17D form must be submitted to Research and Graduate Studies by the published deadline. The department submits the GO-17D on behalf of the student's committee.

Annual Student Review

In the spring term of each academic year, *both students and Thesis/Dissertation Chairs* will submit the [Annual Review Form](#) to the Graduate Director which the Graduate Committee, the student's Thesis/Dissertation Chair, and the department will use to evaluate a student's eligibility for employment and ongoing progress within the program. This information is used for communicating individual accomplishments and tracking the program as a whole. The goal is also to provide a basis of effective communication to facilitate the student's progress.

All students enrolled in the graduate program are responsible for submitting the Annual Review Form to the Graduate Director and their Thesis/Dissertation Chair by April 30 of each academic year. A failure to complete this form may impact funding allocation decisions. A student who is reviewed as "not making sufficient progress" has until September 15th of the subsequent year to make up the missing work, meet with their Thesis/Dissertation Chair to review their progress, and have the Thesis/Dissertation Chair sign off and submit an updated progress report to be considered for continued funding.

Once the Annual Review Form is sent to the Graduate Director, the Thesis/Dissertation Chair will then review the form and provide additional input for the student's file.

Annual Milestones

All students are expected to maintain progress toward their degree. Progress is assessed annually by the sociology faculty and is based upon the student and their advisor's annual review responses. Meeting annual milestones (see table below) is part of this assessment.

Ph.D. Program Milestones

M.S.-Level Milestones	
End of Year 1	Complete core classes; Appoint thesis committee; Complete thesis proposal
End of Year 2	Complete coursework; defend thesis proposal
Ph.D.-Level Milestones	
End of Year 3	Complete core courses; appoint comprehensive exam committee
End of Year 4	Pass comprehensive exam; defend Dissertation Proposal
End of Year 5+	Defend Dissertation

The graduate school has the following time limits for completing milestones:

- No more than five years may pass between starting Ph.D.-level work (year three in the program) and completion of comprehensive exams.
- No more than three years may pass between completing the comprehensive exams and advancing to candidacy.
- No more than five years may pass between advancing to candidacy and completing all graduation requirements for the Ph.D. degree.

Graduate Employment

Every effort will be made to extend offers of employment within the sociology department to students in the Ph.D. program. Students in the Non-Thesis M.S. program are not eligible for funding from the sociology department but may be employed at PSU outside the department.

The availability of graduate employment in the department will vary depending on university and departmental budgets. There are three options for employment in the sociology department: Graduate Teaching Assistantship; Graduate Teaching Assistantship as Instructor of Record; and Graduate Research Assistantship. There are a number of other possible teaching and research relationships both within and external to the department (e.g., hourly research work, summer research funding) which are not covered by these designations and agreements.

In order to be considered for an assistantship, the initial request must be indicated through the standardized graduate application process. Factors affecting assistantship decisions include, but are not limited to: departmental needs, student financial need, student skills and experiences, the specific requirements of some positions, and department and university ability to provide the funding.

Efforts will be made to provide continuous financial support throughout a student's graduate time at PSU, provided that the student remains in good standing and makes timely progress toward the degree. Students are eligible for no more than two years of support prior to receipt of their M.S. degree. Students will be remitted for nine credits of instructional fees per term, plus a percentage of mandatory fees (excluding summer). The stipend amount offered may vary depending upon the number of work hours (FTE) being offered.

Funding may be applied in non-consecutive years, at the discretion of the Graduate Director and Graduate Committee and as the university budget allows (e.g. a leave of absence, a paused GTA position in order to assist a faculty on an externally funded project). Students should discuss requests for funding in non-consecutive years with the Graduate Director. All agreements are subject to funding and budgetary restrictions.

Adequate progress and performance are based on the student's grades and supervising faculty's evaluation. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 in order to remain qualified for a graduate teaching assistantship (GTA). After the first year of the program, the student must not only maintain adequate performance in classes, but must also show progress on their thesis or dissertation in order to be considered for a GTA position.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs): Students who receive funding are typically offered a graduate teaching assistantship (GTAs) which entails up to 12 hours of work per week supporting an undergraduate instructor.

Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs): GRAs may be available when faculty members have funded research opportunities and operate at the discretion of the faculty member in question.

