

University of Kansas

Department of Sociology

MANUAL OF GRADUATE STUDY

**Students are responsible for informing themselves of the requirements of the Department of Sociology and the University of Kansas described in this manual.
Please direct any questions to the Director of Graduate Studies or Graduate Program Coordinator.**

Effective Fall 2026

Students entering prior to **Fall 2026 may also need to refer to the previous Graduate Manual (Fall 2017 or Fall 2025) for specific course requirements & ASD (now called RTF) deadlines. Please see the Director of Graduate Studies or Graduate Program Coordinator for special questions.*

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I. ADMISSION TO THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

The department offers a doctoral program in sociology and students are admitted with the expectation of earning the Ph.D. Please see **Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements** for University-level admission requirements. Prerequisites for admission to the program are at least 15 previous credit hours of sociology, including one course in sociological theory and one course in statistics. Applicants are also required to submit:

- A statement of academic interests and professional goals
- 3 recommendation rating forms and letters from individuals who can evaluate the applicant's academic performance
- 1 complete set of transcripts from all colleges and universities attended
- A current résumé/curriculum vitae
- A writing sample (senior or master's thesis preferred)
- GRE scores

Students who have earned a thesis-based master's degree in sociology at a university other than the University of Kansas may be admitted to the program at the Ph.D. level if the Graduate Studies Committee concludes that they have done sufficient graduate-level coursework in sociology and if their master's thesis meets the standards for such work at the University of Kansas. Students who enter the Ph.D. program with a master's degree from another university must petition the Graduate Studies Committee if they wish to have any of the courses completed in that graduate program accepted in meeting our Ph.D. course requirements. Complete application instructions are on our [webpage](#).

Non-native speakers of English must also demonstrate English proficiency by submitting scores on either the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Academic Format of the International English Language Testing System (IELTS), or the Academic version of the Pearson Test of English (PTE Academic). Applicants' test scores must meet the University's minimum score requirements for graduate *admission*. Additional score requirements are needed for *employment* as a graduate teaching or research assistant (GTA or GRA). Please see **Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements** for University-level English proficiency requirements.

II. STEPS TO THE PH.D. DEGREE

Qualifying for a Ph.D. from the Department of Sociology requires that students complete a sequence of steps. Students must complete all required coursework, write and successfully defend an M.A. thesis, complete the requirements in two areas of specialization, write and defend a proposal for a doctoral dissertation, and successfully complete and defend the doctoral dissertation.

STEP 1: The M.A. Degree

A. Faculty Advising. Incoming graduate students will be assigned to an initial academic advisor selected by the Graduate Director. The Graduate Director serves as the general supervising advisor for all students. Students must choose a principal faculty advisor during their first semester of enrollment in the graduate program and inform the Graduate Director of their selection by completing the Advisor/Committee Agreement Form. For M.A. students, the advisor should also be the chair of their thesis committee. See **Section V. A Faculty Advisor** for full advisor change procedure and policies. Each year in January students must develop a plan of study for the M.A. in consultation with their advisor. A statement of this plan, updated and revised as needed, must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee for review every year. The advisor/committee and plan of study forms are available on [Canvas](#) in the Sociology Graduate Student Resources course.

B. Course Enrollment. Note: The [University Academic Catalog](#) is the definitive source for requirements and regulations for every academic program. However, the Catalog is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contract. Degree requirements listed in the Catalog have been approved by established University Governance procedures. Degree and program requirements and course descriptions are subject to change. This handbook serves as a supplement to provide further details on the requirements, policies, and procedures described in the Catalog. In addition to the requirements in the Academic Catalog, all pre-M.A. students must enroll in 9 credit hours of coursework per semester until they complete the M.A. requirements. This enables students to complete the 36 hours of graduate credit required for the M.A. degree within four semesters. During their first semester all students are required to enroll in three graduate courses, and those with GTA appointments are required to enroll in SOC 893: Leading Discussion Sections in Sociology. All new graduate students are required to participate in the Meet the Faculty Orientation, a series of two to three meetings to acquaint them with the department and faculty. Individual Master's Readings courses (SOC 891) may not be used to meet these requirements except by approved petition. See **Section V. D. Petitions for Waivers of Rules and Requirements** for a comprehensive listing of course petition requirements and limitations. A full list of the courses that satisfy the theory, methods, and substantive seminar requirements may be found in **Appendix A**. For details on the grading scale for thesis hours see **Section IV. D. Thesis and Dissertation Hour Grading**.

International students may be subject to additional enrollment requirements per the terms of their visa and should always consult [ISS](#) with questions about maintaining legal status.

C. Time Limits. Students must complete all requirements for the M.A. degree no more than four semesters from the time of their first semester of graduate enrollment (**i.e., enter in Fall 2025, M.A. due by end of Spring 2027**). Students are required to meet the deadlines specified above if they wish to be considered for departmental financial support. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in loss of funding or dismissal from the graduate program.

D. Portfolio. From their first semester in the graduate program, students will start to prepare a professional portfolio of their graduate work. The portfolio should be a bookmarked PDF document so that it may be accessible to faculty for evaluation (see **Appendix B**). For pre-M.A. students, the portfolio must contain the following items (minimum): a table of contents; curriculum vitae; the syllabi and written work from all graduate courses including research papers, examinations and annotated bibliographies; master's thesis proposal; master's thesis; and any conference papers, grant proposals or published works. The portfolio may also contain the following items if students and their committees find them helpful as evidence of students' command of a given field: syllabi of courses taught or proposed, book reviews, op-ed pieces, and website designs. Portfolios must be submitted each January to the student's advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator.

E. M.A. Thesis. Besides completing the required coursework, students must prepare and defend an M.A. thesis. The purpose of the M.A. thesis is to train students in writing, conceptualization, and research. Defense of the thesis includes a general examination on relevant themes of sociological theory and research. The student's chosen advisor is chair of the M.A. advisory committee, which must comply with Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy. See **Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements** for further details. A maximum of 5 committee members for master's committees is allowed by the department. Students must secure the agreement of each faculty member to serve on the committee and notify the Director of Graduate Studies of the composition of the committee by completing the Advisor/Committee Agreement Form (available [online](#)) during their first year of enrollment. Final approval of committee membership is granted by the Director of Graduate Studies. Students must then develop, in consultation with the committee, a proposal for the M.A. thesis. This proposal must be approved by the committee, and this approval must be formally recorded.

Students must then complete the thesis to the satisfaction of the committee and pass an oral defense of the thesis and a general examination on the major subject. The oral defense and the general examination take place on the same occasion. The general examination is a requirement of the University, and pre-approval to schedule the examination must be received from the College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA) before the examination is given.

The Department of Sociology requires the thesis draft to be submitted to the committee no less than thirty days prior to the anticipated defense date. This requires students to schedule the defense date *prior* to circulating the approved draft to the committee members, upon approval of the chair of the committee, to ensure that the committee has the requisite 30 days for reading and feedback. The last date to defend allowed by the department will be one week prior to the university's graduation deadline for the given term. Defenses are not normally approved to take place outside of Fall and Spring semesters.

MA thesis defenses may be graded Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory. Students will be informed of whether they successfully defended the thesis at the conclusion of the oral presentation examination period. The decision regarding an Honors designation for the defense will be made subsequent to the oral examination. Such a designation will require the endorsement of a majority of committee members (e.g. two of three votes). The votes of committee members will be submitted to the graduate coordinator who will then communicate the results of the vote to the thesis committee chair. The committee chair will then notify the student in writing of the final outcome no later than one week following the final exam and defense.

No student can attempt a thesis defense and a general M.A. examination more than twice; a second failure on the defense and examination requires that the M.A. committee chair report this fact to the Graduate Studies Committee to deliberate on the possible dismissal of the student from the program.

After the thesis has been approved by the M.A. committee and the defense has been completed successfully, students must meet the University's graduation requirements; see **Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements**. Within one semester of graduation students must also submit a paper copy of the title page to the department with the signatures of the advisor and the two committee members. Completion of these requirements leads to the M.A. degree, which normally allows the student to proceed to doctoral study.

F. Non-Thesis (Exam-Only) Terminal M.A. Students who do not wish to continue on to the Ph.D. and who do not complete an M.A. thesis may be awarded a terminal M.A. if they fulfill the following requirements within four semesters of first enrollment in the graduate program: completion of 30 hours of graduate coursework, not including thesis hours, but including SOC 810 (Sociological Inquiry) and 9 additional Sociology graduate courses, including SOC 812 and one additional graduate-level course in sociological methods, and two graduate-level courses in sociological theory that must include SOC 802 (Classical Social Theory) or SOC 902 (Contemporary Social Theory). Individual Master's Readings courses (SOC 891) may not be used to meet these requirements except by approved petition. See **Section V. D. Petitions for Waivers of Rules and Requirements** for a comprehensive listing of course petition requirements and limitations. A list of the courses that satisfy the theory, methods, and substantive seminar requirements may be found in **Appendix A**.

