**Introduction**

This document summarizes relevant policies for the Graduate Program in Sociology at the University of Colorado, Boulder. Graduate students are subject to the rules described in the Handbook that are in effect at the time of their admission to the Program. Although updated through fall 2004, some policies will undoubtedly change, and the Graduate Assistant will keep track of such changes.

Essential information will periodically appear on *socbiz*, the departmental email list for graduate students. Much “official business” of the Department of Sociology transpires via email, and all enrolled graduate students must have email addresses and check their accounts regularly. See Appendix A for more details.

**The Department of Sociology**

The Graduate Program in Sociology at the University of Colorado at Boulder seeks to train creative and productive scholars and teachers. The Department maintains a strong emphasis in the theories and methods of the discipline while specializing in five areas:

- Crime and Deviance
- Environmental Sociology
- Qualitative Sociology
- Gender
- Demography

**Graduate Degrees Offered**

The Department of Sociology offers graduate training leading to the Ph.D. To the greatest extent possible, the program seeks to:

- Provide mentoring through one-on-one faculty-student relationships, as well as teams of mentors,
- Give students clear and informed feedback on progress toward their degrees,
- Socialize students into the norms of the profession by informing them about professional expectations and practices not traditionally covered in seminars,
- Train students to become competent teachers and researchers, and
- Provide sound basic training in theory and methods.

The Department does not maintain a separate M.A. program and does not encourage applications from students who wish to pursue an M.A. in Sociology as a
terminal degree. However, students may obtain an M.A. degree under three conditions:

1) Students already making satisfactory progress toward the Ph.D. may wish to receive the M.A. as a sign of progress toward the Ph.D. To do so, students must meet the M.A. degree requirements outlined later in this Handbook.

2) Students already making satisfactory progress towards the Ph.D. may also wish to receive the M.A. as a terminal degree when changes in their circumstances (e.g., change in career plans, relocation, family situations, etc.) result in their inability to meet Ph.D. degree requirements. If circumstances change and such students choose to return to the graduate program within two years of receiving the M.A., the Department will automatically readmit them.

3) Students whose progress toward the Ph.D. is below expectations can apply for the terminal M.A. If, in the future, they wish to pursue the Ph.D. in this Department they must reapply for admission to the Ph.D. program.

Admission to the Program

The Graduate Program admits students only during the fall semester. Completed applications and supporting documents must be on file by January 1 for consideration for fall admission. Prospective students must apply for admission first to the Department of Sociology. If accepted, the Department forwards the application to the Graduate School for consideration. Acceptance into the graduate program in the Department of Sociology does not guarantee Graduate School admittance.

In some cases, the Department or the Graduate School may grant provisional admission. If admitted provisionally, the Graduate School usually requires the student to complete 12 hours of graduate work with a GPA of 3.25 or better during the first year. In some cases, the Department may require a student to fulfill particular requirements for provisional acceptance.

Transfer of Credit

In accordance with Graduate School policy, the Department accepts a maximum of 21 graduate level credit hours from another college or university toward fulfillment of the requirements of the Ph.D. degree. Students may not submit requests for transfer of credit until the successful completion of the "preliminary examination" (described below). The Department may recommend to the Graduate Dean that a maximum of nine graduate level credit hours from another college or university apply toward the requirements of the M.A. degree. Students wishing to transfer credit toward the M.A. degree must first complete a satisfactory record of performance over at least one semester in residence. Request for transfer of credit
forms to submit for consideration by the Graduate Committee are available from the Graduate Assistant.

The Graduate Committee recommends that students who completed graduate coursework elsewhere take or re-take the four required courses (two in Theory, Data Analysis (SOCY 5021), and Research Design (SOCY 5031)) here at CU. However, students who completed similar courses elsewhere and wish to petition for waiver of these requirements should submit to the Graduate Committee, before August 1 of the entering year, copies of syllabi, written work, and final grades from relevant courses. The Graduate Committee will review the request and make a decision prior to the start of the fall semester.