Ph.D. Students as Instructors of Record: Ph.D. students may also be offered the opportunity to teach as the instructor of record in undergraduate sociology courses after completing M.S.-level work.

Graduate Employee Union (GEU)

The Graduate Employees Union AFT/AAUP (aka GEU) is a union made up of nearly 800 graduate teaching assistants, research assistants, and administrative assistants at PSU. Learn more about how to join GEU by visiting their [website](#). The GEU collective bargaining agreement, [available online](#), contains information about graduate students' status as an employee, what to do in the event of unfair treatment as an employee, and it has specific guidelines regarding the types of duties expected from a GTA or GRA.

It should be noted that the union is oriented toward graduate students *as employees* and does not weigh in on strictly academic affairs. For other issues, please talk to the Graduate Director or the Sociology student graduate representative.

Full Time Equivalent (or FTE) dictates expected weekly and overall workload during an academic quarter. Graduate employees' FTE will be listed on the employment contract received at the beginning of each employment term. A summary of the varied FTEs at which grad students may be employed is below. All GAs must have a minimum .30 FTE. Please refer to the [most recent GEU contract](#) for more details.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)	Total Work Hours per 13 Week Employment Period	Average Hours per Workweek
.30	156	12
.49	254	19.5

As stated in section 18.3 of the GEU collective bargaining agreement, “It is understood that the amount of work may vary throughout the term due to specific assignments and/or other situational demands. Workload assigned to a graduate assistant may or may not be separate from the academic expectations associated with thesis or dissertation research.” For more information on this, please consult the Sociology GEU Unit Representative or other GEU officer.

Tuition Remission

A graduate assistant receives tuition remission and partial fee remission in addition to the stipend earned. The amount of the stipend will vary depending on the full time equivalent (FTE) offered. The tuition paid by the student is variable depending upon the tuition rate in the current tuition tables. Health insurance is the responsibility of the student unless otherwise stated in the [GEU collective bargaining agreement](#).

Graduate Positions within the Sociology Department

Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs)

GTAs work alongside an instructor and will typically work 12 hours each week on average. Assigned work duties may include any of the following activities, which are to be determined by the designated faculty/instructor to whom the GTA is assigned: attending lectures, leading discussion groups, grading, proctoring exams, tutoring, holding office hours, communicating with students regarding the course material, conducting course evaluations, and managing web modules and grades.

GTAs are given responsibility for grading undergraduate course work; GTAs do not grade graduate student course work. When a graduate student is serving as a GTA in a mixed undergraduate-graduate (i.e., 400/500 or other designation) course, the GTA will not be expected to assign grades to other graduate students’ examinations, essays, or term papers. If grading of tests is included among the GTA’s duties in a 400/500-level course, the GTA’s access to other graduate students’ grades should be limited and should not include final grades. Under federal guidelines, all students’ grades are to be kept confidential.

GTAs are required to get in touch with their supervising faculty member beginning the week prior to Fall term, which is the when contracts for Fall term begin. GTAs will be sent a Work Agreement Notice that details their GTA assignment and expected duties. GTAs are encouraged to discuss their obligations with the faculty member and make sure that all expectations are clearly spelled out. GTAs are expected to participate in course management until all exams are given and grades are entered at the end of the term. If the grades are due past the date of the contract’s end, previous arrangements must be made with the supervising faculty member. Students assisting with face-to-face courses are expected to be available to be on campus from week one through the end of finals week.

Graduate assistants will not be requested or permitted to perform personal tasks for faculty.

Efforts will be made to reconcile department needs (e.g., providing assistants for particular courses) with students' progress in the program and need for support. Students' training and experiences and the fit between students' skills and the requirements of specific assistantships will be considered in the decision process. The final appointment is determined by the recommendation of the Graduate Committee.

Assistantships are typically offered for one academic year unless explicitly stated that they are offered for one term only. *Students must request consideration for funding renewal by April 30 each year by indicating their need on their Annual Review Form (see Appendix for links to forms).* Decisions to renew are based on coursework performance, progress in the program, and performance on assistantship duties.

As funding/availability of Graduate Teaching Assistants varies from year-to-year and term-to-term, the Graduate Committee will use the following guidelines to determine which instructors will receive a GTA:

1. GTAs will be assigned to instructors teaching required courses for the sociology major (301/302/396/397/398).
2. (As GTAs remain available): GTAs will be assigned to all tenure-line, NTTF, and graduate student instructors of record (with GTA assignments) in the order of their combined total number of expected undergraduate and graduate students for the coming quarter. When determining how to assign GTAs to faculty with similar total student enrollment, the undergraduate enrollment number will be the deciding factor.