Non-thesis students must also pass a final oral examination over their coursework. To prepare and defend a non-thesis M.A., students must set up an advisory committee and designate a committee chair. Students must secure the agreement of each committee member and must notify the Director of Graduate Studies of the composition of the M.A. committee by completing the Advisor/Committee Agreement Form (available [online](#)). The student's advisor serves as chair of the examining committee and selects two additional faculty members to serve on the committee. Final approval of committee membership is granted by the Director of Graduate Studies. The oral exam must be scheduled at least 30 days in advance. The oral examination may be taken twice; a second failure on the oral examination requires that the M.A. committee chair report this fact to the Graduate Studies Committee to deliberate on the possible dismissal of the student from the program.

STEP 2: Towards the Ph.D. Degree

A. Advancement to the Ph.D. Level. Students who have received an M.A. degree and completed a thesis from the Department of Sociology may pursue the Ph.D. degree by obtaining unanimous approval from members of their M.A. committee for advancement into the Ph.D. level of the program. After the thesis defense, each committee member will complete and submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a recommendation for advancement to the Ph.D. level of program. In addition, students who have completed the M.A. and wish to continue to the Ph.D. level of the program must submit a 2-3 page letter of interest to the Director of Graduate Studies, a copy of their completed thesis, and a signed Advisor/Committee Agreement Form (available in [Canvas](#)) indicating approval of a Sociology faculty member to serve as the student's advisor during their doctoral studies. Students who have earned a thesis-based master's degree in sociology at another university may be admitted to the graduate program at the Ph.D. level if they completed a thesis that according to the Graduate Studies Committee, meets the standards for such work at the University of Kansas.

B. Student Advising for the Ph.D. Degree. Newly admitted students will be advised during their first semester of enrollment by an initial academic advisor selected by the Director of Graduate Studies but must choose a principal faculty advisor by the end of their first semester in the program and inform the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of their selection by completing the Advisor/Committee

Agreement Form (available [online](#)). Continuing students will be advised by the faculty member previously selected to serve as their principal academic advisor. The Graduate Director serves as the general supervising advisor for all students. See **Section V. A. Faculty Advisor** for full advisor change procedure and policies.

Each year, students must develop a plan of study for the Ph.D. in consultation with their advisor. A statement of this plan, and any subsequent significant revisions, must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee for review every January by completing and updating the Graduate Student Plan of Study form, available on [Canvas](#) in the Sociology Graduate Student Resources course. Within one month of the completion of the Oral Comprehensive Exam and dissertation proposal defense, the student must work with their advisor to complete the Dissertation Mentoring Agreement, establishing the timeline for completion of the dissertation, and outlining expectations for both the student and advisor as to turnaround time on feedback, frequency of meetings, nature and extent of comments/suggestions for revision, etc. The Dissertation Mentoring Agreement should be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator. It must be revisited and revised annually and submitted along with the Plan of Study.

C. Course Enrollment. All Ph.D. students are required to enroll in 9 credit hours of coursework per semester for the first four semesters of enrollment in the program. During their first semester all students are required to take three graduate courses, and those with GTA appointments are required to enroll in SOC 893 (Leading Discussions in Sociology). All new graduate students must participate in the Meet the Faculty Orientation to become acquainted with the department and faculty. After completing the oral comprehensive examination and defense of the dissertation proposal, students are required to adhere to the University's Post-Comprehensive Enrollment Policy. See **Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements**.

D. Course Requirements. Students must refer to the [Academic Catalog](#) of the year they were admitted for the full list of required coursework. Note: The Academic Catalog is the definitive source for the definitive list of requirements and regulations for every academic program. However, the Catalog is for informational purposes only and does not constitute a contract. Degree requirements listed in the Catalog have been approved by established University Governance procedures. Degree and program requirements and course descriptions are subject to change. For those who completed the thesis-option M.A. in the Department of Sociology at the University of Kansas, the graduate-level theory, methods, and substantive seminars taken while earning the M.A. count toward meeting these requirements. Students who do not complete Sociology 812 (Analytical Methods) at the master's level are required to do so at the Ph.D. level. Students who completed Sociology 810 (Sociological Inquiry) at the master's level can repeat the course at the Ph.D. level. Individual Doctoral Readings courses (SOC 991) may not be used to meet these requirements except by approved petition. A list of the courses that satisfy these requirements may be found in **Appendix A**. With a letter of support from their faculty advisor, students may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to have one or more of these requirements waived.

Students who earned a master's degree at a university other than the University of Kansas or in a field other than sociology must petition to get credit for graduate course work previously completed. The petition form, available [online](#), must be accompanied by the syllabus from the graduate course the student wishes to receive credit for, their grade in the course and, when possible, the final work product (e.g., written essays, exams, research papers) from the course.

Students are strongly encouraged to fulfill all theory and methods requirements through sociology courses, though exceptions may be made through petition in some cases. (See **Section V. D. Petitions for Waivers of Rules and Requirements** for a comprehensive listing of course petition requirements and limitations.) For details on the grading scale for dissertation hours see **Section IV. D. Thesis and**

Dissertation Hour Grading.

E. Time Limits. All course requirements for the Ph.D. must be completed within the first 5 semesters of enrollment at the Ph.D. level, after completion of the M.A.

Students completing *both the M.A. and Ph.D.* levels of the program are required to demonstrate command of their first research focus within 2 semesters of first enrollment at the Ph.D. level (**i.e. Enter FA25, due by end of SP26**), and of a second research focus within 4 semesters of first enrollment at the Ph.D. level (**i.e. by end of SP27**). After having demonstrated command of the second research focus, students have 2 semesters to complete an oral comprehensive examination and defend a dissertation proposal (**i.e. due by end of SP28**).

Students completing *only the Ph.D.* are required to demonstrate command of their first research focus within 4 semesters of first enrollment at the Ph.D. level (**i.e. Enter FA25, due by end of SP27**), and of a second research focus within 6 semesters of first enrollment at the Ph.D. level (**i.e. by end of SP28**). After having demonstrated command of the second research focus, students have 2 semesters to complete an oral comprehensive examination and defend a dissertation proposal (**i.e. due by end of SP29**).

Students are **required** to meet the deadlines specified above if they wish to be considered for departmental financial support. Failure to meet these deadlines may result in loss of funding eligibility or dismissal from the graduate program.

The Sociology Department's *recommended* time to complete the Ph.D. is 7 years for students who complete both the M.A. and Ph.D., or 5 years for students who enter the program at the post-M.A. level. See **Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements** for University time limits.

F. Portfolio. From their first semester in the graduate program, doctoral students will prepare a professional portfolio of their graduate work. The portfolio should be a bookmarked PDF document so that it may be accessible to faculty for evaluation (see **Appendix B**). For students at the Ph.D. level, the professional portfolio must contain the following items: a table of contents; a curriculum vitae; master's thesis; the syllabi and written work from all courses, including research papers, take-home examinations and annotated bibliographies; Research Topic of Focus Dossiers (RTFs); dissertation proposal; and any published works, conference papers and grant proposals. It may contain the following items if students and their committees find them helpful as evidence of a student's preparation: syllabi of courses taught or proposed, book reviews, op-ed pieces, and website designs. The professional portfolio must be submitted to the student's advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator each year. Post-Oral Comp students must submit one final professional portfolio including the dissertation proposal.

G. Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship (RSRS) Requirement. Students must complete the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship (RSRS) requirement. The University requires that every doctoral student have training in responsible scholarship and research skills pertinent to the field of research and appropriate to the doctoral level. These requirements must be completed by the end of the semester the student takes the oral comprehensive exam. Doctoral students in sociology meet this requirement by completion of the following courses: SOC 810, SOC 812, and SOC 910. Additional information about this requirement can be found in the [Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship](#) policy.

