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SOCIOLOGY STUDENT HANDBOOK

**Ph.D. Program in Sociology
The Graduate Center
City University of New York**

Dear Student,

Welcome to New York and the Ph.D. Program in Sociology at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York! You are a member of an exciting program located in the heart of a vibrant city. Both the city and the program have a great deal to offer: diversity, energy, & intensity all of which can exhilarate and sometimes overwhelm the senses.

The Graduate Center is unique in the sense that it doesn't have a typical campus and consequently has a different community feel compared to what you would find at a conventional campus. We look forward to working with you and want to make your academic career a challenging and rewarding experience.

The Sociology Faculty and Staff

Philip Kasinitz Executive Officer

Mary Clare Lennon Deputy Executive Officer

Rati Kashyap Program Coordinator

Urania Wills College Assistant

INTRODUCTION

This handbook outlines the major requirements and procedures for doctoral work in sociology at

The Graduate Center (GC) of The City University of New York (CUNY). This material has been prepared by students and faculty in the program. This program publication supplements the official Graduate Center's Bulletin. For information about student aid and student life in general, see the current Student Handbook <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Prospective-Current-Students/Prospective-Students> . Additional information is provided at a program orientation meeting for incoming students at the beginning of each fall semester. Please attend that orientation. The Program in Sociology is administered by a staff comprised of the Executive Officer, the Deputy Executive Officer, the Assistant Program Officer, and the front office College Assistant.

ADMISSION AND MATRICULATION

The Sociology Doctoral Program admits students for work toward the Ph.D. in Sociology only. Master's degrees may be granted on an "en-route" basis. Applications for the Ph.D. program are due by December 15 for fall admission. Application form is available online on admissions home page <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Prospective-Current-Students/Prospective-Students/Application-Instructions-Forms> . All applicants are required to have taken The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) before admission. International students must take the TOEFL exam to demonstrate language and written skills in English. All applicants are required to submit a writing sample along (e.g., a college research paper or an article) with their other application materials.

GENERAL PROGRAM INFORMATION

Success in a doctoral program involves more than simply passing courses. Students, faculty, and sociologists elsewhere are partners in a collective intellectual enterprise that extends well beyond the classroom. From the student's perspective this means actively making the most of opportunities to meet and learn from other students and faculty, to listen to others' ideas and to develop one's own. To facilitate this kind of learning, the program sponsors a number of formal events: a Proseminar, regular research colloquia, occasional talks and meetings on student and professional issues, and ongoing discussion groups devoted to particular concentrations within sociology (discussed below). You are strongly encouraged to attend these events frequently and actively involve yourself in the intellectual and professional life of the program, as well as in the Sociology Students Association.

The Proseminar is set up as a course (Soc. 70000) in which new students should enroll during their first semester of study. Each week, different program faculty introduces themselves, their fields of specialization, and their current research. Attending the Proseminar lets you know who we are and gives you a sense of ongoing projects and activities in the program. It may also give you ideas about with whom you might wish to study and help you select an adviser.

The Colloquium series is not a course, but meets monthly (on Fridays) throughout the semester to bring distinguished scholars from outside the program to talk about their research. It's a way of keeping us in touch with the larger intellectual world. The colloquium series sometimes

follows a theme for a semester, and it often gives rise to debate and contention. This is one important way that sociology gets done presenting one's work to audiences and responding to commentary. Both faculty and students should expect to attend the colloquia on a regular basis. Details about speakers, dates, and times are posted on the website and in the program. The colloquia are followed by an informal reception with food and drink, to which all are invited.

Beyond our walls, the American Sociological Association (ASA) offers a student membership, which includes subsidized subscriptions to major journals and provides news about national and regional sociological meetings that you may wish to attend. It is sensible to attend one or more conferences, as an orientation to the profession. Our senior students sometimes present their work at such conferences. There are numerous other conferences on specialized topics, many of which are announced to our listserv.

Informal discussion groups have been jointly organized by faculty and students who share interests in particular subfields or concentration areas, such as cultural studies, gender, and urban research. They take on various formats and are occasions for discussing research and ideas. Attend whichever discussions strike your interest. There is no formal membership, and you aren't expected to be an expert to take part. Look for emails announcing such meetings, or ask students or faculty about them.

IDEAL TRAJECTORY THROUGH THE PROGRAM

In order to obtain your Ph.D. degree in sociology at the CUNY Graduate Center, you must accumulate 60 course credits (including five required courses), pass the First and Second (Orals) Exams, fulfill the language requirement, prepare a dissertation proposal, and complete and defend a dissertation. Each of these stages is described in detail in this handbook. You should read the pertinent sections to obtain a full understanding of the program and Graduate Center procedures and rules that you need to follow in the course of your graduate studies. What is presented here is only an outline of the sequence and recommendations for plotting your trajectory.

Course work: If you are a full-time student, you should complete your course work in 4-5 semesters; if you are a student who has a part-time job, you can extend your course work to 7-8 semesters. We strongly urge all students to take the required theory courses and the Proseminar in their first year of study, and the required statistics courses should also be taken in their first year. After completing your first year, you can begin to specialize. You are expected to develop expertise in three areas, which may be chosen from among the specializations listed on page 12. You can develop other areas of specialization as well. In each area of specialization you should take two or more courses, preferably more in your major area.

Language requirement: This may be fulfilled at any time prior to advancement to candidacy. Students already proficient in a foreign language may want to take a language exam in the first year of the program; international students whose native language is not English may request a

waiver; students who do not meet either of these criteria should read the section in this handbook dealing with this requirement.

First Exam: In addition to obtaining an average of B or better in the required courses, students must pass written theory exam in sociological theory (classical and contemporary) by the time 45 credits are received. Therefore, according to the timetable above, full-time students should take these exams in the first or second year; part-time students may also want to fulfill this requirement in the first or second year, but at least should keep in mind the 45-credit limit.