In certain situations, GTA hours may be split between two tenure line faculty members with lower enrollments. If a graduate student is asked to serve in this capacity, they will only be asked to do so for one term, as this practice does not allow for the deeper familiarity with one class or the mentorship of the student by one instructor and is not to be encouraged. Students with a split GTA line are not expected to work more than 12 hours per week (on average).

At the end of each term, both faculty and GTAs will have the opportunity to review their experiences and make requests for the coming term. Not all requests can be accommodated, but the Graduate Committee will work to ensure stability and satisfaction in GTA/instructor pairings where possible.

Graduate Research Assistantships (GRAs)

GRAs will be supported through faculty research grants and are expected to work on that faculty member's research project. GRAs perform research tasks including data collection, storage, and analysis; presentations; publication preparation; and other research activities, all with authorship credit due as appropriate. Graduate research assistants will not be requested or permitted to perform personal tasks for faculty.

Graduate Teaching Assistantships: Instructor of Record

The Sociology Department is committed to training and identifying graduate students who: 1) will provide high-quality instruction to our undergraduates; 2) undergo the appropriate preparation for teaching undergraduate coursework; and 3) have been selected/confirmed by the graduate committee upon completion of the requirements below.

Teaching positions are contingent upon successful progress in the program and availability of departmental funding. Graduate Instructors' teaching evaluations will be reviewed by the Department Chair each term. If evaluations are unsatisfactory, the instructor will be notified by the Graduate Director and given a specified amount of time to improve prior to revocation of the position.

Graduate instructors teach courses in the regular rotation of face-to-face class offerings at the 200 and 300 levels, based on their experience and departmental needs. With permission from the Curriculum Committee, student instructors may teach 400-level courses in their areas of expertise and online courses. Students should email the Curriculum Committee Chair to request to teach a 400-level course or an online course. Departmental needs, and not student interest, will determine what classes students will teach. Graduate instructors are overseen by the Graduate Director and by the Curriculum Committee. The Curriculum Committee will consult with, and may assign, a faculty mentor who has previously taught the course to work with the student. Graduate instructors teaching a course for the first time must consult with their mentor or the curriculum committee prior to development of syllabus and book selection. Major course-related decisions (e.g., substantial revision of topics/textbooks/assignments) are subject to approval by this mentor/Curriculum Committee.

Minimum Requirements for Graduate Student Instructors of Record:

1. M.S. Degree (must include required courses from PSU or their equivalent).
2. At least three terms as a GTA with an above average or excellent rating from supervising instructor. Students who do not currently have GTA funding may fulfill this requirement by volunteering as a GTA, or working as a GTA for course (by-arrangement) credit.
3. Completion of at least one hour of approved training related to teaching (workshops led by the [Office of Academic Innovation](#) meet this requirement). Other workshops may be approved upon request to the Graduate Director.
4. If a student has previous teaching experience at another university, Requirement #2 and Requirement #3 above may be waived. To be considered for these waivers, the student must submit syllabi, assignments, and course evaluations to the Curriculum Committee.

Graduate students who have completed all M.S. requirements and wish to teach a course should indicate this on the Annual Review Form (see Appendix for links to forms) and include: 1) courses they feel qualified to teach; 2) evidence of their successful completion of the minimum requirements noted above. Students who would like to indicate this interest between Annual Reviews should send an email to the Graduate Director, Curriculum Committee Chair, and Department Chair indicating the same criteria. Regardless of the method of communication, requests must be received *at least three academic terms before the student hopes to teach a course*

given the need to develop a departmental course schedule well in advance; students who are approved to teach will be assigned courses as they become available.

Ineligibility for Employment Due to Substandard Performance

When a faculty member supervising a graduate assistant in a teaching or research employment role notes that the graduate student is not performing the duties of the position at an acceptable level, the faculty member will take the following steps:

1. The faculty member will meet with the student to discuss their concerns and make suggestions, where possible, about how to improve subsequent performance.
2. If concerns persist, the faculty member will notify the Graduate Director for mediation and appropriate action.
3. The Graduate Director will meet separately with the faculty member and the student before making a determination. After meeting with both the faculty member and the student, the Graduate Director will make a decision about the student's progress, and whether the student should be assigned to a different faculty member.