H. Research Topics of Focus. Students demonstrate their command of two topical areas within sociology and their preparation to undertake dissertation research by creating artifacts to be part of their

professional portfolios. Two sections of the professional portfolio are designated as Research Topic of Focus Dossiers (RTFs) and devoted to materials that demonstrate mastery in the students' specialty areas. During their first semester at the Ph.D. level, students must select a chair and establish a committee for their first RTF. After securing the agreement of each person to serve on the committee, the student must notify the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of the composition of the committee by completing the Advisor/Committee Agreement Form (available [online](#)). Committee membership may not change after the RTF has been submitted for formal review. The committee must be comprised of three members of the graduate faculty, at least two of whom are from the Department of Sociology. Final approval of committee membership is granted by the Director of Graduate Studies. By the end of their first semester at the Ph.D. level, students must submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a one-paragraph statement signed by the student and all committee members outlining the field to be covered. The first RTF is due by the end of the second semester for students completing both the M.A. and Ph.D., or by the end of the fourth semester for students completing only the Ph.D.

Within one semester of completion of the first RTF, students should establish a committee and designate a chair for their second RTF, securing the agreement of each person to serve on the committee and notifying the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of the composition of the committee by completing the Advisor/Committee Agreement Form (available [online](#)). Committee membership may not change after the RTF has been submitted for formal review. The committee must be comprised of three members of the graduate faculty, at least two of whom are from the Department of Sociology. Within one month of forming the committee, students must submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a one-paragraph statement signed by the student and all committee members outlining the field to be covered. The second RTF must be completed before the end of the fourth semester at the Ph.D. level.

Students will demonstrate their competency in their chosen topics by receiving a satisfactory grade (B or higher) in a minimum of two courses in each area and placing materials from those courses in their RTF. At least one of the two RTFs will include a ***Critical Review Essay (CRE)***. An RTF will be a part of the student's professional portfolio. Materials in the RTF may include conference papers/presentations, exams/essays/research papers written or published, original course syllabi, completed research proposals, or papers submitted to a journal for review. RTFs are to be electronic documents formatted as a bookmarked PDF file. All committee members will review the RTF and indicate whether it shows evidence of competency in its field of sociology. If the committee deems all or sections of the RTF to be "unsatisfactory", the student is allowed one opportunity for revision; a second failure requires that the student's advisory committee report this fact to the Graduate Studies Committee for consideration for dismissal from the program. A list of courses that satisfy requirements for substantive areas is available from the Graduate Program Coordinator.

At least one RTF must include a ***Critical Review Essay*** that is no longer than 10,000 words (40 pages) in length, excluding the bibliography and cover page with committee members signatures. The CRE is a broad assessment of the area, starting with a conceptual mapping of the area that includes its foundational literature, theories, and relevant work produced in the past 10 years. This essay might also highlight the student's specific interest in the area, especially pertaining to their dissertation. Students may refer to the *Annual Review of Sociology* for examples of the style and content of a critical review essay. Another example of the CRE can be found in the RTF of a former graduate student in our department (available on [Canvas](#) in the Sociology Graduate Student Resources course).

Research Topic of Focus Dossiers are due no later than 30 days before Stop Day in any semester. If a student submits it to the committee later than that date, they cannot expect a decision until four weeks into the next semester counting from the first day of classes. Chairs of committees are responsible for organizing and soliciting feedback from other members of the committee and reporting the results to the

student and the Director of Graduate Studies/Graduate Program Coordinator. All feedback from committee members should be directed to the committee Chair, and committee members should reach an agreement about the outcome of the RTF before any information is relayed to the student. The Chair will then inform the student of the committee's decision and relay the results to the Graduate Director and/or Graduate Program Coordinator as appropriate. For RTFs without a CRE, faculty committees, through the chair, should be expected to provide a decision on the RTF within 30 days of submission. If the committee does not find the RTF acceptable, the student must address its deficiencies and resubmit the RTF within 30 days.

The evaluation of the RTF with CRE includes an oral examination. CREs must be submitted to the committee no later than 3 weeks prior to the oral examination. The committee does not provide separate written feedback on the CRE before the oral examination; the pass/fail determination of the RTF is made at the conclusion of the oral comprehensive examination. If the oral evaluation is deemed unsatisfactory, the student will have one additional opportunity to revise and resubmit within one semester. A second failure requires that the committee chair report this fact to the Graduate Studies Committee to deliberate on the possible dismissal of the student from the program.

I. Oral Comprehensive Examination and Defense of Dissertation Proposal. Within two semesters of having satisfied the requirements pertaining to the second RTF, students must complete an oral comprehensive examination and defend a dissertation proposal. The oral comprehensive examination (which covers students' two areas of specialization) and the defense of the dissertation proposal take place within the same examination period. The focus of the examination and defense will be on the feasibility and quality of the proposed research as well as the student's two research topics of focus. To prepare for the exam and defense, students must establish an oral comprehensive exam committee and designate a committee chair. The committee must comply with Graduate Studies Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition policy. Committee membership is expected to be the same as the final dissertation committee. See **Section VII: University Policies and Degree Requirements** for the University's policy on committee membership. A maximum of 7 committee members for the doctoral committees is allowed by the department. Students must secure the agreement of each person to serve on the committee and notify the Director of Graduate Studies in writing of the composition of the oral comprehensive examination committee by completing the Advisor/Committee Agreement Form (available on [Canvas](#) in the Sociology Graduate Student Resources course). Final approval of committee membership is granted by the Director of Graduate Studies. After the oral comprehensive examination is completed, committee membership can be changed only by written appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies or the Chair of the Department of Sociology. Such change in committee membership cannot be altered less than one month before the scheduled date of the final dissertation defense.

Committee members must be allowed at least 30 days prior to the defense date to read the proposal draft and provide feedback. This requires students to schedule the defense date *prior* to circulating the approved draft to the committee members, upon approval of the chair of the committee, to ensure that the committee has the requisite 30 days for reading and feedback. Oral comprehensive exams may be scheduled during finals week but are not normally approved to take place outside of Fall and Spring semesters. Oral comprehensive exams may be graded Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory. The Department of Sociology does not utilize the Honors designation for oral comprehensive exams. Students will be informed of whether they passed at the conclusion of the oral examination period. Upon passing the comprehensive oral examination and the defense of the dissertation proposal, the student becomes a candidate for the Ph.D. degree. The exam may be taken twice; a second failure on the examination requires that the committee chair report this fact to the Graduate Studies Committee to deliberate on the possible dismissal of the student from the program.

To be eligible for a new or continuing GTA appointment, students must meet all deadlines that are specified herein for completing theses, submitting RTFs, and defending dissertation proposals. In addition, students must resolve all “Incompletes” in the time period specified (see **Section IV. C. Incompletes**).

J. Dissertation. The candidate must present a dissertation that demonstrates the development, execution, and results of original research. The doctoral dissertation is a coherent, logically organized, scholarly document. Material previously published by the candidate may be incorporated in the dissertation. See the [Doctoral Dissertation Policy](#) for a full description of the principles that underlie the dissertation. Instructions regarding the proper form of the dissertation, besides those in this document, are provided on the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs’ [Thesis & Dissertation Formatting](#) website. Completion of the dissertation is the final phase of a doctoral program and is followed by the final oral examination and defense of the dissertation. Upon satisfactory completion of the final oral examination and approval of the dissertation by the dissertation advisory committee, the student proceeds with the submission of the dissertation to the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs.

K. Final Oral Examination. When the student and the members of the dissertation advisory committee believe that the dissertation is in final form (i.e., ready for defense) and all other degree requirements have been satisfied, the student and chair of the dissertation committee should schedule the final oral examination and take any steps required to assure the appointment of a committee for the final oral examination by the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs. Committee membership is expected to be the same as the Comprehensive Oral Examination committee. Committee membership can be changed only by written appeal to the Director of Graduate Studies or the Chair of the Department of Sociology. Such change in dissertation committee membership cannot be altered less than one month before the scheduled date of the final dissertation defense.

Committee members must be allowed at least 30 days prior to the defense date to read the dissertation draft and provide feedback. This requires students to schedule the defense date *prior* to circulating the approved draft to the committee members, upon approval of the chair of the committee, to ensure that the committee has the requisite 30 days for reading and feedback. The last date to defend allowed by the department will be one week prior to the University’s graduation deadline for the given term. Defenses are not normally approved to take place outside of Fall and Spring semesters. The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs requires that the announcement of the final oral examination be published in university and community news media. Interested members of the university community are encouraged to attend.

Dissertation defenses may be graded Honors, Satisfactory, or Unsatisfactory. Students will be informed of whether they successfully defended the dissertation at the conclusion of the oral examination period. The decision regarding an Honors designation for the defense will be made subsequent to the oral exam and defense. Such a designation will require the endorsement of a majority of committee members (e.g. three of four votes). The votes of committee members will be submitted to the graduate coordinator who will then communicate the results of the vote to the dissertation committee chair. The committee chair will then notify the student in writing of the final outcome no later than one week following the final exam and defense.