Second Exam (Orals): Full-time students should be prepared to take this exam in their second or third year of study in the program, after completing course work.

Dissertation: This is the final stage of the program. Students should plan to develop a dissertation proposal after passing the Second Exam. Once the proposal is approved the time necessary for research and writing will vary according to the nature of the thesis. In any case, students are advised that The Graduate Center rules require defense of the dissertation within 8 years or 16 semesters after entering the program; students who transfer 21 credits from another institution must defend within 7 years or 14 semesters.

ADVISING

When students enter the program, the student is assigned an advisor by the Executive Officer for the first year of study. After the first year, students should select their adviser, after discussion with the faculty member involved. Ideally this faculty member's research orientation should be of interest to the student.

Faculty who are teaching at The Graduate Center have office hours on one or more days per week. You can make an appointment to see any member of the faculty by emailing him or her directly. You are urged to make use of these office hours to talk to faculty or to choose your adviser. The faculty wants to get to know you and your interests. We enjoy talking about ideas, work you have read, and about our own research. Don't be shy and don't think you have to have a problem before you approach a faculty member. Get to know us.

You should see your adviser several times each semester for help in choosing courses, developing your research, finding a job, recommending fellowships you want to apply for, and to discuss other concerns you may have. If you wish to change your adviser, please see the Executive Officer before you make final arrangements.

GOOD ACADEMIC STANDING

The Graduate Center uses several criteria to determine good academic standing. Students must abide by all of the following criteria:

1. Maintain a 3.00 or higher GPA

2. have no more than two open grades (INC stands for incomplete, INP stands for permanent incomplete, and NGR stands for No Grade Reported by the professor.)
3. Complete the First Exam before accumulating 45 credits (this includes any transfer credits granted by the program)
4. Complete the Second Exam before you finish 10 semesters (5 years) in the program
5. Be within the accepted time limit for the degree.

If a student is out of compliance with any one of these criteria, that student is not in good academic standing; this can have an adverse effect on the student's ability to collect financial aid, and can block a student's registration in the program.

If students do not register for the current semester or do not obtain an approved Leave of Absence before the deadline at the beginning of the current semester, they will automatically be dropped from the program by the Registrar's Office. So, if you need to interrupt your studies or temporarily withdraw from the program for any reason, it is very important that you notify the Executive Officer in writing, meet with her/him, and file the appropriate papers with the Registrar's Office. Simply failing not to register for a semester will cause you enormous difficulties.

GRADES

The Graduate Center faculty issues the following grades:

A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, F, P (Pass)

A GPA above 3.0 is required in the graduate program, and anyone with a GPA below 3.0 is deemed not to be making satisfactory progress. If a student is unable to complete all of the course work by the end of the semester, prior arrangements must be made with the professor for an INC (incomplete) to be entered as the final grade. The student then has 12 months to submit the work and receive a grade. After the 12-month period has expired, the INC becomes an INP (permanent incomplete). If the work is submitted after the 12-month period, the professor must write to the Vice President for Student Affairs and request that the grade be accepted. There is no guarantee that this request will be granted.

Students should be aware that the Sociology Program's Admissions and Awards Committee has a policy that any student with more than two open grades (INC, INP, ABS, ABD and/or NGR) is not eligible for financial aid from the program for the following academic year. Open grades therefore have a direct, negative influence on financial aid and should be avoided as much as possible. If you do start to accumulate incompletes, it is wise to consult with your adviser and the Deputy Executive Officer to work out a strategy for completing the work. If you fail to do so, be assured that the Registrar will realize the fact that you have open grades and may block your registration.

TRANSFER CREDITS

Students are eligible to transfer some credits of graduate course work done at other institutions. The course work must be equivalent to that offered in the Ph.D. Program in Sociology. Credit will not be given for courses in unrelated fields. By GC policy, no credit can be given for courses where a letter grade was not received (i.e., courses cannot be transferred if students received a P grade for passing). Also, the GC grants no credit for graduate courses if they were used to meet the graduation requirements for an undergraduate degree.

The admissions Committee evaluates the records of incoming students and makes a recommendation on the number of transfer credits to be accepted.

The actual transfer of the credits will take place when the students ask that the next step of the process be instituted. At that point, the admissions Committee's recommendation will be sent to the Registrar's office, where the final determination is made of the number of transfer credits allowed.

The admissions Committee operates on the program policy of accepting a maximum of 21 transfer credits for each applicant.

Students should note that a transfer of credits brings them closer to Level II and lower tuition, but also that much closer to the First Examination, which must be taken by the time 45 credits are earned and before moving to Level II. In other words, if 21 credits are transferred, you must pass the First Exam by the time you have completed 8 additional courses. Students must still take all our required core courses in sociology and are given blanket credits for transferred courses. Blanket credits are simply subtracted from the 60 course credits required for the Ph.D. degree.

LEVELS I, II, AND III

Tuition charges are based on the student's level, which is determined by the number of credits completed (including transfer credits accepted by the program and the Registrar) and specific academic accomplishments. These levels are defined as follows:

LEVEL I: First 45 credits of graduate work, fully earned and evaluated (which may include approved transfer credits) and successful completion of the first examination (which includes the written examination and completion of the five required core courses).

LEVEL II: From the semester following completion of 45 credits, fully earned and evaluated, and successful completion of the first examination to advancement to candidacy. During this period, students must complete their course work; pass the second examination (orals); pass the language examination (if they have not done so already); have a clear financial record; and secure the Executive Officer's approval on the 'Validation of the Dissertation Committee' form. At this point, the Advancement to Candidacy form will be submitted to the Registrar for certification.

LEVEL III: From the semester following advancement to candidacy to completion of the degree. Students must prepare a dissertation proposal for review by the Faculty Membership Committee as well as write the dissertation. Students are expected to maintain their matriculation by enrolling in Soc. 90000 (Dissertation Supervision) every semester (except for approved leaves of absence) until completion of the degree. Level III students registering for courses for credit other than 90000 will be charged additional tuition on a per-credit basis, but they may audit courses without any additional tuition charges.