**The Advising System**

The Department matches every first-year student with a faculty member and an advanced Graduate Student to act as temporary advisors upon entering the program. Students have no obligation to keep this faculty member as a permanent advisor (although in some instances they may wish to do so) and students may change advisors at any time. Only members of the Graduate Faculty of the Department of Sociology or those specifically appointed by the Graduate Committee can act as advisors to graduate students.

With the exception of those in the first year of the program, graduate students must seek their own faculty advisors. Although students find advisors in many different ways, the procedure for doing so often begins by locating faculty members with interests that match their own. After an introductory meeting, the student and faculty member should discuss each other’s expectations, capacities, and timelines. Once a faculty member agrees to serve in the role of advisor, the student should notify the Graduate Assistant in writing or by email. Students should then work with the advisor to select other faculty members to serve on comprehensive examination and dissertation committees.

**Teaching Assistantships**

Most students receive financial support by serving as Teaching Assistants (TAs). Advanced students may teach their own courses as Graduate Part-Time Instructors (GPTIs). Graduate students in good standing are eligible for graduate teaching assistantships. Applications are available from the Graduate Assistant. Teaching assistantships and instructorships, as well as research appointments, are awarded by the Department of Sociology and approved by the Graduate School. Depending upon the type of appointment and the percent time involved, Teaching Assistants may receive tuition waivers for a specified number of credit hours. Such appointments are contingent upon "continued adequate progress" in a degree program. The Graduate School interprets this as the completion (receiving a letter
grade and not an IW or IF) of at least five graduate credit hours per semester, or eight credit hours combined graduate and undergraduate course work.

Students may hold appointments in more than one department; however, the total of all appointments may not exceed 50%. Under extraordinary circumstances, a student may hold an appointment in excess of 50% with the prior approval of the Graduate Committee and the Graduate School.

The Graduate School stipulates that the total number of semesters of teaching support for a Master's student is eight semesters, not including summers. For all Ph.D. students, regardless of whether receiving the Masters' degree at C.U. or elsewhere, the total number of semesters of teaching support is twelve semesters, not including summers.

The Process of Making Teaching Assignments
The Chair of the Graduate Committee or the Associate Chair of the Department makes initial assignments based on graduate student requests. The Chair of the Department reviews the assignments, makes appropriate changes, and issues letters informing students of their assignments. Students receive this notification in as timely a manner as possible. Students offered assistantships must sign a binding contract accepting the appointment and assuming responsibility to uphold it. The Department has no obligation to provide assistantships for more than one academic year at a time. An assistantship received in one academic year does not guarantee that an assistantship will be available in subsequent years. The Department generally does not accept applications for assistantships beyond a graduate student's 6th year of funding as a TA or GPTI (not 6 years in the program). However, such applications may be considered if opportunities of employment should arise.

Unless there are extenuating circumstances (as determined by the Chair of The Graduate Committee), the following criteria are generally used in making teaching assignments (established by the Graduate Student Association 12/09/98):

1) Progress toward Degree: Students who have adhered to the minimum requirements for the program (as detailed in this document) will be included in the pool of applicants for those positions. The Department will consider extenuating circumstances for those who have not met those requirements. The Department Chair makes the final decision on assignments.

2) Matching Course Requests to Availability: The Department will match these as best it can. Students will NOT be thrown out of the pool if there is not a match.

3) Expertise in Area: Includes such things as papers, research, and courses taken at the graduate level. This category takes into account different stages in the program.

4) Teaching Experience: Courses prepared and taught already. This would reduce work for the instructor and help to refine the quality of the course with each subsequent time taught.

5) Teaching Quality: Numerical average of previous two semesters' course grade and instructor grade on FCQs.
6) *Written Professional Projects*: Includes published articles, manuscripts under review, conference presentations, and awards/honors for written work.

7) *Cumulative GPA*

**Research Assistantships**

The Department encourages graduate students to pursue opportunities for funded research wherever possible. The Department's website features a link to potential funding sources, and students should work closely with faculty mentors to locate other sources (http://socsci.colorado.edu/SOC/).