The department will report the outcome of the final examination to the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs. If a grade of "Unsatisfactory" is reported, the candidate may be allowed to repeat the examination a second time. Failure on the second attempt at the final oral examination will result in the termination of the student from the graduate program.

L. Final Submission of the Dissertation. When the final oral examination has been passed and the dissertation cover sheet has been signed by the members of the dissertation committee, the student must meet the university's requirements for graduation. See **Section VI: University Policies and Degree Requirements**. Within one semester of graduation students must also submit a paper copy of the title page to the department with the signatures of the advisor and committee members.

III. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND MISCONDUCT

A. Academic Integrity. The Department of Sociology considers academic integrity essential to our work as sociologists, and we expect students to adhere to its principles in conducting research. This means that students acknowledge the sources they use in their academic work and cite them fully and correctly; not acknowledging a source constitutes plagiarism. Students should consult with faculty well before due dates if they are not sure about how to handle a source. Academic integrity also means that work on examinations and assignments must be carried out by authorized means. Students are subject to sanctions by the University for Academic Misconduct if they violate these principles. Definitions are provided in the [University Senate Rules and Regulations](#).

B. Mandatory Plagiarism Checks. Committee chairs for RTF, M.A., and doctoral committees will conduct a plagiarism check on CREs, theses, and dissertations through iThenticate, access to which is provided to all students and faculty by the University. When the committee chair reports the outcome of the CRE, M.A. final exam, or Ph.D. final exam to the Graduate Coordinator, they will include a statement that the document has been checked for plagiarism and no major issues were found. Though committee chairs are required to conduct and report this check, students are strongly encouraged to check their work themselves before providing the final draft to the committee, and to provide the committee chair a copy of the iThenticate report as a PDF file.

IV. RULES COVERING PROGRESS AND DEPARTMENTAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT

A. Academic Probation. Students are required to maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average to remain in the program. Once a student's cumulative grade point averages fall below 3.0, the student will automatically be placed on academic probation. Students are allowed one semester on probationary status. If the cumulative grade point average has not risen to 3.0 at that point, students may be dismissed from the program. Students may also be placed on probation for failing to make satisfactory progress toward the degree. This may include, but is not limited to, failure to make adequate and timely progress on the dissertation or thesis.

B. Dismissal from the Graduate Program. The department is responsible for evaluating the students in its programs to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward a degree. If the department finds that a student is not making satisfactory progress due to, but not limited to, cases where the student has run out of time to degree, or the student has neither been enrolled nor received an approved leave of absence for two consecutive semesters, or academic misconduct has occurred, the program may recommend to the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences that the student be dismissed from the program.

C. Incompletes. Receiving a grade of "Incomplete" in a course may be regarded as an indication of inadequate progress in the program. Students should not take an incomplete grade unless it is absolutely unavoidable (i.e. due to serious illness, accident, etc.). Students may have up to one semester to remove an incomplete grade. Failure to remove an incomplete grade may disqualify students for departmental financial support and may result in dismissal from the graduate program.

D. Thesis and Dissertation Hour Grading. Thesis (SOC 899) and Dissertation (SOC 999) are graded on the SP/LP/NP grading scale (Satisfactory Progress, Limited Progress, No Progress). The Department of Sociology defines these grades as such:

- SP (Satisfactory Progress)
 - Continuous contact between student and faculty advisor
 - The student demonstrates satisfactory progress for all items written in the Thesis or Dissertation Mentoring Agreement.
 - The student meets all deadlines.
- LP (Limited Progress)
 - The student does not respond to the advisor's email and/or phone call in a timely manner.
 - The student does not meet some deadlines.
 - The student submits work that is only marginally different from previous work submitted.
- NP (No Progress)
 - The student does not respond to the advisor's emails and/or phone calls (lost contact).
 - The student does not meet deadlines.
 - The student does not submit any work, or submits basically the same materials that they had submitted previously.

Consequences for grades of LP are as follows:

- First semester of LP
 - Warning. Director of Graduate Studies will issue a letter to the student.
- 2nd consecutive semester of LP
 - Official Probation. The Graduate Studies Committee will recommend to the College that the student be placed on official academic probation.
- 3rd consecutive semester of LP
 - Dismissal. The Graduate Studies Committee will recommend to the College that the student be dismissed from the University.
- 3rd non-consecutive semester of LP
 - Official Probation. The Graduate Studies Committee will recommend to the College that the student be placed on official academic probation.

Consequences for grades of NP are as follows:

- First semester of NP
 - Official Probation. The Graduate Studies Committee will recommend to the College that the student be placed on official academic probation.
- 2nd semester of NP, consecutive or otherwise
 - Dismissal. The Graduate Studies Committee will recommend to the College that the student be dismissed from the University.

E. Departmental Financial Support. It is the goal of the department to support as many graduate students as possible during their graduate studies. In order to come as close as possible to this ideal, it is often necessary to limit the amount of support provided any one student. One of the primary ways that the department supports graduate students is through their appointments as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs). Other forms of departmental financial support include GRA positions with faculty members, and fellowships such as University Graduate Fellowships. In selecting students for department funded positions including GTAs, departmental need shall be the first consideration. In addition, the following criteria will also be considered with no particular priority: the student's record as a teacher, progress in the program, record as a student, evidence of seeking support outside the department, and extent of past support provided by the university. Students must maintain satisfactory academic progress

as defined by the Department of Sociology to remain eligible for departmental funding. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining a cumulative GPA of 3.50 or higher, passing all courses required for the degree, resolving Incomplete grades in a timely manner, and meeting the time limits for completing the M.A. and Ph.D. degrees as described above (Section II, Step 1, Paragraph C and Section II, Step 2, Paragraph E). Failure to meet any or all of these requirements may result in loss of renewability of the student's funding offer and/or loss of all future eligibility for departmental funding through the Department of Sociology. All instances of a student failing to meet these requirements will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Sociology Graduate Studies Committee. Consequences may vary depending on the student's individual circumstances.

Most GTA/GRA/Fellowship appointments are for one academic year. Students indicate their interest in obtaining and/or continuing teaching each year in the Application for Departmental Assistantship Funding, and each year all students who apply for funding are evaluated by the Graduate Studies Committee. Students entering the program at the pre-M.A. level may be permitted up to five years of departmental funding from the department, excluding summers. Students entering the program post-MA may be permitted up to four years of funding from the department, excluding summers. Funding from the department beyond these time limits is rarely awarded. Such additional funding is only available on the basis of departmental need to students whose progress to degree and teaching performance are satisfactory.

Any student who accepts an offer of departmental funding and later resigns it in order to take a position with another department or program may still have the resigned semesters counted toward their total semesters of departmental financial support received.

All 0.50 FTE GTAs appointed in the Department of Sociology are required to enroll in SOC 893: Leading Discussion Sections in Sociology, for two consecutive semesters, beginning with the first semester in which they hold a GTA appointment. Further enrollment in SOC 893 is required for GTAs assigned to SOC 104. Credit hours earned in SOC 893 do not count toward a graduate degree in sociology.

V. ADVISING, PETITIONS, AND ANNUAL REVIEW

A. Faculty Advisor. On admission, students will be advised by an initial academic advisor, appointed by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), in regard to such matters as course enrollment, committee formation, preparation of the portfolio, and the annual review. By the end of the first semester in the graduate program, students are required to choose a principal faculty advisor and inform the DGS of their selection by completing the Advisor/ Committee Agreement Form (available [online](#)). Any change of advisors must also be noted in this fashion. Students should confer regularly with their faculty advisor regarding their progress in the program. Students are required to record the name and obtain a signature of their faculty advisor on their annual plan of study which is included in their departmental files. The DGS serves as the general supervising advisor for all students.

Students may change advisors at any time provided they can identify another regular member of the department's graduate faculty willing to accept the position. It is the student's responsibility identify the new advisor, to notify the DGS at once and in writing of such changes, and to notify the previous advisor of the change by completing the Advisor/Committee Agreement Form (available [online](#)). When a change of advisor is necessary for reasons beyond the student's control (e.g., a faculty member leaving KU, retiring, or when the advising relationship is no longer productive), the DGS and/or department chair may assist the student in identifying a new advisor or serve as temporary advisor, if needed. The Sociology Graduate Committee will give the student a defined period of time to identify the new advisor

of up to six months. The DGS will assist with and monitor this process, but it will be entirely the responsibility of the student to initiate contacts, and identify a faculty member willing to be their advisor.