LEVEL I	To move to	
	LEVEL II	LEVEL III
When you enter the program, you are level 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take 45 credits, including 5 required courses - Pass the theory exam 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Take 60 credits - Pass the second exam (orals) and language exam - Get the Validation of the Dissertation Committee form approved

FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME STATUS

For purposes of registration, full-time students (or those certified full-time) are those who are enrolled for 7 credits for level I and II. All students at level III are considered full time. part-time students are those who are registered for (or certified for) less. Please consult the program with questions regarding status and/or registration.

Level I students can register on a full-time basis or as a part-time student. Level II and Level III students must register on a full-time or certified full-time basis. Once the Program Office notifies the Registrar that the First Exam has been successfully completed and if the other criteria have been met, advancement from Level I to Level II is implemented by the Registrar’s Office. (Only at Level I are tuition charges for part-time students lower than for full-time/certified full-time students.) Movement to Level III commences the semester following advancement to candidacy.

In order to maintain eligibility for certain types of fellowships, loans, or other types of awards, or to maintain eligibility for deferments for certain types of loans (GSLs, Perkins Loans, etc.), it may be necessary to maintain full-time status. (For further information on this, consult the originator of the loan, or the Financial Aid Office.)

TIME LIMIT FOR THE DEGREE

The Graduate Center automatically computes your expected date of graduation when you enter the program. Students who are admitted with a bachelor’s degree are given 16 semesters (8 years) to complete all requirements for the degree. Students admitted with a master’s degree and granted 21 transfer credits are given 14 semesters (7 years) to complete all requirements for the degree. Periods of official leaves of absence (see below) are excluded from the time limits set for completion of the degree.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE OR WITHDRAWALS

Students interested in taking time off from pursuing their degree must first request a leave of absence or a withdrawal. Non-registration does not automatically activate a leave of absence; a leave must be requested. As indicated previously, if a student does not register without requesting a leave, he or she will automatically be dropped from the program by the Registrar's Office.

Students interested in applying for either a leave of absence or a withdrawal are asked to submit the request in writing to the Executive Officer. The reason(s) for the request must be stated in the letter. The letter should be submitted during the semester prior to the desired action. Leaves are granted at the discretion of the Executive Officer. Once the Executive Officer has approved the leave (or the withdrawal), an official form ("Request for Leave of Absence" or "Request for Withdrawal") must be filed with the office of the Registrar. You are allowed a maximum of 4 semesters of leave. These semesters are in addition to the 14-16 you are given to complete the degree.

READMISSION

Readmission following withdrawal is at the discretion of the Sociology Program. You should write a letter to the Executive Officer explaining your reasons for wishing to be readmitted along with some indication of your academic plans, should you be readmitted.

If your request is approved, you will be asked to submit a \$20 check, payable to The City University of New York, which we will submit to the Registrar along with a copy of your letter and the Application for Readmission form. Academic work (including courses, examinations, and dissertation proposals) completed before you withdrew will be reevaluated upon readmission and credited toward completion of the Ph.D. at the program's discretion.

You may be asked to reapply formally to the program, in which case you will be evaluated in comparison to that year's pool of applicants.

EN-ROUTE MASTER'S DEGREE

Although the Program in Sociology does not offer an M.A. degree, it is possible for doctoral students to obtain a master's degree from a senior college in the CUNY system that has its own M.A. program in sociology or social research (Brooklyn College, City College, and Queens College.) To be eligible, a student must have completed 45 doctoral credits (without counting transfer credits and proseminar), have a B average in all course work, and have passed the First Exam. In addition, the student must submit a research seminar paper from an 800-level course as evidence of preparation in sociological research. This piece of research work must meet the standards of the M.A. committee of the senior college that grants the degree. The decision whether or not to grant an M.A. belongs to the senior college, not to The Graduate Center.

Students must also be registered for the current semester and have no outstanding financial

liability to the university. Please note that students already holding an M.A. may not use their transfer credits toward the 45 required for an en-route master's degree. Students who have done master's-level graduate work (but did not receive a master's degree) may use up to 12 transfer credits as part of the 45 credits required for the en-route M.A. degree. Transfer credits must be officially granted by the Ph.D. Program in Sociology and accepted by the Registrar prior to making the application for the en-route degree (see page 7 for further information on transfer credits).

Applications for the en-route M.A. should be made through the Sociology Program office at the beginning of the semester in which the student expects to receive the master's degree. Please be aware that the granting of an en-route master's is a courtesy offered by the senior colleges. It is not something that the Ph.D. program can guarantee.

PROGRAM COMMUNICATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES

COMPUTER LAB

The Sociology Program maintains a computer lab, and all graduate students in the program are encouraged to make use of this resource. The equipment available includes a number of PCs, a Mac and printer; software includes Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, SPSS, SAS, and Windows. The Graduate Center also houses a Computer Center located at the concourse level and no. of computers in the library. Any graduate student may use the Macintosh and IBM computers there. In order to use any of these facilities, however, students must have an account from the Computer Center (processing takes about one week). A Computer Center account is automatically created after your register. The Computer Center offers regular introductory workshops that deal with the basic and advance computer skills and students are encouraged to check on line to view what workshops are being given and attend those workshops.

MAILBOXES

All students currently registered for courses will have a mailbox. In order to save on mailing costs, student newsletters and other program announcements will usually be sent via email or placed in your mailbox. Please check your mailbox periodically. All confidential correspondence from the program will be sent to your home address. You may have professional correspondence mailed to you at the program.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please notify the Sociology Program office promptly of any change of address or phone number. Also inform of the change to the Office of the Registrar.

