

Northwestern

WEINBERG COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Department of **Sociology**

The Whole Hooey 2019-2020

Guide to Sociology Graduate Program

Table of Contents

Who’s Who in Sociology.....	2
Requirements for a Ph.D. in Sociology	3
Second-Year Papers	5
Alumni Funds for Second-Year Paper Research	6
MA Degree	6
Special Fields and Admission to Candidacy.....	6
Dissertation Proposals, Dissertations, and Dissertation Defenses	8
Non-Curricular Requirements: Teaching & Responsible Conduct of Research	8
Teaching Requirement.....	9
Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)	9
Joint Programs:	10
Management and Organizations and Sociology	10
JD/PhD Program.....	10
Dual PhD Degree Program in Sociology between Northwestern University and SciencesPo.....	11
The MS Program in Statistics:.....	11
A Note on “Good Standing” and Exclusion	12
Advising.....	13
Serving on Departmental Committees	14
Departmental Colloquia	14
Workshops	14
Graduate Student Funding in Sociology	15
20 Quarter Funding Package.....	15
Externally Funded Students (Years 1-6).....	17
Post 20 Quarter Funding Package.....	17
Further Funding Information (any year):.....	19
Teaching Assistantships (Departmental Guidelines, supplementary to The Graduate School’s TA Requirements).....	20
Travel Grants	22
External Education/Training Grants	22
The Graduate School Conference Travel Grants.....	23
Sociology Travel Grants	23
Graduate Student Association.....	23
The Graduate School Policies and Procedures	24
Select Key Policies and Procedures from TGS.....	24
General Registration Policies.....	24
Residency and Transfer Credit	24
Summer Registration	24
Advanced Year Registration.....	24
Leaves of Absence	24
TGS Financial Aid Policies	24
The Graduate School Additional Fees.....	24
TGS Academic Student Services Team.....	25

Who's Who in Sociology

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Full committee list can be found [here](#).

NOTE: Northwestern University reserves the right to change without notice any statement in this publication concerning, but not limited to, rules, policies, tuition, fees, curricula, and courses.

Requirements for a Ph.D. in Sociology

Our graduate program has both structure and openness. The Sociology Department requires students to take the following:

- two theory courses (406-1 and one other)
- two statistics courses (401-1 and 401-2)
- one field methods course (403)
- one additional methods course of the student's choosing
- the Teaching Seminar (570)
- the Second-Year Paper Seminar (490)
- the non-credit Proseminar (480-1 and 480-2).

In addition, we strongly encourage students without a statistics background to take 400 in the fall of their first year.

Beyond these specific course requirements, students must take 9 sociology electives plus 3 courses outside the Sociology Department. Please see "[A Note on "Good Standing" and Exclusion](#)" for more information on grade requirements.

Students may petition to have requirements waived whenever they can present evidence showing that they have met the requirement in some other way. Petitions should be in writing following discussion with the student's faculty advisor and with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS).

The Whole Hooey focuses on departmental requirements, touching lightly on those of The Graduate School (TGS). For TGS requirements, students should read "Doctor of Philosophy Degree Requirements" <https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/phd-degree-requirements/> the accompanying chart (12.7 PhD Timeline) which lays details about tuition, registration, milestones, and forms year by year is particularly helpful. Here is a typical Sociology student's program for the first three years:

First Year (9 courses plus Proseminar):

- 400 (Analysis of Social Data)
- 401-1 (Basic Statistics) and 401-2 (Intermediate Statistics)
- 403 (Field Methods)
- One additional methods course (may be taken any year)¹
- 406-1 (Classical Sociological Theory)
- 570 (College Teaching Seminar)²
- One, two, or three substantive electives. Because of the importance of substantive courses during the early years of graduate study, no independent studies (499s) should be taken during the first year without permission from the DGS.

¹ E.g., comparative/historical methods, methods of cultural analysis, event history analysis, an advanced statistics course, experimental methods, or a general research methods course. To see if a course will fulfill this requirement, submit the syllabus to the DGS, who will run it by the methods committee. Not all methods courses are taught every year, so plan ahead.

² This is a real course, with weekly assignments; it is ungraded (P/F) and done in conjunction with teaching a discussion section for Introduction to Sociology. Attendance at the Introduction to Sociology lectures is a required part of this course. Students may take it with two or three other courses.

- 480-1 and 480-2 (non-credit departmental Proseminar in fall and winter). The first quarter introduces faculty and their research; the second quarter focuses on professional issues – e.g., fellowships and publication -- and includes the three required RCR sessions.

Second Year (9 courses):

- A second sociological theory course. Theory courses that meet the requirement must be taught by faculty in the Sociology Department and/or have a SOC number. Students may count other theory courses that do not meet these criteria as outside-the-department electives.
- One or two quarters of 490 (Second-Year Paper Seminar); the second quarter of 490 is not required. Like 570, these are real courses, with frequent assignments, but are ungraded (P/F).
- Five to seven substantive electives, outside courses, or workshops and/or 499s (Independent Studies)

Third Year (4 to 9 courses)

- Substantive electives, as desired or if needed to meet the requirement for 9 sociology electives and 3 courses outside the department
- Two or three 499s to work on the Special Fields requirement (paper and course syllabus)
- 499s or workshops to prepare the dissertation proposal

Electives

To earn the Ph.D., graduate students in sociology will take 9 Sociology elective courses in addition to the specifically required courses. Sociology electives are graduate level (400 level and above; occasionally a 300 level course may count, with permission of the DGS) substantive courses offered by the Sociology Department (with a “SOC” label). Soc 490-2 and Independent Studies (499s) do not count as electives.

Sociology electives can include courses offered by sociologists in other NU departments and schools or by sociology departments elsewhere, with permission of the DGS; in such cases, the student will bring a course description and syllabus to the DGS and petition to have it count.

In addition to the 9 sociology electives, students are required to take three electives outside of the department. In cases where a student takes a course outside the department that is taught by a sociologist (someone with a Sociology Ph.D.), the student may count the course *either* as a sociology elective (with DGS approval) or as an outside-the-department course, but not both. To count as an outside-the-department course, a course cannot be co-listed with the sociology department (i.e. it cannot carry both a sociology number and an outside department number, e.g., SOC 476/POLI SCI 490) or be taught by sociology departmental faculty. Courses that have sociology numbers and/or are taught by sociology departmental faculty can be counted as sociology electives, but not as outside-the-department electives, even if the course also has another department’s number.