Issues with Faculty Members Supervising Graduate Assistants

When a graduate assistant has issues with their supervising faculty member, the student will take the following steps:

1. The student will meet with the faculty member to discuss their concerns; if the student is uncomfortable discussing the issues one-on-one, they may skip this step.
2. If concerns persist, the student will notify the Graduate Director for mediation and appropriate action. If the faculty member of concern is the Graduate Director, the student will notify the Associate Graduate Director.
3. The Graduate Director (or Associate Graduate Director) will meet with the faculty member and the student before making a determination. After meeting with both the faculty member and the student, the Graduate Director (or Associate Graduate Director) will facilitate a resolution or make a decision about assigning the student to a different faculty member.

The student may request for the grad student representative to assist with any part of this process. The student is also advised to seek out the advice and support of the Graduate Employee Union in the event that they would like to file a formal grievance.

Graduate Teaching Assistant Evaluation

Near the end of each term, two things will occur: 1) All instructors who are assigned GTAs will complete an evaluation of the teaching assistant's performance via a Google form; 2) all GTAs will also be asked to complete a Google form asking for their feedback on the GTA experience. These evaluations will be used to track employment and to help make future recommendations regarding funding allocation.

Appendix A: Table of Relevant Forms

For relevant forms and deadlines, please visit [PSU Graduate Candidate Deadlines Page](#), which is updated each year.

Name	Submit to	Deadline
Annual Review Form (<i>Internal form</i>)	Sociology Graduate Director	April 30, Annually
Thesis Proposal Approval Form (<i>Internal form</i>)	Sociology Department	End of Spring term of first year
Request for Continuation to Ph.D. (<i>Internal Form</i>)	Sociology Graduate Director	January 30 of second year
G0-16M : Appointment of Thesis Final Oral Examination Committee (<i>Official PSU form</i>)	PSU Graduate School	March of second year
G0-16D : Appointment of Doctoral Dissertation Committee (<i>Official PSU form</i>)	PSU Graduate School	Once the Dissertation Committee has been selected
Thesis Signature Page and Dissertation Signature Page (<i>Official PSU forms</i>)	Submit electronically with final thesis or dissertation file	Before annual deadlines for degree completion

Appendix B: Suggested Coursework and Milestone Plans for the Non-Thesis M.S. Program

Suggested coursework plan for the Non-Thesis M.S. for external applicants

M.S. Year 1	
Fall	590 Research Strategies (4 credits) 591 Theory (4 credits)
Winter	592 Qualitative Methods (4 credits) 593 Quantitative Methods (4 credits)
Spring	500-level Elective (4 credits) 500-level Elective (4 credits)
M.S. Year 2	
Fall	537 Qualitative Data Analysis (4 credits) 500-level Elective (4 credits)
Winter	500-level Elective (4 credit) 500-level Elective (4 credit)
Spring	595 Advanced Quantitative Methods (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit) <i>Apply for graduation</i>

Suggested coursework plan for the Non-Thesis M.S. for B+M students

Junior year of B.A./B.S.	
<i>Complete internal departmental application for B+M pathway to Non-Thesis M.S. program</i>	
Senior year of B.A./B.S.	
Fall	400-level course (4 credits) 400-level course (4 credits) 590 Research Strategies (4 credits)
Winter	400-level course (4 credits) 500-level elective (4 credits) 592 Qualitative Methods (4 credits)
Spring	400-level course (4 credits) 500-level elective (4 credits) 500-level elective (4 credits) <i>Apply for B.A./B.S. graduation, Complete formal grad school application</i>
M.S.	
Fall	591 Theory (4 credits) 537 Qualitative Data Analysis (4 credits)
Winter	593 Quantitative Methods (4 credits) 500-level elective (4 credits)
Spring	595 Advanced Quantitative Methods (4 credits) 500-level elective (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit) <i>Apply for M.S. graduation</i>

Appendix C: Suggested Coursework and Milestone Plans for the Ph.D. Program

Suggested coursework and milestone plan for years one and two (M.S.-level work)