COMPLAINTS, DIFFICULTIES, HASSLES

If you encounter some difficulty in the course of your time here, seek advice from your adviser or fellow students and/or meet with the Executive Officer or the Deputy Executive Officer to discuss the matter.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for doctoral studies in sociology include 60 credits of course work the First Exam, the Second Exam (Orals), proficiency in a foreign language, dissertation research, a dissertation proposal, and the dissertation. The single most important project one accomplishes in graduate school is the dissertation, for it is this original study that defines one as a scholar in the early years of a career. Thus the other requirements of the program are geared to preparing the student for dissertation research and writing. See the sections on Interdisciplinary Studies and Research Centers for the broad scholarly possibilities available to you.

COURSE WORK, REQUIRED AND ELECTIVE

The following core courses are required of entering students, and must be completed before the student accumulates 45 credits. Please plan to take these courses during your first two years in the program.

Theory:

Soc. 70100 Development of Sociological Theory

Soc. 70200 Contemporary Sociological Theory

Methods:

Soc. 71500 Sociological Statistics I

Soc. 71600 Sociological Statistics II

Soc. 71000 or one other methodology course numbered Soc. 81000 through Soc. 81900

Students entering the program with prior advanced training in statistical methods may, with the permission of the program, substitute other more advanced quantitative methods courses instead of Stats I and/or Stats II

In addition to these five required core courses, entering students are strongly urged to take Sociology 70000, the Proseminar, which introduces them to research in the fields in which our faculty has particular strengths. Under certain circumstances a required course or courses may be waived if you have already taken the course elsewhere. If you think you qualify for this, contact the Executive Officer.

The rest of the curriculum consists of elective courses. Elective courses afford the student an opportunity to sample the variety of modern sociology. They also give you a chance to work with individual faculty members, to get to know their research, and to develop possible mentoring relationships that may be helpful later when working on the dissertation. These considerations apply to electives taken outside the Sociology Program as well. At the GC, there are no formal majors or minors in the Sociology Program. Students are encouraged to specialize in one or more subfields of sociology--for example, medical sociology or political economy -- but beyond a small core of courses in any field, there are no formal requirements for specialization. One becomes a sociologist with special interests and qualifications by learning to do research and by demonstrating substantive expertise, primarily through the dissertation.

We recommend that you choose your elective courses to familiarize yourself with a variety of substantive areas in sociology and to deepen your research skills. Also, keep in mind that the Second Exam will involve your demonstration of expertise in three areas of sociology. It is sensible first to take courses in these three areas one or perhaps two in each.

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

The 70 or more faculty members of the Doctoral Faculty in the program represent a great diversity of scholarship and have a wide range of substantive interests. A number of broad areas of specialization encompass many of their scholarly activities and represent the subfields of the program. These include:

- Culture, Mass Media, and the Arts
- Criminology & Deviance
- Education
- Ethnography
- International Migration
- Gender
- Race and Ethnicity
- Religion
- Social and Critical Theory
- State, Social Class, Political Economy
- Urban Sociology
- Work, Occupations, Organizations

INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Students who wish to pursue a course of interdisciplinary study may do so with the understanding that their doctorate will be in sociology and that they will have to satisfy all the requirements of the Sociology Program. We encourage interdisciplinary study and will work with the student to design a reasonable course and research background that includes mentors outside sociology.

Certificate Programs, which are available to students matriculated in the Ph.D. Programs at The Graduate Center, are established at GC, e.g. Women's Studies, Film Studies, Demography, Africana Studies and many more. Please consult the GC handbook for more information.

LANGUAGE REQUIREMENT

Before being advanced to candidacy, students are required to demonstrate their ability to read scholarly work in a major foreign language. This requirement can be met in one of two ways. The student may take a written examination offered by the Sociology Program in any of the following languages: French, German, or Spanish. If you wish to be tested in another language that is not listed here, please consult the Executive Officer to see if alternate arrangements can be made. International students may request a waiver of the language exam if their native language

is not English. For the written language exam, in consultation with the faculty the student selects a journal article to be translated and is given two hours to complete the translation. Dictionaries may be used. The program will help you set up the exam.

The second option entails passing a language course offered in the GC Language Reading Program. The program offers intensive courses during the academic year, as well as in the summer. The large majority of these courses are geared toward reading comprehension only. Students must pass the course and supply the Executive Officer with proof of successful completion (a letter from the language instructor to that effect is sufficient).

QUALIFYING EXAMS

Students are required to pass two qualifying exams (the First Exam and the Orals) before they can advance to candidacy. The First Exam is given once during each semester. The Orals are scheduled by the student and his/her orals committee at any time during the academic year. Check with the Sociology Office for the exact dates of the First Exam.

The First Exam consists of TWO requirements: 1) an average of B or better in the five required core courses. In addition, students should have an average of B or better in each of the two required statistics courses, and 2) passing written examination in combine classical and contemporary sociological theory.

Sample questions and reading lists are available from the program office for study at the beginning of the semester. The actual questions are not distributed in advance. The exams are graded by a committee of several faculty members. The grading is blind, students' names are not on the exams. Students are allowed and encouraged to take the theory exams as soon as they and their adviser feel that the student is ready to attempt the examination. No minimum number of credits is required to take the First Exam.

Before the completion of 30 credits, no limits are placed on the number of times the theory exam may be taken without passing, and failure to pass the exam is not recorded in the student's file. After 30 credits are completed, students have two chances to pass the theory exam. (Leaving the exam without handing in answers counts as having taken it once.)

According to Graduate Center regulations both parts of the First Exam must be completed by the time the student completes 45 credits and before the student can move to Level II. All incompletes (including courses from other programs) will be counted as completed credits. If a student has not taken and passed the First Exam upon completing 45 credits, subsequent registration for additional courses will be suspended until the student has successfully completed the exam. Failing either part of the theory exams two times after completing 30 credits will be cause for termination from the program. If the student wishes to appeal (based on the criteria discussed below), a meeting between the student, his/her adviser, and the Executive Officer will be arranged before termination procedures are set in motion.