The student also may change any other committee member with the consent of the committee chair. Final approval of committee membership is granted by the Director of Graduate Studies.

Any faculty member has the right to refuse to serve as any student's advisor or serve on any committee. If a student is unable to identify a Sociology faculty member willing to serve as their advisor within six months, or sufficient faculty members in Sociology to make up a committee, this may be grounds for dismissal.

B. M.A. Thesis Mentoring Agreement. All pre-MA students must submit the MA Thesis Mentoring Agreement before the start of their third semester in the program and enrollment in thesis hours with their faculty advisor. The Thesis Mentoring Agreement is completed in consultation between the student and advisor. It establishes the timeline for completion of the thesis, and outlines expectations for both the student and advisor as to turnaround time on feedback, frequency of meetings, the nature and extent of comments/suggestions for revision, etc. It is strongly recommended that the agreement be completed prior to conducting thesis research over the summer if at all possible.

C. Annual Review. With the advice of their advisor, all students shall submit a plan of study in January of each year. Students must also submit their professional portfolio each year. Post-Oral Comp students must submit one final professional portfolio including the dissertation proposal. Post-Oral Comp students must also submit the Dissertation Mentoring Agreement, initially within one month after the Oral Comprehensive Exam, then annually along with the plan of study. After review, the Graduate Studies Committee will keep these materials on file for use in regular reviews and evaluation for financial support, GTA appointments, and awards/scholarships. The plan of study outlines the timing, means of preparation, and mode of meeting departmental requirements and other goals of the student. Master's level students in their second year of the program are also required to submit a draft of their thesis with their portfolios for review. The Dissertation Mentoring Agreement establishes the timeline for completion of the dissertation, and outlines expectations for both the student and advisor as to turnaround time on feedback, frequency of meetings, the nature and extent of comments/suggestions for revision, etc. The purpose of the annual review is to ensure prompt consideration of the student's goals in graduate study, frequent consultation with the advisor and committee, effective use of the student's time in the program, and sound professional training.

D. Petitions for Waivers of Rules and Requirements. Exceptions to the rules and requirements of the graduate program may be granted for sufficient reason by the Graduate Studies Committee. Students must petition to waive the rules and requirements stated in this manual, and the petition must be accompanied by written assessment(s) from the student's faculty advisor and, where relevant, the approval of the members of their RTF, master's or dissertation committees. This is to ensure careful consideration of the merits of the proposed change by those working most closely with the student involved. Petitions may be forwarded to the College Office of Graduate Affairs and/or Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs for final review and approval as necessary when pertaining to College/University level policies.

Petitions based on medical justifications are required to have supporting documentation from a health care professional. This statement can be as simple as a letter from the student's doctor's office stating that the student is 'being treated', or 'under doctor's care'. The statement MUST NOT include specifics of the condition for which the student is being treated.

Requests for time limit extensions with expected defense or exam dates outside of Spring or Fall semesters will not be considered unless a firm exam or defense date has been set and agreed to by all committee members during the prior Spring/Fall term.

E. Restrictions on Course Waivers. Students may petition to have up to 2 courses waived for Individual Master's Readings (891) or Individual Doctoral Readings (991). Reading hour petitions must include the following materials:

- A syllabus, that includes a full reading list/bibliography to be covered, a description of what the course is about, and the specific goals and outcomes of the class.
- A schedule of regular meetings with the instructor.
- A plan for regular assignments to be turned in to the instructor that demonstrates the student's mastery and understanding of the reading materials, such as annotated bibliography/summary of the readings, and/or series of essay assignments covering the readings.
- A final written product for the class in the form of a term paper or equivalent.

Students admitted at the post-M.A. level who have completed a master's degree in Sociology at an outside institution are permitted to waive up to 1 methods course, 1 theory course, and 2 substantive seminar course requirements. A syllabus and final paper or other major work product are required.

Students admitted at the pre-M.A. level and/or students who have completed a master's degree in a field *other than* Sociology are permitted to waive up to 1 methods course, 1 theory course, and 1 substantive seminar course requirements. A syllabus and final paper or other major work product are required.

All petitions for course waivers for non-Sociology courses must have *significant* sociological content as evidenced by the course syllabus & paper/work product submitted.

SOC 802: Classical Social Theory and SOC 902: Contemporary Social Theory may not be waived under any circumstances; the Graduate Studies Committee will not consider any such petitions.

Petitions to waive SOC 812 Analytic Methods will require additional steps for approval. Students who completed a similar course previously and are confident in their understanding of statistics may request a waiver. If the Graduate Studies Committee determines the course contents are equivalent to the content of SOC 812, the committee will approve the petition *conditionally*. The Committee will then administer an exam. Multiple members of the committee will review the exam. If the student scores a B or higher, the petition will be fully approved.

Course petitions will only be considered after a course is completed and the final grade has been entered.

Students may not petition to have a course listed as substantive seminar, per **Appendix A** of the Graduate Manual, to count as a theory or methods requirement.

A majority vote of the Graduate Studies Committee is required to grant the petitioned exception. Students at all times may request from the Director of Graduate Studies clarification and elaboration of rules, requirements, and recommendations.

Petitions for **substantive courses** offered by another [KU Social Science department](#) numbered 700+ may be approved semi-automatically. Students must submit the petition form with their faculty advisor's signature.

Petitions for **theory or methods courses** that have been previously petitioned and approved two or more times may be approved semi automatically. Below is the list of courses which have been approved 2+ time (will be updated annually):

- a. ANTH 783 (methods)
- b. BIOS 730 (methods)
- c. CLDP 944 (methods)
- d. CLDP 945 (methods)
- e. ELPS 871 (methods)
- f. PSYC 790 (methods)
- g. WGSS 801 (theory)

All other petitions require all materials specified on the petition request form.

Graduate level (700+) courses taught by KU faculty members with courtesy (also called “affiliate” or “adjunct”) appointments in Sociology may be counted toward degree requirements without a petition to the Graduate Studies Committee, provided that the course is directly relevant to their research (thesis, dissertation, etc.), and their primary faculty advisor approves the course. Students must complete a Coursework Approval Form for Courses Taught by Sociology Affiliated Faculty (available [online](#)), have their advisor sign the form to indicate their approval, and submit it to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Students may refer to the faculty listing on the website for current faculty members with courtesy appointments or consult the Sociology Office Manager.

VI. POLICIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS' ACCESS TO UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

Only currently enrolled students will have access to university resources in the Department of Sociology. The resources may include: desk, office space, and mailboxes. Students who are not currently enrolled (including those on official leave of absence) or enrolled students who are not in-residence must return all departmental keys and promptly remove all personal and professional effects from departmental space.

Appendix A: Theory, Methods, and Substantive Seminars Meeting Course Requirements

Sociological Theory

Sociology 802 Classical Social Theory
Sociology 804 Sociology of Knowledge
Sociology 900 Seminar on Special Topics in Theory
Sociology 902 Contemporary Social Theory

Sociological Methods

Sociology 707 Historical Sociology
Sociology 812 Analytic Methods
Sociology 910 Seminar in Special Topics in Methods (courses regularly taught under this number include Historical Sociology and Qualitative Methods)

Substantive Seminars

Sociology 722 Sociology of Gender
Sociology 760 Social Inequality
Sociology 767 Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Gerontology and Aging
Sociology 780 Advanced Topics (courses regularly taught under this number include Cultural Sociology; Globalization; Gender, Family, and Life Course; Sociology of Religion)
Sociology 820 Political Sociology
Sociology 824 Health and Social Behavior
Sociology 873 International Political Economy
Sociology 920 Social Organizations

Other Required Courses

Sociology 810: Sociological Inquiry
Sociology 995: Professionalization Proseminar

Appendix B: The Professional Portfolio

From their first semester in the graduate program, students are expected to prepare a professional portfolio of their graduate experience and work. This portfolio is to be submitted in the first week of the spring term in January. (Post-Oral Comp students must submit one final professional portfolio including the dissertation proposal.) The Professional Portfolio should be seen as an ongoing systematic collection of selected work that can demonstrate achievement and development. It is frequently expanded, revised, and updated. For example, an incorporated seminar paper that is later revised should be updated in the portfolio. Likewise, portfolio statements should be reconsidered and re-written in light of continued study and intellectual development. The faculty will conduct annual reviews of portfolios in the spring and thus students should ensure that all materials included are up-to-date and reflect the student's current progress. Finally, the portfolio should be an electronic document in a single bookmarked PDF file so it is accessible to faculty for evaluation.