**Cross-Campus Connections**

The Department supports the efforts of other university units in which students may seek financial support for their research (as well as faculty mentors). Several of these are branches of the Institute of Behavioral Science (IBS). IBS represents a multidisciplinary effort among researchers in the social and behavioral sciences. More detailed background information about IBS appears on the Web (http://www.colorado.edu/IBS/). The Institute of Behavioral Science includes the following Programs and Centers:

- Research Program on Environment and Behavior (E&B)
- Natural Hazards Research and Applications Information Center (NHRAIC)
- Research Program on Health Behavior (HB)
- Research Program on Political and Economic Change (PPEC)
- Globalization and Democracy Training Program (GAD)
- Research Program on Population Processes (Population Program)
- Population Aging Center
- Research Program on Problem Behavior (PB)
- Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence (CSPV)
- Social Science Data Analysis Center (SSDAC)

**Overview of Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree**

The following outlines program requirements, provides deadlines for meeting them, and gives an example of "adequate progress toward the degree." The Graduate Committee recognizes that alternative paths for adequate degree progress exist that differ from this illustration, that students entering the program with an M.A. degree could move through the program more quickly than others, and that differences among students may affect individual courses of study.

Students are awarded the Ph.D. degree when the following requirements are fulfilled. Students should aim to fulfill these requirements within five to seven years.
1) **Time Limit:** The Graduate School allows six years from the commencement of course work in a graduate program for completion of requirements, including the filing of the dissertation. Under extenuating circumstances, a graduate student and his or her advisor may request by letter an extension of the time limit. This letter should go to the Graduate Committee and, if approved, the Chair of the Committee will forward the request to the Dean of the Graduate School.

2) **Minimum Course Hours and Levels:** Students must complete a total of 45 hours of course work credit hours (which can include independent study courses). At least 24 hours must be in the Department of Sociology on the Boulder campus. All courses taken within the Department of Sociology must be numbered 5000 or above to qualify for graduate credit. Students may take up to six credit hours at the 4000 or 3000 levels in other departments if the courses are taught by a current graduate faculty member and are approved for graduate rank by the student's advisor, in accordance with the rules of the Graduate School. The Dean of the Graduate School must approve any courses numbered 3000.

3) **Successful Completion of Required Seminars:** These include Research Design, Data Analysis, Classical Theory, Contemporary or Postmodern Theory, the Sociology-in-Progress Seminar, and the Sociology Pro-Seminar.

   **Note on Transfer Credits:** As discussed above (see “Transfer of Credit”), the Department recommends that students who have completed graduate coursework elsewhere take or retake the Theory and Methods sequence at CU. However, students who have taken similar courses elsewhere and who wish to waive these requirements should submit to the Graduate Committee, by August 1, a request that includes a copy of the syllabus from the similar course, all written work submitted for that course, and the final grade received. The Graduate Committee will review the request and make a decision prior to the beginning of the fall semester.

4) **Completion of Equivalent of “Preliminary Exams”:** A student’s GPA in the six required classes during the first year in the program represents the "preliminary examination." A minimum of 3.5 GPA in these courses and no single grade lower than a B- constitutes passing. Any student receiving a B- or below in any required course must meet with the Graduate Committee faculty to assess her/his progress. Students who do not pass prelims must retake courses as directed by the Graduate Committee. Failure to pass the second time will result in expulsion from the Ph.D. program. A student may then, with approval from the Graduate Committee, work toward a terminal M.A. degree.

5) **Successful Completion of Theory and Methods Comprehensive Exams:** These written exams are given annually (usually early in August). Regardless of when the exams take place, results are not available until mid- to late September. The Graduate Committee administers the exams, which are drafted by faculty appointed by the Graduate Committee. The exams assess how well students have integrated essential knowledge. Students are required
to take the Methods exam at the end of the first year and Theory exam at the end of their second year. A student can choose to take both exams at the end of their first year. A student can apply to waive the requirement that they take the exams at the required time. The exams take place on separate days (Methods on one day and Theory on another). Students have up to eight hours to complete the exams, and may rely on written or electronic notes but not books to do so.