Workshops for Credit

Students may count workshops as one of their 9 Sociology electives under the following stipulations:

- The faculty coordinator(s) will decide whether a workshop can be taken as a course with credit.
- The faculty coordinator(s) will decide what a student needs to do to get course credit.
- A workshop taken as a course must receive a letter grade, not pass/fail.
- Students can receive a maximum of two course credits for workshop participation, and they can receive credit only one time for a given workshop (no duplication).

Total Number of Courses

Sociology graduate students typically take 10 specifically required courses:

- 2 quarters of statistics (2)
- Field methods and one other methods (2)
- 2 quarters of theory (2)
- College Teaching seminar (570) (1)
- Proseminar (480) (2)
- 2nd year paper seminar (490) (1)

In addition, most students take Soc 400 (Analysis of Social Data, which can count as an elective) and the second quarter of Soc 490-2.

These 10 courses plus 9 sociology electives and 3 courses outside the department come to 22 courses, the number required for a Ph.D. in sociology. Students often end up with more than this number because they take Independent Studies or other courses. Not everyone takes 400 or the second quarter of 490; they still must take 22 courses, which can then include Independent Studies.

The number of total courses may be reduced by up to 6 courses for students who have done graduate work elsewhere. The 6 courses that are waived can reduce either the number of required electives (to as few as 3) or the number of required courses outside the department (to zero), but the total number of reductions to these requirements can be no more than 6. All such reductions must be approved by the DGS.

Second-Year Papers

By or during the third quarter of the first year, a student develops a topic for the Second-Year Paper (2YP), which may also qualify as an MA thesis. The 2YP is an introduction to carrying out academic research in sociology, and it takes the form of a research report of roughly 30 or so pages that applies sociological theory and methods to some body of data. This project should demonstrate the student's mastery of a substantive area, including familiarity with the relevant literature and with appropriate research methods. The final product should approach journal-article quality, and indeed these papers often reach publication. Many 2YP projects will necessitate a submission to the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

The student develops a topic with a professor who agrees to be the primary advisor; the student also asks a second faculty member to serve as reader. Both faculty members must be members of The Graduate School's Graduate Faculty, and the chair of the committee must be a member of the Sociology Department. The student then has a year to develop the research. Both advisor and reader must approve the 2YP by the end of the second-year spring quarter. Students should turn in a completed draft of their papers by May 1 to allow for any changes that faculty require. The student will have shown drafts to their advisor and reader throughout the year. It is highly desirable that the paper be far enough along to allow submission by the January deadline for consideration in the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association.

If the 2YP has not been completed and approved by the end of spring quarter, the student and faculty advisor must write to the DGS and the GPA indicating what has created the delay and setting a firm due date in the summer. The student and advisor must let the DGS and GPA know when the paper has been accepted. A detailed schedule will be passed out in the Second-Year Paper seminar (490) in the fall.

Alumni Funds for Second-Year Paper Research

The Sociology Department offers modest financial support for Second-Year Paper (2YP) projects that involve research expenses. The funds will help with typical expenses such as travel, transcribing, or other research expenses. Note: The funds cannot be used for attending conferences unless the student is collecting data for their 2YP. Students may apply for these funds during the spring quarter of their first-year when they start writing their 2YP proposals. The DGS will send out a notice asking for applications and budgets.

MA Degree

The Department of Sociology graduate program admits only those students whose ultimate goal is to earn a PhD. However, a student can receive an optional master's degree. For a master's degree, TGS requires at least 9 graded courses authorized for graduate credit. The Department of Sociology further requires that all departmental required courses be completed, and the Second-Year Paper be approved. More information on TGS requirements can be found at: <https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/masters-degree-requirements/>

Special Fields and Admission to Candidacy

The Special Fields Paper is a literature review (roughly 30-40 pages) of one subfield of sociology, plus a syllabus for an advanced undergraduate course in that subfield. The paper is not a summary of scholarship, but rather a critical analysis of scholarship. Through this assignment, a student develops her or his own perspective on the subfield's core empirical and theoretical claims and how they have evolved, the areas of current debate, and how the subfield should develop in future. The Annual Review of Sociology offers good models for how to write such papers. The aim of this requirement is to provide the student with broad and deep knowledge of a subfield sufficient to teach introductory and advanced undergraduate and graduate courses. Students and their advisors negotiate what exactly constitutes a "subfield."

Sections of the American Sociological Association are a good guide to recognized fields.

When originally conceived, the Special Fields Paper was designed to allow a student to develop and demonstrate expertise in a subfield *different* from the subfield of the dissertation, so that students would be prepared to teach more broadly and could go on the job market in two different areas. While this remains a worthy goal and an important starting point in considering the Special Fields Paper, in practice, students often do not have a clear idea of the field of the dissertation this early in their graduate school career, and therefore find it difficult to carve out a distinct area for the Special Fields Paper that is separate from the area of the dissertation. Consequently, the question of whether the Special Fields Paper should be focused on the area of the dissertation, or an area other than the dissertation, is left to the student and the advisors.

When discussing this question, students and their advisors should consider issues such as the following: Was the Second-Year Paper on a topic distinct from the topic of the dissertation, or will the dissertation itself draw from two different subfields? In such cases, it may be reasonable to treat the Special Fields Paper as the literature review for the dissertation, since the student can claim to have demonstrated mastery of two fields in other ways. Conversely, is the student planning a dissertation in a more peripheral, novel, or less marketable area? In such cases, it may be appropriate for the student to use the Special Fields Paper as an opportunity to develop expertise in a more central, recognized, or more marketable subfield. In some cases, students may wish to explore the intersection of two subfields in order to ask what light one sheds on the other.

Because students' individual situations are so varied, these questions are best discussed with the advisors on a case by case basis; a "Guide to Negotiating the Scope of the Special Fields Paper" has been prepared and is available on the departmental website under "Graduate Student Resources." Students are encouraged to bring this document with them when they meet their advisors to discuss the scope of the paper.