The Professional Portfolio must contain the following items:

- table of contents
- curriculum vitae
- a portfolio statement explaining why the items selected have been included in the portfolio, how they relate to fields of interest, how those fields might be integrated and related to one another and what are understood to be the leading research issues in the major fields
- syllabi and written work from all graduate courses including research papers, take-home examinations, master's thesis proposal, etc.
- master's thesis
- research topic of focus dossiers (RTF) for two areas, at least one containing a critical review essay (CRE), if applicable
- dissertation proposal
- published works, if applicable
- conference papers, if applicable
- grant proposals, if applicable

The Portfolio may also contain the following work products if the student and their committees find them helpful as evidence of student's preparation:

- PowerPoint presentations (converted to PDF form)
- description of professional websites designed
- syllabi created for courses taught or proposed
- annotated bibliographies
- public sociology activities such as op-ed pieces, work done for community organizations, and the like

Once completed, please convert your portfolio to an electronic bookmarked PDF and email it to your advisor and the Graduate Program Coordinator.

VII. UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

This section is written and provided by the KU College Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs for inclusion in departmental graduate manuals.

This section contains information on requirements and policies of the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs, hereafter referred to as “the University”. It is not a complete list of all policies pertaining to graduate students. Only those policies that *most commonly* affect graduate students are included. Policies are described in general terms and are intended to help students understand what is expected. They do not reflect the exact language of the official policy and should not be confused with official policy. Specific information and restrictions as well as links to relevant forms may be accessed by clicking on the policy headings. Links to the official policies in the KU policy library are found at the bottom of each policy description. Students are accountable to and should familiarize themselves with the University's official policies.

GENERAL POLICIES

The following University policies apply to ALL graduate students regardless of degree, program, or department. These are minimum general requirements. Your department or program may have more restrictive policies in any of these areas.

Admission

Degree or non-degree seeking applicants must have a bachelor's degree (as evidenced by an official transcript from the institution the degree was obtained).

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Admission to Graduate Study](#)

English Proficiency Requirements

The University requires all applicants, international or domestic, to demonstrate English proficiency for admission to any graduate program at KU. There are multiple ways to prove English proficiency:

- Declaration of native or native-like speaker status on the online application for graduate study.
- Official scores from an English proficiency standardized test (e.g. TOEFL, IELTS-Academic, or PTE), sent by the testing agency to the University of Kansas. Official scores must be less than two years old. Scores must be reported to KU directly by the testing service. Self-reported scores or unofficial scores are not accepted. TOEFL scores should be sent by ETS to KU institution code 6871. IELTS should be sent to KU Graduate Admissions via the e-delivery service. PTE score sheets containing the Score Report Code and Registration ID should be emailed to graduateadm@ku.edu for verification.
- Graduation with a baccalaureate degree (or higher) earned in residence from an accredited English-medium college or university or an accredited college or university in the United States. Degrees earned online may not be used to verify English proficiency. Note: this option is not sufficient for employment as a Graduate Teaching Assistant.
- AEC Curriculum: Students who haven't taken one of the listed tests may complete coursework through the KU Applied English Center (AEC) to demonstrate English proficiency.

- **US Military Employment:** If you are employed as an officer in the U.S. military with documentation of selection or promotion to the rank of Major or higher (or the equivalent U.S. Navy or Coast Guard rank), then you will be considered fully proficient and will not be required to complete AEC testing.

Additional English Competency Requirements for GTAs:

English proficiency requirements for GTAs are governed by the Kansas Board of Regents and must be met separately from the English proficiency requirement for admission to a KU graduate program. Detailed information on English proficiency requirements for GTAs may be found on Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' Spoken English Competency page.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [English Proficiency Requirements for Admission to Graduate Study](#)
- [Spoken English Language Competency of Faculty and Graduate Teaching Assistants, Kansas Board of Regents Policy](#)

Enrollment

For graduate students, advising on enrollment and course selection take place at the department level. While individual units may have additional enrollment requirements, for students who are required to enroll full-time (e.g. students holding a GTA/GRA/GA appointment, international students on an F-1 or J-1 visa, students receiving federal financial aid, etc.) the University defines full-time enrollment as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters:

- Enrollment in 9 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 6 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s). *See Doctoral post-comprehensive enrollment.
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a Competency-Based Education (CBE) program

Summer sessions:

- Enrollment in 6 credit hours;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours plus a GTA, GRA, or GA appointment, regardless of percentage of appointment;
- Enrollment in 3 credit hours for graduate students using the Montgomery GI Bill – Active Duty (MGIB-AD) and Post-9/11 GI Bill – Active Duty;
- Doctoral candidates enrolled in dissertation hour(s).
- Enrollment in 6 competencies for students in a CBE program

Graduate students are not normally permitted to enroll for more than 16 hours a semester or more than 8 hours in summer session.

While these are KU's definitions of full-time enrollment, other institutions may have different definitions. Be sure to consult with your financial aid and/or health insurance providers before making enrollment decisions.

Students not enrolled by 11:59pm the day before the first day of classes will be assessed a late enrollment fee. The University Registrar then deactivates the KU ID of any not enrolled by the last Friday in October (for Fall) or last Friday in March (for Spring). Students who wish to enroll after that must submit a [Permit to Re-Enroll](#) to be reactivated.

Students who wish to leave their graduate program should inform the department of such plans in writing so that a Voluntary Withdrawal form may be submitted on their behalf. Please note that voluntarily withdrawing from your program does **not** automatically withdraw you from coursework. You must also withdraw from all classes in Enroll & Pay via the "Withdraw from the University" option.

Deadlines for adding, changing, dropping, or withdrawing from all courses, as well any fines associated with the change, are set by the University. **Deadlines vary from year to year. Students should carefully review the current [Academic Calendar](#).**

You may also wish to consult the Registrar's page on [Effects of Dropping or Withdrawing on your Transcript](#).

Your graduate program coordinator (or similar title) is available to guide you through any enrollment scenarios or questions that come up. In order to avoid problems on your record, please consult with them prior to dropping or changing enrollment.

Related Policies:

- [Discontinued Enrollment](#)
- [Enrollment](#)
- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate Coursework Expiration Dates](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#)

Graduate Credit (Including Transfer Credit)

The University's Graduate Credit policy defines KU's conditions for the following:

- Definition of graduate credit for the purposes of a course "counting" towards a graduate degree or graduate certificate at KU;
- Transfer of graduate credit to KU from an outside institution;
- Reduction in the required number of graduate hours for Master's students;
- Counting credit hours taken as non-degree seeking student towards a later graduate degree at KU;
- Counting credit hours taken as a certificate seeking student toward another graduate degree.

Transfer Credit

The transfer credit option allows master's students to add graduate-level coursework completed at another institution to their KU transcript to count toward their KU degree. Upper-level coursework taken as an undergraduate, even courses numbered at the graduate level, is not eligible for transfer in any case. Additional restrictions apply to what non-KU graduate courses and the number of credit hours that can

be counted toward a KU master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below, as well as consulting with their DGS. In all cases, transfer credit must first be approved at the department or program level. To begin the transfer process, students should consult with their DGS to submit the required transfer materials. These include a transcript reflecting the courses to be transferred and descriptions and/or syllabi for the courses in question.

No transfer of credits is allowed for the Ph.D. In circumstances where students enter the Ph.D. program with an M.A. from another institution or other relevant graduate coursework, it may be possible for students to request a reduction in the number of hours required for the Ph.D. Students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Reduced Credit Hour Degree

KU policy defines 30 hours as the minimum for master's degrees. Departments may petition for a reduced hour degree master's degree for individual students in cases where they may provide evidence that the student entered the program especially well-prepared to complete a graduate-level degree and the student is able to maintain a superior grade point average. Reduced credit hour degrees must be based on coursework or experiences that can be objectively measured, such as coursework or qualifying internship or study abroad programs. Professional or life experience does not qualify. A reduction in hours is distinct from a transfer of credit and is reserved for students whose prior coursework doesn't qualify for transfer credit (e.g. was already used to fulfill requirements towards a completed degree) and there are no modifications on the transcript.

Restrictions apply to the number of credit hours that can be reduced for a master's degree, so students should carefully review the information provided in the link above and the related policies below.

In all cases, a reduction in hours must first be approved at the department or program level, so to begin the process for approval, students should consult with their DGS. Students must also provide documentation of the coursework or experience being used to justify the reduced hours (e.g. transcripts, program descriptions).

Because there is no minimum number of required hours for the Ph.D., reduction of required hours based on prior degrees or experience is determined solely at the program level. Doctoral students should consult with their DGS about their enrollment plan.