**Grading of Exams:** Students receive grades of Pass, High Pass (which is truly exceptional), or Low Pass (which communicates to the student that he or she has met the bare minimum requirements and must meet with faculty to discuss plans for improvement). Grades do not appear on students' official records. Students receiving High Pass may report this on their vitae and job application letters.

Students who fail one or both of these exams must retake failed exams the next year. Failure to pass the second time will result in expulsion from the Ph.D. program at which time a student may, upon approval from the Graduate Committee, work toward a terminal M.A. degree. See Appendix B for more information on Comprehensive Exams.

6) **Successful Completion of Specialty Area Comprehensive Exam:** Students must take this exam no later than the second full week of August after their fourth program year. The exam date and time are set by the student and the SCEC. The format of the exam may vary. Details are outlined in the section on Years 3 and 4 below.

7) **Successful Defense of Dissertation Proposal:** Students must prepare a written dissertation proposal and orally defend it before the Dissertation Committee before January of their fifth program year. Further details appear in the section on Years 5 and 6.

8) **Completion and Successful Defense of the Dissertation:** Students should complete dissertation research and defend by the end of their sixth program year. Students should obtain a copy of the Graduate School’s "Specifications for Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations" from the Graduate Assistant. Additional information appears under Years 5 and 6 below.

The following is a typical sequence through the Program:
(See also [http://socsci.colorado.edu/SOC/Graduate/checklist.html](http://socsci.colorado.edu/SOC/Graduate/checklist.html))

**Enter Program**

**Demonstrate Proficiency in Statistics:**

1) Pass qualifying examination in statistics, or
2) SOCY 4061 (Statistics) with grade of B- or better [prerequisite for SOCY 5021 (Data Analysis)], or
3) Pass any graduate level Statistics course with a grade of B- or better

**Year 1**
Required Fall Semester Seminars
1) SOCY 5001 (3 credits) Classical Theory
2) SOCY 5031 (3 credits) Research Design
3) SOCY 6821 Sociology-in-Progress (1 credit)

Required Spring Semester Seminars
1) SOCY 5021 (3 credits) Data Analysis
2) Second Theory Seminar (3 credits)
3) Elective Seminar (3 credits)
4) SOCY 6821 Sociology-in-Progress, Part II (1 credit)

Note: Courses will vary for students entering with a Master’s degree.

Study for Methods and Theory Comprehensive Exams
Required: Take Methods Comprehensive Examination (summer after Year 1)

Year 2
Required Fall and Spring Semesters
Enroll in elective seminars for a minimum of five credit hours a semester for full-time status in the program. Students who have not yet taken the second Theory Seminar should do so at this time.

Required Spring Semester: Sociology Pro-Seminar (1 credit)
Study for Theory Comprehensive Exam
Required: Take Theory Comprehensive Exam

Students who appealed and had approved not to take the Methods Comprehensive Examination in Year 1 MUST take it when it is offered during the summer following Year 2 in the program.

Students must complete 30 credit hours (not including dissertation hours) by the end of Year 2 to be eligible for funding to teach in Year 3. The 30 hours can include independent study courses. Students may teach as GPTIs after completing 30 hours of course work.

Years 3 and 4
Students who requested and had approved not to take the Theory Comprehensive Examination in Year 2 MUST take it when it is offered during the summer following Year 3 in the program.

Required Course Hours
For full-time status in the program, students must enroll for at least six credit hours each semester of their third and fourth program years until fulfilling course work requirements. By the end of Year 4, students must have completed 45 hours of course work (24 in residence). Before taking the Specialty Area Comprehensive Exam and after completing course work, students may enroll for one dissertation hour for full-time status. After taking the Specialty Area Comp Exam, they must enroll in a minimum of five dissertation hours.
**Develop Specialty Area**

Students in Years 3 and 4 should concentrate on building expertise in a specialty area. In addition to coursework, this should include submitting papers to journals and conferences and preparing for the Specialty Area Comprehensive Exam. Students at this stage in the program should work closely with a faculty mentor or a mentoring team.