Students who fail the theory exam will receive written evaluations of their performance. We emphasize that the theory examinations are not intended to test what students have learned in theory courses, because a particular course will select certain themes for emphasis that may or may not be stressed in the examination. Students are expected to be able to connect the core concepts of sociological theory to the traditions associated with particular theorists. But we wish to stress that this is indeed a first exam. We urge students to take the theory exams as soon as possible.

FIRST EXAM APPEALS PROCEDURE

The following procedures provide a guide to students seeking a reevaluation of their grade on the First Examination. If the student at any point feels that there have been procedural irregularities or a major misevaluation of the exam, he or she has the right to appeal to the Executive Officer and, if not resolved, to the Provost. Graduate Center policies and procedures with respect to disputes concerning grades or performance on examinations are outlined in the GC Student Handbook.

If the First Exam is taken and failed before the student has taken 30 credits, it will not be recorded or counted against the student in any way. Under these circumstances, an appeal will not be granted. Also, if the exam is taken after completion of 30 credits and the decision of the examination committee to fail a student is unanimous, no appeal at the program level will be granted.

Failure when the decision was not unanimous and the exam has been taken for the first time after 30 credits can be appealed to the Executive Officer if the student believes that there has been a gross injustice. The Executive Officer's decision will be final at the program level. A failure when the exam has been taken for the second time after 30 credits can be appealed to a two-person anonymous appeals committee appointed by the Executive Officer. If one or both of the appeals readers fail the appealed exam, the student will fail and will be dropped from the program. The student may appeal a failure to the Provost. If both of the appeals readers pass the exam, the student will pass.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE FIRST EXAM

At the end of the spring semester, the Executive Officer appoints a board of examiners, normally including the instructors of the theory courses, for the First Examination for the following academic year.

THE SECOND EXAM (THE ORALS)

The second exam in sociology (known as the orals) requires doctoral students to develop a broad grounding in several fields within sociology. We want our graduates to be able to teach courses, at the advanced undergraduate or graduate level, in at least three separate areas of sociology, and believe that a sociologist should understand the relationships between a chosen field of interest and other areas of the discipline. In the course of an academic or other career, many scholars will move from one research area to another. It is therefore desirable that anyone completing a PhD in sociology be familiar with the core literatures in several different subfields of our

discipline. The second exam evaluates this important aspect of professional competence. The orals exam is not intended chiefly as preparation for the dissertation. A dissertation clearly requires mastery of ideas and literature that bear on one particular subject or set of research questions. However, that is a different task than demonstrating competence across three separate subfields of sociology. An orals exam may, or may not, include areas that are not directly connected to the dissertation.

In picking three separate areas or subfields of sociology, we encourage students to consult the lists of ASA sections, listed at: <https://www.e-noah.net/ASA/Profile/Interests.asp> (you will need to log in to see the list)

Each of the sections in bold type in that document represent subfields at the level of generality appropriate for an orals area. Students may also find it helpful to consult the list of ASA areas, listed at <http://www.asanet.org/cs/root/leftnav/sections/overview>

Once a student has chosen three fields for the second examination, the student should ask three or more members of the Sociology Doctoral Faculty whether they will serve on the orals committee (one faculty member for each area). Once they have agreed, the student should submit a 'Validation of the Orals Committee' form to the Executive Officer (see sample form in 'Resources for students' on our website). Once approved, the student should start to compile a reading list or bibliography for each area, and then seek feedback about the list from the faculty member who will examine that particular area. The examining professor has authority over the appropriateness of the size and content of a given list that he or she will cover in the exam. The chair of the orals committee has the additional responsibility of reviewing all three reading lists or bibliographies and certifying that there is minimal overlap of readings.

The program requires a form to be submitted to the Executive Officer that lists the three areas to be examined in the orals exam and which faculty member will examine each of the areas. This form should be submitted to and must be approved by the Executive Officer. We recommend that it be submitted well in advance of scheduling the exam. It is the policy of the sociology program that all three members of a second exam be members of the sociology doctoral faculty. The Executive Officer has the authority to make exceptions to this policy where warranted, but the expectation is that the second exam in sociology will cover three separate areas within our very broad discipline.

Past students have found it helpful to organize each bibliography as if it were a syllabus or reading list for a course. Related readings might be organized chronologically or they might be collected together under subheadings, with each subheading approximating the kind of topic area or span that a course might discuss in one or two class sessions. In the exam itself, a student should be able to give a rationale for the selection of works in their bibliography, justifying why those particular items were chosen and others were not. The student ought to be prepared to talk about the relationship between different aspects of the literature and the ways that the various parts fit into the subfield as a whole. To the extent that individual readings represent debates or disagreements or divergent positions within the field, the student should be prepared to discuss the issues under dispute or the differences between perspectives. Finally, a student should be ready to be examined on the content of any particular reading, and be able to discuss its argument, findings, or major points.

The second exam usually lasts between 1.5 and 2 hours, with roughly half an hour devoted to questions about each of the three areas. At the end of the exam, the student is asked to leave the exam room for a few minutes while the three examiners discuss the student's performance. The examiners sign a form that indicates their collective decision regarding the exam. This form

should be completed before the end of the exam meeting and the student should be informed at that time as to the outcome of the exam.

Passing the second exam certifies that a student has developed a level of knowledge and understanding of three separate areas of sociology at a level of competence commensurate to a scholar with a PhD in sociology. If a student fails the exam, as judged by the examining committee, then the committee will give immediate feedback at the end of the exam meeting as to what weaknesses the student evidenced and provide suggestions on how the student should improve and what to study, so that the student will be better prepared to retake the exam on a later occasion. In the event of a failing grade, the second exam should not be repeated sooner than three months after the date of the failed exam.

DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

Paralleling this intellectual agenda is the search for suitable scholars to guide your research and to sit on the dissertation committee. The role of a dissertation committee is to guide the preparation of a dissertation proposal, to oversee the subsequent research and writing of the dissertation, to examine the candidate in an oral defense, and to approve the completed dissertation. A dissertation committee in the Ph.D. Program in Sociology must be constituted according to the following rules:

- A) By Graduate Center rules, all dissertation committees must contain at least three members of the CUNY Doctoral Faculty.
- B) At least two of the three Graduate Center dissertation committee members must be on the Doctoral Faculty in Sociology. Student may add outside members. These may be members of The Graduate Center Doctoral Faculty in disciplines outside sociology; it may include CUNY faculty members who are not on the Doctoral Faculty; and it may include professors from other institutions. Whatever the size of the committee (beyond the required minimum of three), members of The Graduate Center Sociology Doctoral Faculty must always comprise a majority.
- C) Once the above conditions are met, students should fill in ‘Validation of Dissertation Committee’. The chair of the dissertation committee then meet with the Executive Officer to appoint a faculty member he/she thinks is necessary and would be helpful to enhance the quality of the dissertation. Every dissertation committee must be approved in writing by the Executive Officer.

‘Validation of Dissertation Committee’ form signed by the adviser and the student indicating the proposed members must be filed with the Executive Officer prior to the development of a dissertation proposal.

In evaluating and approving a proposed dissertation committee, the Executive Officer may choose to depart from the normal composition outlined above, if he or she judges that the appropriate expertise is not available on the Sociology Doctoral Faculty. In all cases, however, Graduate Center’s rules regarding dissertation committee composition must be observed (e.g., that there be a minimum of three members of the CUNY Doctoral Faculty on the committee).

There are additional informal considerations. Members of one's dissertation committee provide both technical assistance and advice to the student working on a dissertation, and later often become the most important people in assisting a student in finding a job. For both roles one wants helpful, supportive people. In the former role one seeks specific kinds of expertise, sometimes substantive knowledge, sometimes methodological skills. In the latter role, one is concerned with scholars' reputations and stature and their links within networks: committee members speak for new Ph.D.s at the beginning of their careers.

The implication of these remarks is that students should think carefully about dissertation committee membership. Some may wish to invite a distinguished expert from outside CUNY onto their committee, in addition to members of the Doctoral Faculty. This may require some advance planning – initiating a correspondence about common intellectual interests, or taking a course from that person before deciding whether to ask her or him to serve on one's committee. These issues should be discussed with one's adviser and others.

ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

After the dissertation committee and proposed topic have been approved by the Executive Officer (Validation of Dissertation form), the student can advance to doctoral candidacy in sociology, assuming all Graduate Center requirements are fulfilled.

These include the following: the student must be currently registered; have a clear financial account; and have completed all required course work (with a B average or better), the language requirement, the First Exam, and the Orals. (For further details, see The Graduate Center Student Handbook available online.)

The Registrar will notify the student upon approval of the Advancement to Candidacy to the Doctoral Degree. Remember to get IRB approval at this time if don't already have it. You will not be allowed to deposit your dissertation if IRB approval is not on file.

<http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Prospective-Current-Students/Current-Students/Human-Subjects-IRB> .

The student is required to register for every subsequent semester (unless a leave of absence is granted) until the degree is awarded. You must be advanced to candidacy before you will be able to schedule your dissertation defense.

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE (M.PHIL.)

Upon advancement to candidacy students are eligible to receive the M.Phil. degree. The Office of the Registrar should send you an M.Phil. application form as soon as the advancement to candidacy has been approved. If you do not receive an application at that time, contact the Registrar's Office to obtain one.

THE DISSERTATION

Although students may have a general idea of a dissertation topic early on in their graduate career, the time to crystallize this is after the second exam is passed. There are two parallel tasks: 1) the identification of a topic and the elaboration of ideas and methods that will result in

a dissertation proposal, and 2) deciding on a committee of faculty who will guide the student's work and ultimately judge the dissertation itself.

Deciding on a topic, and finding within this topic a delimited manageable area for research, is rarely simple. One needs to read widely in the literature to decide what is already known and what is not (i.e., where the 'research frontier' lies). Students are encouraged to brainstorm and obtain the widest possible range of advice from faculty and student colleagues in this initial phase. In some cases this includes searches for existing datasets or obtaining access to field research sites. Formulating research questions may also require brief pilot research.

Please note that all students, regardless of their dissertation topic, must consult with their adviser regarding requirements concerning the protection of human subjects prior to beginning dissertation research. Students should also contact the Office of Sponsored Research at 212- 817-7520 to obtain more information on these requirements.

DEVELOPING A DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

The department expects that students will file their proposals within a calendar year following the completion of their oral exams. Copies of previously submitted dissertation proposals are available in the Sociology Program Office for perusal. Students may consult these documents to obtain a better understanding of the desired format and content of proposals. These copies are maintained for reference purposes only and may not be photocopied without the author's permission or removed from the office.

Because each proposal is to some degree unique, it is up to the candidate and the dissertation committee to shape the proposal to a point that it is finally acceptable to all members of the dissertation committee. The committee chair has the task of negotiating differences among the committee members, including the student, about what the dissertation should cover and how the work should be described in the dissertation proposal. There are, however, certain areas that all proposals should cover.

We generally expect a succinct statement at the beginning of the proposal that states the thesis problem, major proposition, theme(s), and the research question(s) that organize the proposed research. This introduction should also briefly situate the proposed research in the sociological literature, and it should briefly discuss the kind of data or evidence that will be used to develop and substantiate the thesis. A second section of the proposal develops in more detail the theoretical framework of the thesis, with further reference to relevant literature in sociology and concern for the problems of substantiating the claims advanced in the opening section of the proposal. The third section of most proposals focuses directly on research methods and attempts to answer questions of evidence and analysis that were raised in the previous section on theory and background. A concluding section of the proposal returns to the question of how the proposed thesis will make a contribution to sociology, as well as other contributions to knowledge it may afford. Normally, proposals include a tentative table of contents for the

dissertation and a formal bibliography reflecting major contributions to and the current state of discussion of the dissertation's subject matter in the sociological literature.