Ideally in the spring quarter of the student's second year (and certainly no later than the beginning of fall quarter of the third year), the student chooses an advisor for the Special Fields Paper and a second faculty reader. Both of these must be members of The Graduate School's Graduate Faculty, and the chair of the committee must be a member of the Sociology Department. In consultation with these two faculty members, the student identifies a subject area and prepares a reading list. Both faculty must approve the completed SFP and syllabus by the end of the spring quarter of the third year, so students should turn in their final drafts to both advisors (cc'ing the graduate program assistant) no later than May 1 to allow for changes that the faculty may require. However, students are encouraged not to think of the SFP as a yearlong endeavor but rather as a more delimited project. Ideally students will complete the SFP by the winter quarter of third year and then move ahead to preparing the dissertation prospectus.

We offer a seminar for students writing their Special Fields Papers. Students had proposed such a seminar, roughly analogous to the Second-Year Paper seminar, as an effective way for third-years to move through this requirement together. The seminar is not required, but it has a course number (Sociology 476) and can be counted as a sociology elective (as long as a student takes it for a grade and not pass/fail).

Completing the Special Fields Paper meets TGS's requirement for passing qualifying exams. When the paper has been accepted, the Special Fields advisor should email the GPA, cc the DGS and second reader, and confirm the paper has been approved. Provided all other requirements have been met (e.g., coursework, etc.), the GPA will process the paperwork to TGS, and the student advances to candidacy.

Dissertation Proposals, Dissertations, and Dissertation Defenses

Students must write a dissertation proposal, in consultation with their dissertation chair, and defend the proposal before a dissertation committee consisting of at least three members, including the chair. Two of the members of the dissertation committee must be members of The Graduate School's Graduate Faculty. Two members of the committee must also be members of the Sociology Department, including the chair of the committee. While TGS requires students to defend their dissertation proposals no later than by the end of their fourth year, both TGS and the Department *strongly* encourage students to meet this requirement earlier. Doing so allows students to compete for internal and external fellowships in the fall. Note also that many dissertation projects will necessitate Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval.

Once the proposal has been approved by the dissertation committee, the student is "ABD" ("all but dissertation," not an official status but a common phrase in academia). During the writing stage, students should be in close contact with their chair and other committee members, updating them regularly on the progress of the dissertation, sending draft chapters, and consulting them about any changes in direction and about methodological, substantive, and ethical issues.

As the dissertation nears completion, the student should consult his or her chair about reconvening the dissertation committee for the final defense of the dissertation. The student will want to ask his or her chair how to assess when the dissertation is ready to defend, how much time to allow for faculty reading and response to the draft, how much time might be needed after the defense for revisions before the final dissertation can be submitted to TGS, and so forth. Information about submission requirements is available on TGS's website.

However much fun graduate school seems, the graduate school career is not permanent. We suggest that students should aim to finish in six years. In recent years, students who are well-prepared and settle on their dissertation topics early have been able to finish in five. TGS's official statement is that "Only rarely under extenuating circumstances will students be granted permission to continue beyond 9 years."

Non-Curricular Requirements: Teaching & Responsible Conduct of Research

In addition to taking courses and meeting the key milestones of the Second-Year Paper, Special Fields Paper, and dissertation, graduate students also must meet two additional requirements: the teaching requirement and certification that they have been trained in responsible conduct of research (RCR).

Teaching Requirement

The teaching requirement is a TGS requirement. (This requirement applies to students entering in 2010 or after). The Sociology Department meets TGS's teaching requirement with a two-part requirement. The first part, which has long been in place in our Department, is a teaching seminar that all first-year students are required to take. The seminar involves formal instruction in such matters as syllabus construction; lecturing, discussion, and other methods of transmitting information; evaluation, grading, and strategies for making feedback useful to students; and methods for teaching students to write and revise written work. Alongside this formal instruction, first-year graduate students do a bit of closely supervised practice teaching and practice grading (in the context of the spring quarter undergraduate course, Introduction to Sociology).

Graduate students meet the second part of our teaching requirement by TAing (or teaching) for a quarter. TA assignments may include running discussion sections, grading and evaluation, preparing and delivering one lecture during the course, suggesting additional readings to supplement the syllabus, preparing test materials and assignments, meeting with students during office hours, etc.

Although the formal requirement that all graduate students do some teaching during their graduate career is new, in fact almost all of our graduate students teach and regard learning to teach as a key part of their graduate career. Moreover, we build an orientation to teaching into our Special Fields Paper requirement, where students are required to prepare a syllabus for an upper-division course (along with writing a synthetic review of a literature). If students apply for teaching positions (aka, go on the "job market"), they typically prepare a teaching portfolio, which is reviewed by their dissertation advisor and by the placement officer.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)

Students need to be familiar with, and trained in, two separate but overlapping ways of ensuring ethical research. The first and older of the two is the Institutional Review Board, which focuses on making certain that research does not threaten the well-being of human subjects. Many types of sociological research – e.g., research employing ethnographic, interview, or experimental methods – require IRB approval, and every student needs to learn how the IRB process works. The second is the Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR), a requirement that comes from the National Science Foundation (NSF); universities and departments that have any NSF funding must see that their students are RCR-certified.

The Department handles both of these via the required Proseminar during the winter quarter of the first year of graduate study. There are four components:

1. Students take and pass online CITI modules called CITI RCR Training (NOT the CITI Human Subject Test). Once the RCR online modules are complete, students should submit a copy of their completion report to the GPA. (Students do these on their own, and they should be completed at the same time as components 2-4);
2. In Proseminar, students participate in a discussion of the IRB process led by a representative from the IRB and tailored to sociological research;

3. In Proseminar, students participate in a discussion of ethics in *quantitative* research led by a Sociology professor;
4. In Proseminar, students participate in a discussion of ethics in *qualitative* research led by a Sociology professor.

Ethical issues are also covered in research-oriented courses, such as Field Methods, and individual students should discuss issues specific to their own research with their advisors.