**Form Specialty Area Comprehensive Examination Committee (SCEC)**

Specialty Area Comprehensive Examinations are administered by the student's SCEC, comprised of five members of the graduate faculty, chosen by the student in consultation with the advisor. At least three members (including the advisor) must come from the graduate faculty of the Department of Sociology. Students must advise the Graduate Committee of the members of the SCEC via the Graduate Assistant before the end of the first semester of the third program year. The Graduate Committee then approves the SCEC.

**Optional Primary and Secondary Committee Members**

Each graduate student, with the approval of her or his major professor, has the option to name one or two committee members as "secondary members." Secondary members of Comprehensive Examination Committees may add their voices to committee decisions whenever they wish to, but especially when the "primary members" have a disagreement or otherwise ask for the secondary members' input. There is no requirement or expectation that secondary members actively participate in oral defenses or evaluations of Comp Exams, but individual faculty members may feel comfortable “signing off” only after they have read everything and have fully participated in all committee meetings. Certainly, since both primary and secondary members must sign various forms needed for the student to graduate, both should always have copies of examinations. They may attend committee meetings and defenses, but they are not required to do so.

At most, only one committee member from outside the Department of Sociology can serve as a primary member. With the approval of the advisor, the student can make changes in “primary” or “secondary” status of committee members at any time. However, the Graduate Committee must approve any changes made in the four months before anticipated graduation.

**Specialty Area Comprehensive Examination Reading List**

Students must submit a Specialty Area Comprehensive Examination Reading List, approved by the Specialty Area Committee, to the Graduate Committee for approval before the end of the first semester of the student’s Third Year. The student should create this list in concert with the advisor and other committee members. A signature form for SCEC approval of the Reading List is available on the website. [http://socsci.colorado.edu/SOC/Graduate/specialtyarea.html](http://socsci.colorado.edu/SOC/Graduate/specialtyarea.html).

**Specialty Area Comprehensive Exam**
The purpose of the Specialty Area Comprehensive Exam is for the student to demonstrate mastery of the relevant literature in the area(s) of choice. Students must take this exam before the second full week of August after their fourth program year. The student and SCEC coordinate a date and time for the exam, as well as its format. Possibilities include but are not limited to the following:

- A written exam in which the student answers several questions (usually three out of five or six options). The SCEC creates the questions in concert with the student. The student has up to 24 hours to complete the exam.
- A two- to three-hour oral examination answering the questions as above.
- An oral defense of one or two papers (publication potential) in the student’s specialty area.

Students who fail this exam must retake it within a year. A second failure will result in expulsion from the Ph.D. program (at which time a student may, upon approval from the Graduate Committee, work toward a terminal M.A. degree).

Application for Candidacy
At least two weeks before the Specialty Exam, students must obtain an “Application for Admission to Candidacy” form from the Graduate Assistant, who will process and forward it to the Graduate School.

Years 5 and 6
Required Dissertation Hours
Students who have completed the Specialty Area Comp Exam must register for a minimum of five dissertation hours each semester until the dissertation defense. Thirty total hours are required; no more than 10 dissertation hours taken prior to the Specialty Exam can count toward the total requirement. Students may take up to 10 hours in the same semester as the Specialty Exam. These count toward the required 30 hours.

Formation of the Dissertation Committee
Students must work with their advisor to form a committee of five members. The Dissertation Committee may, but does not necessarily, consist of the same five faculty members who served on the SCEC. The student must designate one of these members as the Committee Chair, or two as Co-Chairs (outside members may co-chair, but not chair a committee). Three members must be graduate faculty of the Department of Sociology, one member must be graduate faculty from outside the Department, but from the Boulder campus and the fifth member may be from either the Sociology graduate faculty or the graduate faculty of another CU Boulder department. A faculty member from another CU campus or university can serve on a Dissertation Committee pending approval of a request for a temporary appointment. Students may, with the approval of the Committee Chair, add a sixth member if the addition is consistent with Graduate School policy.