The proposal should be a concise statement of approximately **5,000 words**, addressing the following questions:

- 1) The heart of a successful doctoral dissertation is its contribution to thinking about broad sociological problems. What theoretical controversies or issues does your dissertation address? How will your project advance sociological thinking about the subject it discusses?
- 2) What is the empirical reference point of your proposed investigation? What is the "empirical puzzle"? What is substantively problematic?
- 3) What kind of evidence will you use, how will it be generated or gathered, and by what methods will you analyze it?

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL REVIEW

The student submits a dissertation proposal to his/her dissertation committee chair and other committee members. After the student has incorporated suggestions for revision from the chair and other committee members, the whole committee must meet with the student to discuss the proposal and approve it. Such approval is indicated by the signatures of the chair and other committee members on the "Proposal Cover Sheet", which also lists the title of the proposed dissertation, the names of the dissertation committee members, and the date the committee met with the student.

Once the dissertation proposal has been approved by the dissertation committee, the student should submit 3 copies of the proposal (with a copy of the signed cover sheet attached to each copy) to the Program Assistant. An electronic version of the proposal should also be submitted to the Program Assistant at the same time. The proposal is distributed to FMC members in preparation for discussion at the next available meeting of the FMC. The FMC discusses a maximum of 4 proposals at any one meeting, so make sure to check in advance to ensure that the calendar will permit discussion of your proposal at the next FMC meeting.

FMC members prepare written comments on the proposal. The comments are distributed to the student and the dissertation chair at least three days before the scheduled FMC meeting. The student and the chair should be present in the meeting, or in unusual circumstances be available for a Skype or conference call. The discussion will ordinarily be postponed if the dissertation committee chair cannot attend, but may go forward if another committee member sits in for the chair.

The student responds for five minutes at the beginning of the discussion of his or her proposal to the written comments from the members of the FMC. A discussion with the committee follows, during which the student is expected to respond to the criticisms advanced by FMC members. Following the discussion, FMC members vote to approve or disapprove of the proposal. Results

of the vote shall be noted in the minutes of the meeting.

If a majority of the voting FMC members vote not to approve of the proposal, the student is advised of the reason for disapproval, and the decision shall be communicated to the Executive Officer of the PhD Program in Sociology. In such cases, the Executive Officer will consult with the dissertation committee in order to work out an agreement that will allow the student to move forward with the proposed research in a timely manner.

DISSERTATION DEFENSE

When you and your dissertation committee believe that you have completed your dissertation, you may schedule a defense date in consultation with your committee. The Sociology Office must be notified no later than three weeks before the defense date. We shall notify the Provost's Office, and they will officially notify the members of the student's committee of the date and place of the defense. By Graduate Center rules, in addition to the certified members of the student's dissertation committee, an outside reader may be appointed by the Executive Officer to attend and participate in the oral defense. The reader may, for example, be a member of a sociology program outside The Graduate Center or a member of a program other than sociology within The Graduate Center. Generally, readers should receive your dissertation at least six weeks before the defense. Unlike the Second Exam, the dissertation defense is open to members of the Doctoral Faculty and graduate students. In the defense you will be asked to summarize the central themes and findings of your dissertation, and to respond to questions from committee members and others. You must defend your dissertation within 8 years or 16 semesters of entry into the program. If you transferred 21 credits from other institutions you must defend within 7 years or 14 semesters. Please visit GC web site and the Library Dissertation Assistant for information on preparing and filing the dissertation manuscript well in advance of the submission date. The GC mandates a specific format for the dissertation which you must follow, so be sure to inform yourself about the rules.

FINANCIAL AID -

Financial aid applications are due February 1st; award notices are sent out after March 15th for the following academic year. A few research assistantships, and college work study grants are distributed by the Sociology Program. Other forms of financial aid, including educational loans, state aid for qualifying students, and special fellowships, are administered through the Office of Financial Aid. Some types of aid have service-related requirements. For more information, consult the Financial Aid or Sociology Office. If you apply for financial aid, please make sure you fill out all the application forms, including FAFSA for work study.

Although the program has a strong commitment to assist continuing students, and makes every effort to fund them in accordance with need and demonstrated merit, this is not always possible, given budget limitations. Therefore, students, particularly more advanced students, are encouraged to investigate additional sources of funding, some of which are described below.

Please note that a student's academic record/standing are taken into account when the department allocates financial aid. In accord with GC rules, it is necessary for students to

maintain good academic standing, as defined on pages 5-6 (definition taken from the GC Student Handbook), to obtain such aid.

In addition to the financial aid available through the yearly cycle of funding, the program often helps to place students (second year and beyond) in adjunct teaching positions within CUNY and elsewhere. Students may also independently contact chairs of programs in other colleges and universities for part-time teaching openings.

Some faculty also hire students as assistants on research grants. Look for notices posted on the program notice board or sent via email and let professors know that you are looking for research assistant work.

The Graduate Center has a number of fellowships to support graduate students during their dissertation research. Typically application deadlines are early in February; it is important to plan well ahead for these. They usually require that the student has been advanced to candidacy (completion of the First and Second Exams, and language requirement, plus approval of 'validation of dissertation' form). Second- and third-year students should start planning with these fellowships in mind.

Similarly, predoctoral dissertation fellowships are available from various external sources (e.g., the Social Science Research Council, the National Science Foundation, Frank Guggenheim Foundation, and others.) Once you have identified a topic for your dissertation research, talk to your adviser about funding sources. Additionally, the Office of Sponsored Research maintains a library of information on funding sources as well as a database and a monthly 'Calendar of Deadline Dates' that is published. These fellowships have various deadlines and require considerable advance planning. Doctoral students may consult the reference sources and receive assistance in applying for support for student research, dissertation research, and postdoctoral research. The Office of Sponsored Research is located in room 8306 (212-817-7520).