Joint Programs:

Management and Organizations and Sociology

The [Department of Management and Organizations in the Kellogg Graduate School of Management](#) and the Department of Sociology are strongly tied. Organizations play a key role in stratification, social change, and collective behavior, and are themselves shaped by larger sociological and historical processes. The joint program is designed for students who want to gain a disciplinary base in sociology while focusing their doctoral research on organizations and their environments. Specific areas of research include: building and testing theory about organizations, their members and their management; organizational processes; institutions; and the embeddedness of economic action in social structure.

The MORS-Sociology Joint Degree requirements can be found [here](#).

JD/PhD Program

The [JD/PhD Joint Degree Program](#) is open to a small number of students who intend to pursue an academic or research career and whose teaching and research will be enriched by both the JD and Ph.D. degrees. Applicants who wish to participate in the program must complete the Graduate School application, submit supplemental application items to the Law School, and meet the admission requirements for both Northwestern's School of Law and The Graduate School.

The JD/PhD Joint Degree overview requirements can be found [here](#).

For students admitted directly into the JD/PhD Joint Degree program, the Sociology Department requires that they complete [all sociology coursework](#) and the Second-Year Paper, prior to beginning Law School in the third year. JD/PhD students who do not meet these requirements will not be able to start Law School in their third year and will remain with the Sociology Department. With permission from the Law School and the Sociology Department, a JD/PhD Student unable to begin Law School in the third year may be allowed to begin Law School in the fourth year. If approved, the student must complete all requirements mentioned above **AND** the Special Fields Paper before beginning Law School in the fourth year. JD/PhD students can have up to three out-of-department electives waived, provided these do not exceed the maximum of 6 waived courses.

Current PhD students may also apply to transfer into the JD/PhD program. Such students will be required to meet all the usual Sociology PhD program standards for the year preceding Law School entry. Students who are considering applying for admission to the JD/PhD program

should talk to the Sociology DGS about what requirements would need to be completed before beginning Law School.

JD/PhD students currently receive 6 years of guaranteed support and may receive only certain forms of support beyond 6 years. Given the number of course requirements in sociology and requirements for a Second Year Paper and a Special Fields Paper, JD/PhD students must carefully plan their schedules. Students should consult with the DGS and their advisor to plan their schedules, but it is recommended that in the first two years of graduate study students should take a full complement of 17 courses for credit (8 required sociology courses and 9 sociology electives) and two non-credit Proseminar courses. As noted above, the Second Year Paper must be completed in timely fashion to permit students to enroll in the Law School in year 3. While students must complete the Special Fields Paper by the end of their fifth year, the Department recommends they write it during the two years spent in Law School. By doing so, they will be able to enter candidacy during the 5th year of the program.

Dual PhD Degree Program in Sociology between Northwestern University and SciencesPo

The dual degree program allows Northwestern and SciencesPo students to spend some years at the partner institution, during which students will take courses, conduct research, write a dissertation under the direction of a joint Northwestern-SciencesPo dissertation committee, and become eligible for the PhD degrees of both institutions.

Students interested in the dual degree program should contact Professor Lincoln Quillian (l-quillian@northwestern.edu) for additional information. Students who have been admitted to the dual degree program should consult their admission letter for requirements.

The MS Program in Statistics:

The statistics department offers a program to receive an MS in statistics for students receiving a Ph.D. in other departments, including sociology. The requirements for the MS in statistics are discussed here: <https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/statistics/statistics-ms/>

The sociology department allows students who are also receiving the MS in statistics to waive some coursework. MS students are allowed to waive up to four course requirements in light of the large number of courses they will be taking as part of the MS program. Note students cannot exceed the 6 total course waiver restriction (for example, if 4 waivers have been approved for prior graduate level coursework, a student in the MS program will receive 2 waivers instead of 4). Note also that The Graduate School does not allow double counting of courses toward multiple degrees. Specifically sociology students getting the MS in statistics are allowed to waive the following sociology Ph.D. course requirements:

- Two courses from outside of sociology
- One sociology elective
- One additional course that, at the student's choice, could be a sociology elective, an outside-the-department course, or the department's required "additional methods course"

Students are expected to complete all coursework by the end of year 3 and should be aware that

there is no extension to complete the Sociology PhD coursework by the end of their 3rd year. Students may complete the MS Program coursework in their 4th year with approval from their advisor and the Sociology DGS.

A Note on “Good Standing” and Exclusion

The Graduate School has minimum standards for satisfactory academic progress. There are three sets of criteria that TGS takes into account in determining whether or not students are making satisfactory academic progress:

- Program length. Doctoral students must complete all requirements for the PhD within [nine years of initial registration](#) in TGS. Students who do not complete degree requirements by the established deadlines will not be considered in good academic standing and will be placed on probation.
- Grades and cumulative GPA. A student whose overall grade average is below B (3.0 GPA) or who has more than three incomplete (Y or X) grades is not making satisfactory academic progress and will be placed on probation by TGS.
- Internal milestone deadlines. Doctoral students who have not been admitted to candidacy (i.e. written the Special Fields Paper) by the end of their third year, or who have not completed the dissertation prospectus by the end of the fourth year, are not making satisfactory academic progress and will be placed on academic probation by TGS.

More information on TGS’s requirements and consequences can be found at:
<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/satisfactory-progress/>

In addition to TGS’s standards, the Sociology Department has its own criteria to be in good standing:

1. Complete all required courses, with a grade of B or better, by the end of the third year.
2. Complete nine sociology elective courses, with a grade of B or better, by the end of the third year.
3. Complete three elective courses outside sociology, with a grade of B or better, by the end of the third year.
4. Complete all departmental writing requirements by the dates indicated.
 - a. Second-Year Paper – end of spring quarter, second year
 - b. Special Fields Paper – end of spring quarter, third year
 - c. Dissertation Proposal – end of spring quarter, fourth year
 - d. Dissertation Defense – end of ninth year

Students who do not meet the first requirement (e.g. the student gets a B- in 406-1) will need to retake the class or do some equivalent work—possibly set up as a 499—to be determined by the DGS and faculty.