Year 1 (M.S.-level work)		
Fall	590 Research Strategies (4 credits) 591 Theory (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	
Winter	592 Qualitative Methods (4 credits) 593 Quantitative Methods (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	Identify thesis topic, Thesis Chair, and thesis committee members (end of winter)
Spring	500-level Elective (or 695 Quant II) 500-level Elective (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	Annual review form (end of April) Thesis proposal approved (end of spring) IRB for thesis submitted (end of spring term) Obtain secondary data or collect data and complete transcription (end of summer)
Year 2 (M.S.-level work)		
Fall	500-level Elective or 537 Qualitative Data Analysis (4 credits) 500-level Elective or 503 Thesis (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	
Winter	500-level Elective or 503 Thesis (4 credit) 500-level Elective (4 credit) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	Apply for approval to continue on to Ph.D. (January 30) Appoint thesis committee (at least six weeks prior to thesis defense)
Spring	500-level Elective or 503 Thesis (4 credits) 500-level Elective or 695 Advanced Quant (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	Annual review form (end of April) Apply for graduation Thesis oral defense Finalize thesis and submit

Note: Students entering the program with a Bachelor's begin at Year 1 (M.S.-level work) and must request to continue on for Ph.D.-level work; students entering the program with a M.S. begin at Year 3 (Ph.D.-level work)

Suggested coursework and milestone plan for years three and beyond (Ph.D.-level work)

Year 3 (Ph.D.-level work)		
Fall	637 Qualitative Data Analysis or 600-level elective (4 credits) 600-level inequality elective (4 credits) 607 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	
Winter	600-level Elective (4 credits) 600-level Elective (4 credits) 607 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	
Spring	695 Advanced Quant or 600-level elective (4 credits) 600-level Elective (4 credits) 607 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	Identify Dissertation Chair Annual Review form (end of April)
Year 4 (Ph.D.-level work)		
Fall	603 Dissertation (9 credits)	Comprehensive exam option one
Winter	603 Dissertation (9 credits)	Comprehensive exam option two
Spring	603 Dissertation (up to 9 credits)	Comprehensive exam option three Annual review form (end of April) Appoint dissertation committee (at least six weeks prior to proposal defense) Dissertation proposal defense IRB for dissertation
Year 5+ (Ph.D.-level work)		
	603 Dissertation (one credit per term until graduation, 27 dissertation credits required for the degree)	Annual Review form (end of April) Apply for graduation Dissertation defense

Suggested coursework and milestone plan for students entering at year three (Ph.D.-level work)

Year 3 (Ph.D.-level work)		
Fall	590 Research Strategies (4 credits) 591 Theory (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	
Winter	592 Qualitative Methods (4 credits) 593 Quantitative Methods (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	
Spring	695 Advanced Quant 500-level Inequality Elective (4 credits) 507 Professionalization Seminar (1 credit)	Identify Dissertation Chair Annual Review form (end of April)
Year 4 (Ph.D.-level work)		
Fall	637 Qualitative Data Analysis (4 credits) 603 Dissertation (5 credits)	
Winter	603 Dissertation (9 credits)	Comprehensive exam option one
Spring	603 Dissertation (up to 9 credits)	Comprehensive exam option two Annual review form (end of April)
Year 5+ (Ph.D.-level work)		
	603 Dissertation (one credit per term until graduation, 27 dissertation credits required for the degree)	Appoint dissertation committee (at least six weeks prior to proposal defense) Dissertation proposal defense IRB for dissertation Annual Review form (end of April) Apply for graduation Dissertation defense

Note: Students entering at year three may request to substitute required courses with prior equivalent coursework from the M.S. Note that a waiver of a required course does not waive the required credits; 27 credits of coursework are required toward the Ph.D.

Appendix D: Resources

Odin is the computer account for PSU community members. Contact the [Helpdesk](#) for assistance with Odin accounts.

Banweb is PSU's information system. For students, Banweb provides access to student records, student account, grades, and financial aid information. For faculty and staff, Banweb provides access to employee information and services, tax information, and is where class grades are submitted. Log in using the Odin username and password.

Google Apps provide email and other services. PSU partners with Google to provide university-sponsored access to Gmail (____@pdx.edu), Google Calendar, Google Drive, Google Sites, Google Groups, and Google Sync. Your PSU email is the method we will use to send departmental information and announcements. Please check this email regularly. We have a Google Group to send emails to all graduate students: SOC-GRADS-group@pdx.edu.