Optional Primary and Secondary Committee Members
The Graduate Committee must approve the composition of all Dissertation
Committees before the student begins work on the dissertation. The student should
provide the names and designations (i.e., primary or secondary) to the Graduate
Assistant to obtain this approval.

**Dissertation Proposal and Defense**

Students must write a dissertation proposal and orally defend it before the
Dissertation Committee before January of their fifth program year. The Proposal
should offer a working outline of the project, developed prior to the defense and in
concert with (especially) the primary members of the Committee. Formats may
vary from 10-12 page proposals to documents that are more extensive. However,
proposals seldom exceed 30 pages, and no Committee expects students to submit
finished chapters of a dissertation at this time. In general, a proposal should
establish the topic(s) under investigation and state the relevant questions that have
arisen thus far. It should also establish the methods and/or analytical techniques
used in the initial stages of the research, keeping in mind that the need for
additional or alternative strategies might arise as the research progresses. A
timetable can help the student as well as the Committee, but given the
unpredictability of research, this, too, might be subject to change. In short, no
specific requirements for a prospectus can apply to every project.

Students must allow committee members at least two weeks before an oral
defense to review the proposal and determine project suitability. Committee
members may suggest changes during this time. The student may officially work on
the dissertation project only after the Committee has approved the prospectus or
revised prospectus with a majority vote. However, the work might well be
underway (for example, as part of a course) at the time of the defense.

Students must bring a Report on Dissertation Proposal Defense Form,
available on the website, to the defense.

http://socsci.colorado.edu/SOC/Graduate/defense.doc

After obtaining signatures, students must make two copies and follow the directions
on the form for submission. An approved proposal is a contract between the
Committee and student who can expect to receive a Ph.D. only if he or she fulfills
the proposal’s objectives and successfully defends the dissertation.

**Dissertation Research and Defense**

Students should aim to complete dissertation research and defend by the end of the
sixth program year. Primary committee members should read chapters or sections
of the dissertation in progress. Secondary members may elect to read only the last
draft, but this may be negotiated between the Committee member(s) and the
student.

The Graduate School’s requirements for the written dissertation appear in
"Specifications for Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations,"
available from the Graduate Assistant.
The Ph.D. dissertation defense is a public event and any student or faculty member may attend. At least four Committee members must evaluate the defense as satisfactory in order to pass. Candidates who fail the defense will have a second opportunity to defend. The Committee must specify what the candidate should do to prepare. The Department has no obligation to give students a third chance to defend the dissertation. A Committee can (and usually does) require dissertation revisions even if the candidate passes the defense.

**The M.A. Degree**

The Department of Sociology does not have a Master’s degree program. However, students may obtain an M.A. degree in transit to the Ph.D. if they wish, and students unable to complete Ph.D. requirements may pursue a terminal M.A. degree, pending approval by the Graduate Committee. The Department does not allow extra time for the completion of the M.A. degree.

Students may meet the requirements for an M.A. degree in two ways: they may complete 24 hours of course work (with grades of B or better) and write a thesis or they may take 30 hours of course work and orally defend the question, “What is Sociology?”

**Guidelines for the thesis option:**

- **Formation of a Master’s Thesis Advisory Committee (TAC)**
  
  The Thesis Committee must consist of at least three regularly appointed graduate faculty members from the Department of Sociology. Students select the members of the Committee and designate one as Chair. A candidate may, with the approval of the TAC chair, place additional members on the Committee consistent with the rules of the Graduate School. Students must report the composition of the Committee to the Graduate Assistant, who will then submit the list to the Graduate Committee for approval. Committees do not have official standing until approved by Graduate Committee.

- **Preparation of a Written Thesis**
  
  The thesis must demonstrate competent and independent scholarship and make a useful contribution to sociological knowledge. An M.A. thesis is shorter and entails less original research than a Ph.D. dissertation. Students will find the format for the M.A. Thesis in "Specifications for Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations," available from the Graduate Assistant.

- **Completion of at Least Four and a Maximum of Six Thesis Credit Hours**
The master’s thesis must represent the equivalent of four to six semester hours of thesis work. Students must register for thesis credit hours in the semester of the thesis defense.