Students who do not meet the second or third requirement (e.g. the student gets a B- in a Sociology class that is not a departmental requirement or a course outside Sociology) will be able to have the course count toward the courses required by TGS, but not as a sociology elective or as an outside sociology elective.

Students who do not meet the fourth requirement (e.g. the student does not have the Second-Year Paper approved by the end of the spring quarter of the second year) will need to petition the Department with a firm date of completion.

Graduate study takes a great deal of energy, time, and commitment, so it sometimes happens that a student does not make a good fit with the demands of the program. When a student is out of good standing or seems to be struggling, the DGS and/or the student's faculty advisor will counsel him or her on the necessary steps to improve. The Sociology Department, following a vote of the faculty, can exclude from the program students who do not keep up with the requirements and expectations of the Department. Should the Department vote to exclude a student, that student can appeal the decision. Appeals are handled by TGS.

Advising

Every student in the Sociology Department has a faculty advisor. That advisor may change several times over the course of a student's graduate career, but there will always be one professor who is the current advisor and is up-to-date on the student's progress. Students may change advisors at any time if they find a professor more suited to their intellectual interests. Students should report such changes to the Graduate Program Assistant for the departmental records. Advisors for each student are listed on the graduate student's profile at <http://www.sociology.northwestern.edu/people/graduate-students/>. Students should ensure that the webpage is up to date with the name of their current advisor.

All entering students are assigned an initial faculty advisor for the first year. This person usually remains the advisor until the student has selected an advisor for the Second-Year Paper. The Second-Year Paper advisor becomes the primary advisor until the student chooses an advisor for the Special Fields Paper. The Special Fields advisor serves as the main advisor until the student has a dissertation chair. Thus, the student might have as many as four advisors or as few as one. Regardless of who the official advisor is, all faculty members are happy to give intellectual advice, and graduate students should seek them out.

Students should meet with their advisors often, especially at the beginning of each quarter, to plan their courses and research and to discuss their progress. Students are expected to communicate regularly with advisors, including responding promptly to emails from advisors, the DGS, and the Associate Chair.

Early during the spring quarter of each year, the entire Sociology faculty meets to evaluate all graduate students. It is imperative that a student's faculty advisor be completely up to date on the student's progress at this time, especially if there have been any circumstances that have resulted in incompletes in courses or delays in meeting some requirement. The Director of Graduate Study and Graduate Program Assistant will send an email asking students for updates in preparation for the faculty meeting to review students; after this meeting, students will receive a letter informing them of the faculty evaluation of their progress and of any concerns.

Serving on Departmental Committees

By custom, graduate student representatives serve alongside faculty on most departmental committees. Students are reminded that only those who are in good standing (meeting their milestones, making up any incompletes in a timely fashion) should serve on these committees.

Departmental Colloquia

Northwestern's Sociology Department is famous for its longstanding colloquium series. Colloquia are held every Thursday at 12:30. Each week prominent sociologists (or other social scientists) from around the world present their research. The discussions that follow are lively and critical, with the entire department—students and faculty—engaged in intellectual debate that is both good-humored and intense. The Department expects graduate students to attend the colloquia, and indeed the Thursday colloquium is a key component of the scholarly and professional education we offer. We also encourage students to ask questions at the colloquia and to arrange to meet with visiting scholars whose work is of particular interest. (A meeting schedule is circulated in advance of each colloquium).

Workshops

Workshops are intellectual communities of students and faculty that are organized around various sub-fields and methods. The workshops provide graduate students with opportunities to present their work in progress, as a means of honing their presentation skills and gaining feedback on their research. The workshops also help students learn to critique others' work and to become active participants in scholarly discourse. Workshop participants often come from other departments and programs, thus offering opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration. The sociology workshops are key contributors to the rich and challenging academic environment that our department cultivates.

A list of all the workshops can be found [here](#).

Graduate Student Funding in Sociology

20 Quarter Funding Package

The funding package currently offered to entering graduate students by The Graduate School [TGS] includes 20 quarters of funding (for cohorts from 2012 to present) for the first 5 years of graduate education. The funding package is made up of University Fellowship quarters and Graduate Assistantship³ quarters. While individual funding arrangements often vary, the *typical* 20 quarter funding set up, using only the funding package, is:

- Year 1** – 4 quarter (fall – summer) University Fellowship
- Year 2** – 3 quarters Graduate Assistantship; 1 quarter University Fellowship for summer research
- Year 3** – 3 quarters Graduate Assistantship; 1 quarter University Fellowship for summer research
- Year 4** – 3 quarters Graduate Assistantship (**1 quarter may take the form of a University Fellowship for prospectus research if departmental TA needs are met**); 1 quarter University Fellowship for summer research
- Year 5** – 3 quarters University Fellowship for dissertation research; 1 quarter University Fellowship for summer research

To be eligible for such funding students must be making good progress toward their Ph.D. and follow the [Regulations Governing Recipients of University Assistance](#). What funding a student receives each quarter, whether it be a University Fellowship or a Graduate Assistantship, is at the **discretion of the Sociology Department and subject to Department needs**.

After the fifth-year summer (the 20th quarter), the 20 quarter funding package **no longer applies**. Students can be supported by

- (1) Student Banked Quarters they have accrued (see [below](#) for more information);
- (2) An external funding source, such as external fellowships, full (not hourly) RA-ships and teaching in the School of Professional Studies (SPS); or teaching at a local college.
- (3) WCAS gives the Department a few Advanced Student Quarters (ASQ) to fund 6th years (and in rare instances, 7th years) who are serving as a TA or instructor in the Department. These ASQs are provided at the Department's discretion.

External funding often substitutes for, rather than adds to, the 20 quarter funding package. Students should continually review the [Financial Aid](#) section of the Graduate School website.

First Year

Students not receiving funding from an external source will receive a 12-month (4 quarter) University Fellowship subject to the policies and procedures outlined on the TGS website and explained in admission offer letters. The fellowship offers a stipend, full tuition scholarship, and a Northwestern University Student Health Insurance Plan (NUSHIP) premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP). The stipend amount is determined each year by TGS and

³ Almost always in the form of a Teaching Assistant (TA) position

Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences.