Related Policies:

- [Graduate Credit](#)
- [Co-enrollment](#)
- [Master's Degree Requirements](#) (on Reduced Hour Master's Degree)

Credit/No Credit

The University supports and encourages interdisciplinary study, which may include graduate students enrolling in coursework at the graduate level that is outside of their primary discipline. The Credit/No Credit (CR/NC) is an option for graduate students who are taking a course that is not required for their degree or certificate and who do not wish to have the course grade reflected in their cumulative graduate GPA. Rather than a grade appearing on the transcript, the student receives a designation of CR or NC, which does not factor in the GPA.

No course graded CR/NC will count toward the satisfaction of any graduate degree or certificate requirement. This includes, but is not limited to, courses taken to fulfill the Research Skills and Responsible Scholarship requirement for doctoral students.

Students make the CR/NC election via the Registrar's CR/NC online request form. Elections and changes to elections can only be made during the specific CR/NC period. For regular semester courses, this period begins after the last day to add a class and extends for approximately two weeks. Exact dates may be found on the current KU Academic Calendar. Please keep in mind, short courses may have alternate dates.

The student should consult with their own program advisor about the appropriateness of the course prior to enrolling; however, in cases where CR/NC is elected, the course instructor is not informed of the election unless the student chooses to share this information.

Additional restrictions apply. Students should carefully review the information in the link above.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [University Senate Rules and Regulations \(USRR\), Section 2.3.8](#)

Probation & Dismissal

Probation is an academic status that can be assigned to a graduate student that is not making satisfactory progress toward completing their degree. The department initiates the probation process and will inform the student of why they are not making satisfactory progress, what they must do to return to good standing, and the deadline for doing so.

Students are most commonly placed on probation due to their graduate cumulative GPA dropping below a B average (3.0 on a 4.0 scale). In these cases, on the student's record for the semester following the semester in which the student's GPA drops below 3.0. If the student's cumulative GPA is raised to 3.0 by the end of the probationary semester, the student will be automatically returned to good academic standing.

Individual Schools/the College may set more stringent GPA requirements.

Students may also be placed on probation by their departments for other reasons that constituting a failure to make satisfactory progress towards degree. These may include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of progress on the thesis, dissertation, or capstone project
 - Unacceptable academic performance on program milestones outside of coursework (e.g. exams)
 - Unsatisfactory grades or GPA within foundational required courses (despite the overall cumulative GPA)
 - An unsatisfactory result in their department's annual progress evaluation
- Nearing or going beyond their maximum time to degree. See the Time Limits section below for more information.

Students should carefully review the Good Academic Standing policy for graduate students at KU for more information on what constitutes making satisfactory academic progress.

Individual programs may also have additional measures of progress. Students should also consult the Annual Review section of their department graduate handbook or the degree requirements section and with their program advisor for more information.

If a student is unable to raise their cumulative GPA or otherwise meet the communicated terms of the academic probation, the department will reconsider their continuation in the program, and in most cases will recommend the student for dismissal. Once dismissed, a student is no longer able to be enrolled in coursework and cannot complete their degree. Students dismissed from any graduate program may not be admitted to any other graduate program at the University of Kansas.

A student on probation or facing dismissal should discuss their status with their advisor.

Related Policies:

- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)
- [Good Academic Standing policy](#)

Grading

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs' (GPA) Grading policy governs requirements for the grading of graduate students above those described in Article II of the University Senate Rules and Regulations. Additionally, individual schools, departments, or programs may have grading policies that are more stringent than those of GPA.

Students should also consult their advisor and the departmental grading section of this handbook for additional information that may affect them.

At minimum, for all graduate students at KU, at least a B average is required on course work counted toward any of the master's degrees at KU, and only courses graded A, B, or C (excluding C-) may be counted. Course work counted toward a doctorate, including that for a master's degree if obtained at KU, should average better than a B.

Related Policies:

- [University Senate Rules & Regulations](#)
- [Grading](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Dismissed Enrollment](#)

Time Limits

The University expects that master's degree should typically be completed in two (2) years of full-time study, the doctorate degree in five (5) years of study, and both the master's and doctorate together in six-seven (6-7) years of study.

Students who anticipate exceeding these targets should review the information in the policies below, as well as consult with their program advisor to create a timeline for degree completion. In order to support this process, students are encouraged to use a Mentoring Agreement Template and/or adapt to their own needs to support effective mentoring and a positive mentoring relationship.

Note that individual schools/the College/degree programs may require Mentoring Agreements for students who are nearing their maximum time to degree.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Degree Program Time Constraints](#)

- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)
- [Doctoral Degree Comprehensive Oral Exams](#) (on exam expiration and recertification)
- [Doctoral Program Profiles with Time to Degree Information](#)
- [KU CLAS Mentorship Agreement Template](#)
- [Univ. Michigan Rackham Graduate School Mentoring Plan Templates](#)
- [KU Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs IDP template](#)

Leave of Absence

In exceptional circumstances (e.g. cases of illness, emergency, financial hardship, military leave, to pursue family responsibilities, or to pursue full-time activities related to long-range professional goals) it may be necessary for graduate students to take a break from their program temporarily, without having to withdraw entirely from the program. An approved leave of absence allows a student to take a temporary break from enrolling in graduate coursework while remaining in good standing with the University and the department and while “stopping the clock” on their time to degree. When a student is on Leave of Absence status it is understood that they have temporarily suspended their graduate work and therefore will not make use of University resources, including faculty time.

Requesting a Leave of Absence is done through a University petition. University petitions must first be approved and supported at the program level, so students wishing to initiate the petition process should first consult with their Director of Graduate Studies and review their department’s internal petition procedures. Units or the Director of Graduate Study may request documentation to support the student’s need for a leave of absence.

In order for a Leave of Absence to be approved, the student must be withdrawn from all active and/or future enrollment. Withdrawal for the purposes of Leave of Absence is still subject to all Registrar deadlines, required forms, and applicable tuition and fees.

Students on Leave of Absence are automatically reactivated after their leave is over and are eligible to enroll for their intended semester back during the normal enrollment periods. See the KU Academic Calendar for exact dates that enrollment begins.

If at any time plans change and a student wishes to return and enroll before leave was supposed to end, they may contact their department to be reactivated early.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Leaves of Absence](#) (policy)
- [Leave of Absence](#) (GPA website, form linked at bottom of page)

Required University Milestones

All graduate students must complete one or more exams as part of their degree requirements. In addition to department or program guidelines, the following milestones are required for all students and specific regulations apply:

- Master's Final Culminating Exam (written or oral)/Thesis Defense for Master's degree
- Doctoral Comprehensive Oral Exam
- Doctoral Final Exam/Dissertation Defense

*A final culminating effort is not required for departments with an approved coursework-only master’s degree option in the Academic Catalog (note that programs with a capstone are considered coursework only).

Before a student is allowed to complete any of these three exams, pre-approval from the school/College is required in advance of the exam date. This pre-approval request will be submitted on the student's behalf by their department after the exam date has been scheduled. The school/College reviews the student record and verifies all University requirements have been fulfilled. The full list of these requirements may be found via the link in the heading above. Students should work with their departments well in advance of their planned exam date, to schedule their exams in a timely fashion and to ensure that all University policies relating to oral exams are being followed.

There are additional policies requirements for oral exams. The following are University policies pertaining to oral exams:

Oral Exam Committee Composition

All voting committee members must be appointed members of the Graduate Faculty of KU. Additionally, a majority of committee members serving on a graduate student oral examination committee must be tenured/tenure-track faculty in the candidate's department or program of study.

Many additional restrictions apply, especially for doctoral exam committees. Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the University policies pertaining to exams, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies when forming an exam committee. Your graduate program coordinator can assist with confirming the qualifying status of any faculty member at KU, or outside of KU.

Oral Exam Attendance

Oral Exams may be conducted in-person, remotely, or a hybrid of both. There are no University level requirements for physical presence; however, there are strict regulations on participation.

In all cases, all committee members must be present, either physically or via phone/video conference, for an exam to commence. **If a committee member does not arrive or appear, the exam may not begin and if a committee member leaves or loses connection such that they cannot fully participate, the exam may not proceed. Oral examinations that do not meet these attendance requirements are not valid.**

Master's and doctoral students should carefully review the policies below, as well as consult with their Director of Graduate Studies in the formation of an oral exam committee.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Master's Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Doctoral Student Oral Exam Committee Composition](#)
- [Oral Exam Attendance](#)
- [Graduate Faculty Appointments](#)

DOCTORAL DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the student's individual Ph.D. program's degree requirements, the following are University requirements for graduation with a Ph.D. at KU.