- **Successful Oral Defense of the Thesis**
  The thesis defense is an oral and public event at which the candidate explains and defends the thesis. The Thesis Committee, here constituted as an examining committee, assesses the adequacy of the thesis and the candidate's competence in the relevant areas of sociological knowledge. If more than one TAC member votes against passing, the candidate fails the defense. Candidates who fail will have a second opportunity to make a successful defense. The TAC must specify what the candidate should do in preparation for the second defense. If the candidate fails the second defense, the Department of Sociology has no obligation to provide another opportunity. The TAC can require modifications in the thesis even if the candidate passes the defense. Satisfactory completion of these modifications is a condition of passing the defense.

**Annual Review and Report**

Each spring, the Graduate Committee evaluates graduate students' progress in the program. To achieve high-quality mentoring of graduate students, each student should prepare Annual Report and meet with his or her Advisor or Major Professor to review progress toward timely completion of the degree. The form for the Annual Report is available on the website:

http://socsci.colorado.edu/SOC/Graduate/vitaeform.doc

In the Report, students record course work, teaching assignments, comp exams completed, papers presented, awards and grants received, and other information relevant to evaluation. Students will receive the dates for submitting completed vitae via socbiz. A sample of this document appears in the Appendix. Students should complete the form and submit one copy to the Graduate Assistant and one to his or her advisor/major professor by the first week of March.

The student should then schedule a meeting with his or her advisor (or major professor) for a review of progress toward the degree. The precise deadline for this review depends on the date of the Graduate Committee meeting, but students and faculty will receive notice of dates via email (i.e., socbiz). As a rule, students should meet with advisors before April 15. In cases where students meet regularly with the advisor, no additional meeting is necessary. However, in all cases, the advisor must provide documentation to the Graduate Assistant that the student is making satisfactory progress in the Program (or that a binding plan has been developed to restore satisfactory progress).

Completion of the Annual Report and meeting with the advisor/major professor is REQUIRED. In addition, completion of the Annual Report and meeting
with Committee Chair will be REQUIRED for all students applying for department funding (as TA or GPTI).

Before making fall funding decisions, the Graduate Committee will review the Annual Reports for the latter group, and may agree to fund individual students who demonstrate satisfactory progress. These students should also submit a timetable for future progress (i.e., completion of all exams, formation of committee, defending a proposal, completion of the dissertation, and graduation).

**Pre-registration for Graduate Students**

All graduate students should register as soon as possible after receiving registration materials. Graduate students who wish to enroll in independent study, dissertation hours, or master's thesis hours should contact the Graduate Assistant. Students who register late may incur financial penalties and will find it difficult to enroll in desired courses. Failure to complete registration as soon as possible may also lead to the cancellation of graduate seminars due to insufficient enrollment.

**Time-Out Program**

This allows students in the pre-Comprehensive Exam stage to leave the graduate program for a specified period without penalty. Students in good standing who wish to take Time-Out must: (1) petition the Graduate Committee for approval, and (2) apply through the Registrar's Office. The six-year clock does not run while a student is on Time-Out. Post-Comprehensive Exam students wishing to take Time-Out should see the Graduate Assistant.

**Graduate Student Petitions**

Students may petition the Graduate Committee to request exceptions to rules when extenuating circumstances exist. Obtain petitions from, and submit them to, the Graduate Assistant. Students should address petitions to the Graduate Committee. The text of the petition should include:

1) a summary of the issue,
2) a statement of students' preference of “audience” for the discussion of the petition (elected student representatives to the Graduate Committee will be included in the committee's deliberations of the student's petition only by request of the petitioner),
3) the names of the student's committee members,
4) Signatures of the student and his or her faculty advisor.
In general, the Graduate Committee places petitions on the agenda of the next meeting following submission. The Graduate Committee meets regularly during the academic year, but not during summer. Students should plan to submit petitions in time for consideration during the fall and spring semesters.

The Committee considers petitions on a case-by-case basis. The outcomes of past petitions submitted to the Graduate Committee do not constitute policy and in no way indicate the possible outcome of future petitions submitted by other students.