Second Year

Second-year students who do not receive funding from another source will receive one of the following each quarter:

Graduate Assistantships (GA-ship) during the academic year. Students will be required to serve as a [teaching assistant](#) as part of the GA-ship. GA-ships come with a stipend, full tuition scholarship, and a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

University Fellowships for summer research will be given for all summers where a student isn't funded from an external source (external fellowships or full, not hourly, RA-ships). The fellowship offers a stipend, full tuition scholarship, and a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Year

Third-, fourth- and fifth-year students who do not receive funding from another source may receive one of the following each quarter:

Graduate Assistantships (GA-ship) during the academic year. Most GA-ships require students to serve as a [teaching assistant](#). GA-ships come with a stipend, advanced rate tuition scholarship, and a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

University Fellowships for summer research will be given for all summers where a student isn't funded from an external source (external fellowships or full, not hourly, RA-ships). The fellowship offers a stipend, an advanced rate tuition scholarship, and a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

1 Quarter University Fellowship for Prospectus Research are **potentially available** to third- or fourth-year students who have completed their Special Fields Papers and are working toward their prospectus defense. The Department will offer this as often as it can, however, there is no guarantee that it will be available to all students each year. NOTE: these University Fellowships are for students in good academic standing and working toward their prospectus defense **only**. Once a student has successfully passed their prospectus, they no longer qualify for this University Fellowship funding. The fellowship offers a stipend, an advanced rate tuition scholarship, and a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

3 Quarter University Fellowship for Dissertation Research (a.k.a. fifth-year fellowship) are available to fourth- or fifth-year students and provides a student with 3 quarters (excluding summer) of University Fellowship support. Students must successfully pass their prospectus defense at least 2 months prior to the start of the 3 Quarter University Fellowship for Dissertation Research. NOTE: this funding is only available during a student's fourth or fifth year. Students who do not use the fellowship during this time are NOT guaranteed University Fellowship funding in their sixth year. Additionally, students who take the University Fellowship in their fourth year are still required to complete at least 2 GA-ships in their fifth year to receive funding from the Department. The fellowship offers a stipend, an advanced rate tuition scholarship, and

a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

Externally Funded Students (Years 1-6)

Students on the 20 Quarter Funding Package who receive external funding (either outside NU fellowships, qualifying Research Assistantships, or qualifying Graduate Assistantships with other departments) during their first five years of study will receive the following support from TGS (outlined in the [TGS External Award Policy](#)):

1. A 1:1 match up to an additional four quarters of support (Student Banked Quarters) to be used through the summer of the sixth year of support for graduate students who are awarded and accept an external competitive award within their **first five years of study**; and
2. A stipend supplement of \$500 per month for the duration of the external award to students **through their fifth year**.
3. A stipend top-up to the TGS base stipend (if the external award stipend is lower) to students **through their sixth year**.

While most external fellowships will qualify for this additional support, students should be aware that some RA-ships and GA-ships with other departments do NOT qualify as external funding. Students receiving external fellowships can follow up with the GPA and Associate Chair to see if their fellowship counts as external funding. Students receiving a RA-ship or GA-ship with another department should check with the PI or other department to see if the funds count as external or not.

NOTE: Students who accept more than 4 quarters of external funding should be aware that they will not accrue more than four (4) Student Banked Quarters. Regardless of how long a student receives external funding, they will still receive the \$500 per month stipend supplement through their fifth year and stipend top up through their sixth year.

Post 20 Quarter Funding Package

After a student's fifth year, the 20 Quarter Funding Package does not govern their funding. Funding after this point is based on accrued Student Banked Quarters, limited Advanced Student Quarters, and other funding (including, but not limited to, external fellowships, RA-ships on grants, and SPS lecturer positions).

Sixth Year

Sixth-year funding is NOT guaranteed for students. The only way to guarantee sixth-year funding is to receive Student Banked Quarters during the first five years of study. Sixth-year students are encouraged to continue applying for external fellowships as their primary plan for funding in the sixth year and beyond. Sixth-year students are strongly encouraged to be funded in the fall quarter, to ensure their Northwestern University Student Health Insurance Plan (NUSHIP) subsidy cover the entire year regardless of funding in the winter, spring or summer quarters. The policies for sixth-year students not receiving funding from another source are:

Student Banked Quarters

Student Banked Quarters are awarded when students receive external funding (either outside NU fellowships, qualifying Research Assistantships, or qualifying Graduate Assistantships with other departments). **These quarters of funding can be used fall through summer of the sixth year only.** Whether a Student Banked Quarter of funding will be a University Fellowship or a Graduate Assistantship is **ultimately determined by the Department.** Usually, one or two quarters will be funded as a Graduate Assistantship and the rest will be University Fellowships. NOTE: If a student accepts external funding in their sixth year, any unused Student Banked Quarters are **forfeited** at the end of their sixth year. These quarters of funding offer a stipend, an advanced rate tuition scholarship, and a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

Advanced Student Quarters

Advanced Student Quarters **are limited** and are Graduate Assistantships in the form of a [teaching assistantship](#) or lectureship position. Sixth-year students who wish to receive Department funding must complete the annual graduate funding form at the end of their fifth year and indicate their interest. They must also talk with their advisor and submit a detailed timeline to the Associate Chair and GPA for completing their dissertation in their sixth year. These quarters of funding offer a stipend, cover advanced rate tuition, and a Northwestern University Student Health Insurance Plan (NUSHIP) premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

Seventh Year

Seventh-year funding is NOT guaranteed for students. Seventh-year students are strongly encouraged to continue applying for external fellowships as their primary plan for funding in the seventh year and beyond. Seventh-year students are strongly encouraged to be funded in the fall quarter, to ensure their NUSHIP subsidy covers the entire year regardless of funding in the winter, spring or summer quarters. The policies for seventh-year students not receiving funding from another source are:

Advanced Student Quarters

Priority is given to sixth-year students without funding but it is **possible, although unlikely**, for Advanced Student Quarters to be given to seventh-year students. If given, they will always be Graduate Assistantships in the form of a [teaching assistantship](#) or lectureship position (if such an opportunity is available). Seventh-year students who hope to receive funding from the Department must complete the annual graduate funding form at the end of their sixth year and indicate their interest. They must also talk with their advisor and submit a detailed timeline to the Associate Chair and GPA for completing their dissertation in their seventh year. NOTE: Students who received Advanced Student Quarters in their sixth year will have lower priority for these quarters in their seventh year. These quarters of funding offer a stipend, an advanced rate tuition scholarship, and a NUSHIP premium subsidy (subsidy is available only for the NUSHIP).