Enrollment Requirement

Prior to the semester in which the comprehensive exam is held, all doctoral students must complete a

minimum program engagement equivalent to two full-time semesters. This may be accomplished through either of the following:

- Two semesters (fall and/or spring) of full-time enrollment in KU coursework, as defined by University policy
- At least 18 hours of enrollment in KU coursework spread out over several part-time semesters

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Engagement and Enrollment in Doctoral Programs](#)

Continuous Enrollment for Post-Comprehensive Students

During the semester in which the doctoral oral comprehensive exam is completed and each fall and spring semester follows, doctoral students must adhere to very specific enrollment requirements. These requirements may be different than enrollment requirements prior to the oral comp exam.

Failure to properly comply with the enrollment requirements may cause delays to graduation or additional enrollment requirements to make up what was missed, increasing tuition expenses near the end of your degree program.

To avoid delays or additional costs, you are also strongly advised to meet with your graduate program coordinator the semester before your oral comprehensive exam. Your graduate coordinator will work with you to develop an enrollment plan that meets all policy requirements, while also preventing unnecessary or avoidable fees.

Post-comprehensive enrollment requirements also apply to students with GTA/GRA/GA appointments, but these students must be certified to drop their enrollment levels. Departments are responsible for tracking student enrollment and will submit the certification form on the student's behalf **at least two weeks prior** to the beginning of the semester in which the enrollment will drop below 6 hours. Students who are certified to reduce hours continue to meet the University's definition of full-time enrollment, as well as the enrollment requirements of their employment contract.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Full-time Enrollment for Graduate Students](#)
- [Doctoral Candidacy](#)

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE REQUIREMENTS

The University offers a variety of Approved Graduate Certificate Programs to encourage current graduate students to pursue interdisciplinary study, gain a credential for expertise in an outside area of study, or provide an option for a coherent course of advanced study for those not ready to commit to a full degree program. Note that students must be fully admitted to a graduate certificate by the end of the last course that will count to fulfill the certificate. Students wishing to complete the certificate should apply as early as possible. Students whose interests or career goals may be served by a Graduate Certificate should familiarize themselves with the University's policies relating to Certificate programs (found below) early in their graduate career, in addition to individual certificate program requirements.

Related Policies and Forms:

- [Graduate Certificate Programs: Eligibility and Admission Criteria](#)
- [Policies & Procedures for Graduate Certificate Programs](#)

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS (Master's & Ph.D.)

In addition to all program requirements, students planning to graduate must complete all University graduation requirements **prior to the published Graduation Deadline** in a given semester. Students should consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for the published Graduation Deadline, which varies by semester.

Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs Graduation Checklists ([Master's](#) | [Doctoral](#))

These graduation checklists provide a comprehensive list of all University requirements for graduation and should be consulted by every graduating master's or doctoral student as soon as graduation is expected. Submission of the final draft of the thesis or dissertation is done electronically. Students must comply with all University requirements for formatting and electronic submission of the thesis or dissertation. There is no University requirement that students provide a bound or printed copy of the draft.

We strongly encourage students to submit an Application for Graduation as early as possible; ideally prior to the 20th day of classes of the semester they intend to graduate.

GRADUATE & POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs (GPA) offers funding opportunities in several different categories. Students interested in applying should direct inquiries to the department's Director of Graduate Studies or to GPA. Some of the available funding includes:

[Summer Research Scholarships](#): intended primarily for post-comp doctoral students.

[Graduate Student Travel Fund](#): intended for graduate students presenting a paper at a national or regional meeting of a learned or professional society. A student may receive an award (max \$750) only once per academic year, with priority given to students who have not received the fund previously. Funds are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

[Doctoral Student Research Fund](#): Designed to support KU doctoral students who need assistance to carry out research that advances progress toward the degree. Applications for this fund are accepted only for a limited time as funding is available. Students are eligible to receive one award from this fund during their doctoral career. Students should check the link above for additional information and restrictions.

VIII. KEY OFFICES AT KU

Sociology's [Graduate Program Coordinator](#) and/or [Director of Graduate Studies](#) is your first stop for any questions related to graduate study or requirements. If you would like to research an issue in advance of speaking with your department, or if you still have questions, the following offices can provide assistance:

College Office of Graduate Affairs (COGA)

COGA oversees graduate affairs and administers University policy for programs within the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences. The COGA website contains comprehensive information on requirements and processes pertaining to graduate education at KU. Most common questions can be answered with the information provided there, including questions regarding [enrollment changes or forms](#), university policies regarding [exams](#) and committee requirements, and university [graduation requirements](#). The College of Liberal Arts & Sciences' [Master's Hooding Ceremony](#) is coordinated by COGA.

COGA reviews all [student petitions of university and College policy](#), issuing decisions on behalf of the College or referring as required to a faculty committee and/or Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs. The more common student petitions relate to [Enrollment](#), [Leave of Absence](#), and [Time Limit Extensions](#).

COGA is a resource if you have questions about petitions or graduation requirements that your department is unable to answer. Refer to the COGA website for current staff contact information.

Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs

Graduate & Postdoctoral Affairs is the office of the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies at KU. The Executive Council of Graduate Faculty sets policies and regulations governing graduate study, and offers various programs for graduate students throughout the year. While COGA should be your first stop for any questions your department cannot answer, you may be referred to Graduate Studies for certain matters, especially for questions about [GTA/GRA/GA appointments and policies](#). The university's [Doctoral Hooding Ceremony](#) is coordinated by Graduate Studies.

Graduate Admissions

Contact Graduate Admissions for questions regarding the KU Online Application for Graduate Study, English proficiency requirements, and official transcripts.

Office of the University Registrar (OUR)

Contact OUR for questions related to enrollment (if the question cannot be resolved via the enrollment changes link provided above under COGA), tuition, campus fees, the Academic Calendar, and fee petitions.

Financial Aid & Scholarships

Contact Financial Aid for questions related to the disbursement of scholarships, fellowship award, loans, and FAFSA.

International Support Services (ISS)

Contact ISS for questions related to international students, including enrollment requirements, international student insurance, obtaining a social security card, I-20 questions, and any issue related to student visas. While other offices on campus such as the AEC, Human Resources, or the Registrar may also handle related matters, because the students' legal status in the country may be affected, it is recommended that students contact ISS first.

Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE)

The Center for Teaching Excellence (CTE) is a university office dedicated to assisting instructors, including GTAs, to develop effective instructional techniques. The expert staff of CTE can introduce instructors to the pedagogical technology available at the university and help instructors develop new approaches to teaching. CTE specialists work with instructors individually, and also offer a diverse array

of workshops and discussions. They also can guide instructors to useful scholarly literature on the subject of college teaching and learning.

Appendix A: Theory, Methods, and Substantive Seminars Meeting Course Requirements **(MASTER)**

Sociological Theory

Sociology 801 ~~The Rise of Social Theory~~
Sociology 802 Classical Social Theory
~~Sociology 803 Issues in Contemporary Theory~~
Sociology 804 Sociology of Knowledge
~~Sociology 808 Feminist Theories~~
Sociology 900 Seminar on Special Topics in Theory
Sociology 902 Contemporary Social Theory

Sociological Methods

Sociology 707 Seminar in Historical Sociology
Sociology 812 Analytic Methods
~~Sociology 813 Field Methods and Participant Observation~~
~~Sociology 814 Health Services Research: Epidemiology, Evaluation, & Survey Methods~~
Sociology 910 Seminar in Special Topics in Methods (courses regularly taught under this number include Feminist Research Methods, Historical Sociology, and Qualitative Methods)

Substantive Seminars

Sociology 722 Sociology of Gender
Sociology 760 Social Inequality
~~Sociology 762 Social Deviation and Control~~
Sociology 767 Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Gerontology & Aging
~~Sociology 771 Intergroup Relation~~
Sociology 780 Advanced Topics
Sociology 820 Political Sociology
Sociology 824 Health and Social Behavior
~~Sociology 830 Race in the Americas~~
Sociology 873 International Political Economy
~~Sociology 875 The Political Economy of Globalization~~
Sociology 920 Social Organizations
~~Sociology 930 Comparative Studies~~
~~Sociology 950 Social Psychology~~
~~Sociology 960 Deviance and Social Problems~~
~~Sociology 970 Social Conflict and Change~~
~~Sociology 980 Special Topics (courses regularly taught under this number include Cultural Sociology; Globalization; Gender, Family, and Life Course; and Gender and Social Policy)~~

Courses in ~~striketrough~~ have been retired due to not being offered in 5+ years