Appendix A: Departmental Email Lists

**Socfac:** This email list is for Department of Sociology faculty members only. Faculty members use this list for both official departmental communication and for personal communication among faculty.

Graduate students may not subscribe to the socfac email list. However, they may post to the socfac list if the content of the message relates to official departmental business. Graduate students should not post personal messages to the socfac list.

**Socbiz:** This email list is for official departmental communication between faculty members, staff, and graduate students. All graduate students in the Department of Sociology are required to subscribe to this list, and faculty members may subscribe to socbiz if they so choose. Graduate students are required to check their official university account periodically. This is the only formal means of communication for graduate students in the Department of Sociology.

Graduate students and faculty members may both post to socbiz if the content of the message relates to official departmental business. Graduate students or faculty members should not post personal messages to the socbiz list.

**Socgrads:** This email list is for informal communication between graduate students. Graduate students may choose to subscribe to this list, but they are not required to do so. Faculty members may not subscribe to this list.

Appendix B: Additional Information about Comprehensive Examinations

In response to questions about the purpose, structure, and grading of the comprehensive examinations, the Graduate Committee offers additional information below. This appendix provides clarification of procedures but does not change the way the exams are structured, administered, or graded.

*Purpose of the Exams*

Comprehensive Exams in Methods and Theory are routinely given in graduate programs to assess students’ understanding of these areas, both of which are
essential to the practice of sociology. The exams are intended to evaluate students’ ability to use theory, apply methods, and integrate knowledge in an efficient and appropriate manner. The material covered on the exams builds upon, and goes beyond, what is routinely offered in the department’s graduate seminars. Resources available for preparing for the exams include reading lists (available from the Graduate Assistant) and previous exams (available online: see “Resources” in the “Graduate Program” area of the department’s website). The department does not provide answers to previous exams.

Structure of the Exams
The Theory Examination consists of three sections, covering Classical, Modern, and Postmodern/Contemporary Theory. Students choose one question among several offered in each section. The completed exam, therefore, consists of three answers, one in each of the three sections in the exam. Answers must be in essay form, using complete sentences and correct grammar and spelling.

The Methods Exam requires students to answer three or four questions, sometimes with options for a particular question. One question often requires students to design an appropriate scientific study, in order to test students’ ability to create a justifiable methodological approach to a particular social issue. Another type of question often incorporated on the exams is designed to evaluate students’ ability to apply and interpret quantitative methods. Importantly, there is no guarantee that these types of questions will be asked in each examination. Thus, students should be prepared to answer these types of questions as well as others related to methodological issues covered in classes and in readings.

Grading of the Exams
Students receive their grades by confidential letters from the Graduate Director, usually distributed during mid- to late September. As explained in the Overview of Requirements for the Ph.D., students receive grades of Pass, High Pass, which is truly exceptional, or Low Pass, which communicates to the student that he or she has met the bare minimum requirements. As stated in the letter, students receiving grades of Low Pass must arrange to meet with faculty to demonstrate improvement. In some instances, students must revise and expand on incomplete answers to particular questions. Grades do not appear on students’ official records. Students receiving High Pass may report this on their vitae and job application letters. All students are welcome to make appointments with Examining Committee members if they wish to clarify why they received a particular grade.

Generally, the Theory and Methods Examining Committees each consist of three faculty members. Because the examinations assess students’ comprehensive understanding of theory and methods, the committees may, but do not necessarily, include faculty who teach the required Theory and Methods courses.

Each Theory Exam is read in its entirety by all faculty members of the examining committee. Members grade the exams individually, and then meet to discuss the results. There is usually consensus on grades, but in instances where there is disagreement, committee members discuss and re-read relevant exams or
particular questions until agreement is reached. Typically, each question of the Methods Exam is read by at least two committee members, with each committee member reading a sample or portion (if not the entirety) of each student's exam. The committee then meets to discuss results, and members read and re-read particular questions until reaching consensus on evaluation. Overall, there is usually an exceptionally high level of consensus among committee members.