PSU website provides a wide range of information. The [Sociology Department Page](#) has additional information.

Thesis/Dissertation Proposal Template is an internal sociology template that can be used to begin the proposal. Confirm the necessary contents and formatting of the proposal with the advisor. There is also the [Three Paper Dissertation Proposal Template](#).

Canvas is PSU's online classroom platform as of Winter 2022; both graduate and undergraduate courses have course sites. Log in using the Odin username.

Office of Information Technology (OIT) manages technology on campus. The help desk may be contacted at 503-725-HELP or help@pdx.edu.

Campus map shows locations and floor plans of buildings.

Library provides access to books, articles, and other resources. Sociology's subject librarian is Kimberly Pendell (kpendell@pdx.edu)

Student registration page is used to browse classes that will be offered in upcoming term(s).

Time grid shows when classes are held by day and time of week.

Academic calendar shows dates for upcoming terms.

On-campus housing options include small sleeper units, studios, and one bedroom units.

Transportation and parking services students a variety of options for subsidized travel, including a discounted or reduced fare TriMet pass, as well as parking passes.

Graduate School manages all details related to admissions, graduate employment, degree requirements, credit transfers, financial aid, and more. The website has links to various policies and procedures, deadlines, DARS, thesis and dissertation information, student services, and commencement information.

Graduate Employee Union (GEU) represents graduate student interests on campus and offers support in a variety of ways. Students can download a membership card and look at the GEU contract from this page.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approves research with human subjects.

PSU Code of Ethics provides standards of honesty and integrity, respect, stewardship and compliance, accountability and responsibility. All members of the PSU community are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Code of Ethics.

Human Resources (HR) handles employment on campus. HR also provides information on formal PSU policies, such as the Alcohol/Drug Policy, Consensual Relationships Policy, and Email Communications Policy.

Office of Global Diversity and Inclusion (GDI) handles grievances related to harassment or discrimination. More information about this process, as well as the other services offered by GDI can be found on their website.

Student Health and Counseling (SHAC) is the on-campus health center. Students have an option to acquire care directly through SHAC or to purchase insurance in order to access healthcare.

Student Education Travel (SET) Grants are available through the Student Activities and Leadership Program (**SALP**). Students can apply for up to \$500 per student each year in order to offset conference travel costs. Proposals must be submitted well in advance of conference attendance.

Student Legal Services (SLC) provides free legal services to all PSU students. Services related to immigration, family law, interpersonal violence, renter's rights, bankruptcy, criminal charges, and more are offered. The main limitation is that SLS will not sue PSU.

Office of Academic Innovation (OAI) provides training and support for those teaching courses. They also offer a graduate certificate in teaching, which provides additional training to graduate students who are beginning their teaching careers.

PSU Food Pantry is available to any PSU student taking one or more credit hours. Pantry hours for vary by term, but is located in the Smith Student Memorial Union 047A (lower level). For more info: There is also **Free Food Market** during the warmer months that is held on the Park blocks.

Services for Students with Children provides a variety of services to students, from childcare subsidies to safe and clean lactation spaces, to parenting workshops and family events. They also offer zero-interest emergency loans for parents and access to clothing and supplies for children.

Retention and Completion Fund from the graduate school can provide funding for the last quarter of study.

Disability Resource Center (DRC) provides accommodations and support for a variety of disabilities for graduate and undergraduate students. The Sociology Department is happy to support graduate students seeking additional accommodations.

Diversity and Multicultural Student Services provides an accessible, inclusive environment that enriches the university experience and engages students, their families, and the community. We serve and empower student populations whose access, retention, academic success, and graduation are most challenged by socio-historical factors and contemporary inequities. Our values are: Community, Equity and Diversity.

Veterans Resource Center provides a student lounge, computer space, leadership opportunities, student employment and programs.

Queer Resource Center (QRC) exists as a resource and referral center for all students along the sexuality and gender spectrum. They host queer events, have a lending library of books, zines, and videos, offers a communal space in the Smith Memorial Student Union, offer mentorship opportunities, conduct research, and more.

American Sociological Association (ASA) is a national professional organization for sociologists.

Pacific Sociological Association (PSA) is a regional professional association for sociologist.