As a reminder, Student Banked Quarters can NOT roll over into the seventh year. Unused Student Banked Quarters are **forfeited after the summer of the sixth year.**

Eighth Year and Beyond

Eighth-year funding is not available from the Department. The Department occasionally facilitates lectureship positions with the School of Professional Studies (see below for more information). NOTE: Teaching at SPS is considered employment and not student funding. Therefore, it does not come with a tuition scholarship, nor health insurance. Students will need to pay for the NUSHIP Premium out of pocket if they wish to remain on the plan, or find an [approved alternative insurance policy](#).

Further Funding Information (any year):

Graduate Student Funding Form: Each year, the Department asks each student to complete a Graduate Student Funding Form. At the time of the data collection, you **must** tell the Department how you expect to be funded in the coming year, **even if you do not need funding**, in order to allow us to fund other students.

Internal Fellowships: The Graduate School offers a prestigious fellowship called the Presidential Fellowship. The Sociology Department also offers several Sociology Fieldwork Research Fellowships, which cover one quarter's worth of out-of-residence fieldwork, and a MacArthur Summer Research Grant, which covers collaborative research with a faculty member (this last is available to all students, not just advanced students).

Permission to Work Forms (PTW): Graduate students are expected to be full-time students conducting their studies and research. Often, other funding and employment opportunities arise. When that situation occurs, permission to receive remuneration must be requested.

A [Graduate Student Permission to Work \(PTW\) Request Form](#) is required when students are receiving additional pay if ANY of the following conditions are met:

1. The graduate student's service exceeds 10 hours/week.
2. The graduate student's period of service exceeds one month.
3. The requested compensation is greater than or equal to \$600.

If any of the above conditions are met, a PTW form must be completed. The PTW form must be submitted **BEFORE** the work begins. The work must be approved by the Associate Chair and your Advisor. The signed permission to work form should be submitted to the GPA for submission to TGS.

Research Assistantships (RA-ships): RA-ships that are full time (meaning they are paying the full GA rate stipend and commit a student to an average of 15-20 hours of work per week) generally count as external funding. First through fifth year students should always check with the PI, or the GPA, to see if an RA-ship will provide Student Banked Quarter funding for the sixth year.

School of Professional Studies: Students can be hired to teach a course as a lecturer with the Northwestern University School of Professional Studies (SPS). Please note that SPS is separate from WCAS, and teaching for SPS is considered employment and not student funding. Students

should talk to the Associate Chair and GPA about SPS positions and *be sure to read their contracts carefully before signing*. SPS lecturer positions do not offer tuition scholarships, nor health insurance. NOTE: If an SPS course does not meet enrollment minimums (currently 5 students), it will be cancelled, and the lecturer will not be paid.

Teaching Appointments: If a student is considering a teaching appointment either through WCAS or SPS, it is the student's responsibility to know whether that appointment covers tuition and health insurance and at what level. Although a teaching appointment may be facilitated by the Department, the student is contracting directly with the other entity (WCAS or SPS), and the contract the student signs should specify the amount the student is to be paid and the tuition to be paid, if any. **Students should read all contracts before signing.** Also, be aware that WCAS may change its policies for stipend amounts and tuition payments at its discretion.

Teaching Assistantships (Departmental Guidelines, supplementary to The Graduate School's [TA Requirements](#))

Teaching (in some form) is a common expectation for most professional sociologists, and teaching experience has long been an integral part of graduate education in the Department of Sociology at Northwestern. Students typically begin getting teaching experience in the spring of their first year, in the required College Teaching Seminar (570), and most will receive their funding in the form of TA-ships in their 2nd, 3rd, and 4th years.

TAs are expected to attend all lectures. Starting fall 2018, if a serious issue necessitates missing a lecture, TAs must receive approval well in advance from the Associate Chair. Absences for other than last-minute emergencies are to be for academic reasons only and must be cleared by the Associate Chair. In the case of last-minute emergencies (e.g., personal illness, death in the family) that cannot be anticipated, the TA must contact the course instructor as soon as is feasible to alert them to the situation.

Departmental Policy on Teaching Assistant Assignments

Sociology graduate students **cannot** accept TA-ships in other departments or programs until the TA needs in the Sociology Department are met. Sociology Ph.D. students should not take TA jobs in other departments or programs until they have cleared this with the Associate Chair, otherwise funding may be blocked. The Associate Chair is responsible for making teaching assistant assignments, which will be made before the beginning of each quarter.

Seminar in College Teaching (570)

The Seminar in College Teaching course combines a seminar on teaching with hands-on experience. All students enrolled in 570 will provide teaching assistance to Sociology 110 (Introduction to Sociology), regardless of the type of stipend or employment they have. The TA duties will normally include leading or co-leading one discussion section that meets once a week and consists of no more than 35 students.

Soc 570 is a required first-year course offered once a year. First-year students with extensive teaching experience may appeal to the DGS to have the requirement waived.

Securing a Teaching Assistantship (TA) – Second Year and Beyond

With 570 completed, in order to secure a paid TA position in the second year and beyond,

- A student must be in good academic standing which includes:
 - Keeping one's record clear of incompletes. No incomplete can extend beyond one year or funding will be denied.
 - To be admitted to candidacy by the end of the fourth year.
- International students must have a score of 65 or higher on the Versant English test. These tests should be taken early enough to have the score by May of the year preceding the TA-ship.
- Students must reply to the annual Graduate Student Funding Form distributed by the Department (usually in late winter or early spring).

If the first two of these requirements are not met, TGS will not approve a TA-ship.

Students who will be funded as TAs will be asked to submit their availability and preferences for teaching assistant assignments. The Associate Chair will strive to assign graduate students to one of their preferred courses, though this is not always possible. Those failing to respond to the requests for availability and preferences by the deadline will be assigned wherever needed.

