



UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Sociology PhD Graduate Program Handbook

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Sociology PhD

Together, the [Graduate Student Handbook](#) and your graduate program handbook should serve as your main guide throughout your graduate career. The Graduate Student Handbook includes university information, policies, requirements and guidance for all graduate students. Your program handbook describes the details about graduate study and requirements in your specific program. While both of these handbooks are wonderful resources, know that you are always welcome to talk with faculty and staff in your program and in the Graduate College.

The central activities and missions of a university rest upon the fundamental assumption that all members of the university community conduct themselves in accordance with a strict adherence to academic and scholarly integrity. As a graduate student and member of the university community, you are expected to display the highest standards of academic and personal integrity.

Here are some resources to help you better understand your responsibilities:

- [Academic Honesty](#)
- [Academic Integrity Training](#) - Open to all graduate students at no cost
- [Plagiarism](#)

Introduction

The Sociology PhD program provides training in the skills necessary to secure research careers in both academic and non-academic professions and emphasizes applied research in community-based settings.

The Sociology PhD program is organized around a curriculum combining grounding in the acquisition of theoretical and methodological skills with advanced study in one of the department's four areas of concentration: Crime and Deviance; Domestic Violence; Health, Families, and Communities; and Social Inequalities.

The program is one of only a few in the United States focusing on applied research. Students are trained in specific applied research skills such as data analysis, qualitative methods, quantitative methods, mixed methods, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and/or program evaluation. Combined with course work in one of the four substantive areas, graduates will be trained for employment in the following settings: the academy, industry, business, government, and nonprofit agencies. The program provides training in the skills necessary to secure advanced careers in academic and non-academic professions and emphasizes applied research in community-based settings.

All coursework in the 60-hour post-MA program includes a research component that incorporates an applied focus. The program requires a total of 60 semester credit hours beyond the master's degree. The Sociology PhD requires a minimum of 60 credit hours beyond the master's degree, with 15 credit hours coming from required core courses, three credit hours from a restricted elective in theory, and three credit hours from a restricted elective in research methods and data analysis. Students select a minimum of 12 elective credit hours in one of the department's four areas of concentration: Crime and Deviance; ; Domestic Violence; Health, Families and Communities; or Social Inequalities.

Requirements and credit hours for the PhD are outlined below.

Curriculum

Please visit the [Graduate Catalog](#) to see the current curriculum for our program.

Timeline for Completion

3-Year Schedule of Course Requirements (Example)

1st Year of Graduate Training

Fall	Spring	Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYA 7019: Advanced Sociological Theory (3) • SYA 7309: Advanced Research Methods (3) • Restricted Elective in Major Area (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYA 7407: Advanced Data Analysis (3) • Unrestricted Elective (3) • Restricted Elective in Major Area (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted Elective in Major Area (3) • Unrestricted Elective (3)
Semester Total: 9 credit hours	Semester Total: 9 credit hours	Semester Total: 6

2nd Year of Graduate Training

Fall	Spring	Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted Elective in Major Area (3) • Restricted Elective in Data Analysis/Methods (3) • Restricted Elective in Theory (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unrestricted Elective (3) • Unrestricted Elective (3) • Unrestricted Elective (3) • Qualifying Exam (January) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unrestricted Elective (3) • Candidacy Exam
Semester Total: 9 credit hours	Semester Total: 9 credit hours	Semester Total: 3

3rd Year of Graduate Training

Fall	Spring	Summer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYA 7980: Dissertation Credit (9) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYA 7980: Dissertation Research (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SYA 7980: Dissertation Research (3)
Semester Total: 9 credit hours	Semester Total: 3 credit hours	Semester Total: 3 credit hours

Total Credit Hours: 60

[Doctoral Program Courses](#)

Restricted Electives in the Major Area of Concentration (12 hours)