Students who have particular financial difficulties are encouraged to explore all available sources of funding and are advised to consult the Financial Aid Office directly for further assistance. They may also consult with their adviser or the Deputy Executive Officer.

RESEARCH AND RESEARCH CENTERS

To enhance their ability to qualify for research and teaching opportunities, students are encouraged to develop as broad a background in research skills as possible. Faculty and students carry out research in a variety of settings, organized as well as unorganized. The Graduate Center houses various research centers and institutes engaged in a wide range of projects and ongoing activities; students may contact their offices to inquire about programs and research opportunities. <http://www.gc.cuny.edu/Degrees-Research/Centers-Institutes>

PROGRAM COMMITTEES

The Ph.D. Program in Sociology is administered by the Executive Officer and Deputy Executive Officer, but major policy and personnel decisions are made by the program's faculty-student committees. The Executive Committee is the governing body of the Sociology Program. The standing committees are the Faculty Membership Committee, Admissions and Awards Committee, and Curriculum and Examination Committee. The ad hoc committees are Theory Committee, and Search Committee. Their mandates and composition are as follows.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is composed of the Executive Officer (chair); two faculty members from each CUNY college with five or more Doctoral Faculty; two elected faculty members representing all the remaining CUNY units, each of which has fewer than five members on the Doctoral Faculty in Sociology; plus the "central line" faculty based at the Graduate Center. Campus faculty are elected for three-year terms. One student representative for every four faculty members is elected by students for a one-year term. At present, this means that there are three student representatives. The term of office for student members shall be one year with elections held in May.

The Executive Committee is the main policy-making body of the program, recommending appointment of new faculty and approving changes in curriculum and program requirements. The Executive Committee nominates and elects the faculty members of the four other standing committees. Students are nominated and elected from among the currently registered student body.

STANDING COMMITTEES

Faculty Membership Committee: The Faculty Membership Committee is composed of the Deputy Executive Officer (chair), and one of the two faculty members from each campus who serve on the Executive Committee. There are also two student representatives. This committee is the steering committee of the Executive Committee and advises the Executive Committee in matters of personnel. It also has the authority to review dissertation proposals by students. Each Committee member provides written comments to aid the student and the dissertation committee in carrying out the research.

Admissions and Awards Committee: This committee is composed of the Deputy Executive Officer (chair), Executive Officer (ex officio), faculty members elected by the Executive Committee, and two student members selected by students. The committee decides who will be admitted to the program, assesses student applications for financial aid, and determines allocations of aid packages.

AD HOC COMMITTEES

Theory Committee: The Theory Committee coordinates the curriculum and reading lists for the required courses in classical and contemporary sociological theory. It normally consists of the

instructors of the courses, plus one or more other members of the Doctoral Faculty and two student members, and is appointed by the Executive Officer.

Search Committee: Search committees are ad hoc committees established to make recommendations to the Executive Committee when a search for a new faculty member is being conducted. At least one student member serves on a search committee.

GRADUATE CENTER ORGANIZATIONS AND GOVERNANCE

Graduate students participate actively in the running of the Sociology Program as well as The Graduate Center at large. Governance and the implementation of academic policies are determined jointly by faculty and students; all Graduate Center committees have student members who are elected by the student body.

Governance of the program is according to the bylaws (on file in the Sociology Office), which may be amended only by vote of the Executive Committee and a majority vote of all members of the program (and then must be approved by the GC Committee on Structure and Graduate Council). Students have voting rights on the committees as provided by the bylaws. Students vote each year to elect their representatives to the committees.

SOCIOLOGY STUDENT ASSOCIATION (SSA)

The Sociology Student Association is the official organization of the students in the Sociology Program. Elections for SSA officers and student representatives to program committees are held annually in the spring of each year. Throughout the academic year, the SSA president and vice-president call monthly meetings, which are open to all CUNY doctoral students in sociology (notifications of meeting dates and times are informed via email and are posted) and provide a forum for discussing committee business and student concerns. In addition to the monthly meetings, special sessions may be convened and ad hoc committees formed to address issues that may arise. The SSA also sponsors social events, for example, a beginning-of-year and an end-of-year party. All students are welcomed and encouraged to participate in meetings and run for office.

GRADUATE COUNCIL

The academic governing body of The Graduate Center is The Graduate Council, which is chaired by the President of The Graduate Center. The Sociology Program is represented on The Graduate Council by two elected faculty members and an elected student for every 100 or fewer students in the Ph.D. Program in Sociology, which at present means two student members. The Graduate Council meets four times a year. Most of its work is carried out by standing committees, which include a Committee on Curriculum and Degree Requirements, Structure Committee, Student Services Committee, Student Academic Appeals Committee, Research Committee, Library Committee, Computer Committee, and a Committee of Committees which recommends members of the standing committees.

DOCTORAL STUDENTS' COUNCIL (DSC)

The DSC is the policy-making body of the Doctoral Students' Organization. It represents students' interests before the administration and carries out various activities on behalf of students, including the support of student organizations, funding for cultural affairs, and publication of magazines and newsletters. Its funds derive from the student activity fees. Annual elections are held.

OTHER GRADUATE CENTER STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

The student organizations chartered by the DSC include: Association of Latino and Latino-American Students; African, Latin, Asian, Native-American Social Science and Support Group; Black Student Alliance; Business Ethics; Caritas; Chinese Students and Scholars Association; Cultural Studies Student Association; Feminist Students' Organization; International Socialists Organization; International Students Association; Korean Student Association; Medieval Study; QUNY: Organization for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Concerns; The Marxist Working Group; Project Chiapas; Students for Educational Rights; Taiwanese Students Association; and West Hall Organization. Students may obtain information about these organizations from the DSC office at 212-817-7888.