Structure, Hours, and Duties

The normal TA assignment is one teaching unit per quarter, with a unit typically consisting of grading papers and exams for up to 60 students in a single course, and, in larger 100- and 200-level lecture courses with discussion sections, running two discussion sections of approximately 25-30 students each. Leading such discussion sections provides experience and evidence of teaching ability, which is used by the Department for selecting students as lecturers and may be useful for students who apply for teaching jobs.

TAs are also expected to hold office hours for two hours per week. They may also assist in constructing examinations or give one (and only one) class lecture as a learning experience. The average workload is 15 hours per week, though there is considerable variation across courses.

Grading

TAs are required to adhere to the grading policy of the instructor, and the instructor must make that grading policy clear. Without express approval of the instructor, TAs are not to give grades directly to students, including grades for papers, exams, and discussion section participation.

Evaluation

CTEC (Course and Teacher Evaluation Council) evaluations are available for TAs who serve as leaders of their discussion sections. In addition, departmental TA evaluation forms are filled out for all TAs by their course instructors at the end of each quarter. It is expected that informal evaluation and feedback will occur throughout the quarter.

Pay Schedules

TA and Lecturer Pay Schedules

The pay schedules are different for those working as teaching assistants and those working as lecturers. For instance, if you TA in the fall quarter and work as a lecturer in winter quarter, you will not receive a check in December. Additionally, if you TA winter quarter and work as a

lecturer in the spring, you will not receive a check in March. All checks are sent on the last business day of the month.

TA Pay Schedule

Fall Quarter

September
October
November

Winter Quarter

December
January
February

Spring Quarter

March
April
May

Lecturer Pay Schedule

Fall Quarter

September
October
November
December

Winter Quarter

January
February
March

Spring Quarter

April
May
June

Health Insurance

All Northwestern graduate students are required to have health insurance, whether through NU or a comparable policy that meets criteria laid out by NU. Health insurance coverage is provided through the 5th year for those who have a GA-ship or are funded by a University Fellowship. The NUSHIP health insurance subsidy is also paid for students with external funding (as qualified by TGS) and advanced students with GA-ships. Other advanced students (e.g., those registering for 512) can enroll in the NU health insurance plan, but must pay for it themselves. Students considering a leave of absence or funding themselves must have health insurance.

Travel Grants

External Education/Training Grants

The External Education/Training Grant is to assist Sociology Ph.D. students with attending workshops/training programs at locations other than Northwestern University. Applications for these funds will be accepted at the beginning of spring quarter and will not exceed \$1,000 to any one applicant. Applications will be assessed by the Graduate Affairs Committee in conjunction with the Sociology Department Chair.

Eligibility:

- All registered students, in good academic standing, may apply for these funds

Application:

- One-page description of the workshop/training program, and how it fits into the student's research plans;
- Budget with cost of the workshop/training program, and additional estimated costs;
- Letter of recommendation/support from the student's advisor.

Upon return from the workshop/training program, students will submit a brief report (not to exceed one page) on how the workshop/training program helped them with their research.

The Graduate School Conference Travel Grants

The Conference Travel Grant (CTG) provides funds to assist Ph.D. and MFA students traveling to conferences and/or seminars to make presentations on behalf of the University. The grant is not intended to support attending courses at other schools, research, or general educational travel. More information on the TGS Conference Travel Grant can be found at:

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/funding/fellowships-and-grants/internal-grants/conference-travel-grant/index.html>

Sociology Travel Grants

Departmental travel grant provides funds to assist graduate students to attend conferences to make a presentation or participate on a panel. These funds are for conference travel only and are not to be used for research travel purposes. Conferences held in Chicago are the only conferences for which the Department will reimburse the conference fee without requiring that the student make a presentation or participate on a panel.

Eligibility:

- The student must be registered and in good academic standing.
- All registered students (including first-year) are eligible.
- Students who are working full-time at a university, foundation, etc. are not eligible.
- Students are eligible to receive \$545 per fiscal year (Sept 1st to Aug. 31st).
- Students who are presenting at an international conference are eligible to receive an additional \$250.
- Students must be presenting, or be a participant on a panel, at the conference and must provide a copy of the invitation.
- Funds will be provided after the travel has been completed and the appropriate receipts and proof of presenting have been submitted (within 30 days of the conference dates).

Reimbursement information can be found in the [Graduate Student Box Folder](#).

Alumni Funds for Second-Year Paper Research - See [Alumni Funds for Second-Year Paper Research](#) under the Second-Year Paper requirements section.

Graduate Student Association

The Sociology Department Graduate Student Association (GSA) is the organization that represents graduate student interests and needs within the Department. Graduate students serve on departmental committees with faculty to solve problems that arise, make graduate students' needs and perspectives known, recruit new faculty members and new graduate students, and plan social activities.

The Graduate School Policies and Procedures

The full TGS Academic Policies and Procedures can be found at:
<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/>

Select Key Policies and Procedures from TGS

General Registration Policies

<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/general-registration/>

Residency and Transfer Credit

<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/phd-degree-requirements/>

Summer Registration

<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/general-registration/#summer>
registration

Advanced Year Registration

<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/general-registration/#tgs>
general registrations

Leaves of Absence

<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/tgs/academic-policies-procedures/leaves-absence/>

TGS Financial Aid Policies

<http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/about/policies/financial-aid-policies.html>

The Graduate School Additional Fees

<http://www.northwestern.edu/sfs/tuition/graduate/the-graduate-school.html>

TGS Academic Student Services Team

Kate Veraldi

Director, Student Services

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847.467.4108

Kate is the representative for students with **last names V through Z**. Contact her with questions regarding Professional Development Programming and TGS Grants and Fellowships.

Kristine Emrich

Assistant Director, Student Services

Email kristine.emrich@northwestern.edu

847.491.8469

This person is the representative for students with **last names A through F**. Contact them with questions regarding the CIC Traveling Scholar and Chicago Metropolitan Exchange, graduate certificates, and academic probation.

Bianca West

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847.491.7332

Bianca is the Student Services Representative for last names **G through U**.