All students in the doctoral program must complete a minimum of 12 hours of credits in one of the department's four areas of concentration. Restricted electives are offered on a rotating cycle to allow students to complete their major area of concentration in a timely fashion. Normally at least one course in each of the areas of concentration is offered in each regular semester (Fall/Spring). A student must complete 12 hours of credits in one area of concentration that they have selected as part of their plan of study. Additional course work completed beyond that required for a student's major area of concentration may be counted toward the 18 hours of unrestricted electives required in the plan of study. The courses listed below are illustrative examples and reflect the department's areas of concentration that are currently available to students. Other courses in the Sociology Department as well as

directed independent study, directed research, and doctoral research may be also be appropriate and may be approved with the consultation of both the student's faculty adviser and the Graduate Director.

Due to the nature of the course content, some courses are listed in more than one area of concentration. Additional courses may be used as well, but the student must obtain the approval of their advisor and the Graduate Director.

Crime and Deviance

- SYA 6128 Theoretical Criminology*
- SYO 6515 Issues in Social Disorganization
- SYP 6515 Deviant Behavior Issues
- SYP 6517 Topics in Crime and Deviance
- SYP 6518 Guns, Crime, and Violence
- SYP 6522 Sociological Perspectives in Victims
- SYP 6524 Social Organization of Homicide
- SYP 6546 Crime, Law, Inequality
- SYP 6555 Sociology of Alcohol and Drugs

*SYA 6128 cannot be used to satisfy both the theory elective requirement and as part of an area of concentration.

Domestic Violence

- SYO 6515 Issues in Social Disorganization
- SYO 6175 Social Research in the Family
- SYA 6128 Theoretical Criminology
- SYP 5566 Seminar on Domestic Violence
- SYP 6522 Sociological Perspectives in Victims
- SYP 6561 Child Abuse in Society
- SYP 6563 Reactions to Domestic Violence

Social Inequalities

- SYD 5795 Class, Race, and Gender in American Society
- SYD 6428 Poverty, Homelessness, and the Cities
- SYD 6363 – Social Inequalities and Reproductive Health
- SYD 6428 – Poverty, Homelessness and the Cities
- SYD 6538 Topics in Social Equalities
- SYD 6705 Seminar in Race and Ethnicity
- SYD 6809 Seminar in Gender Issues
- SYO 6256 Inequality and Education
- SYO 6409 Social Inequalities in Health
- SYO 6538 Topics in Social Inequalities
- SYP 6546 Crime, Law, Inequality

Medical Sociology

- SYD 6363 – Social Inequalities and Reproductive Health
- SYD 6417 – Contemporary Urban Society
- SYD 6428 Poverty, Homelessness, and the Cities
- SYD 6404 Food Insecurity and Health

- SYO 6175 – Social Research in the Family
- SYO 6405 Sociology of Health and Illness
- SYO 6409 Social Inequalities in Health
- SYP 6555 Sociology of Alcohol and Drugs
- SYP 6561 Child Abuse in Society
- SYP 6563 Reactions to Domestic Violence
- SYP 6735 Sociology of Health and Aging

Independent Study Hours

No more than 12 total semester hours of independent study (including those hours counted toward a master's degree) may be applied to a doctoral plan of study.

Note: The College of Sciences requires that students must maintain a 3.0 GPA in their plan of study in order to qualify for graduation.

Qualifying Examination

As soon as possible after completing the program's required core courses in theory and methods/statistics and 12 hours in an Area of Concentration, a student will take a comprehensive Qualifying Examination. Students passing the Qualifying Examination will continue with their scheduled plan of study. Students failing the Qualifying Examination must retake it at the next scheduled examination period. If the Qualifying Examination is failed a second time, the student will be dismissed from the Sociology doctoral program. Full-time students would normally be expected to take the Qualifying Examination during their second or third year in the program.

Content

Section 1: Theoretical Foundations of Sociology

All students will answer two of three questions. All students who take the exam in the same area of concentration in a given semester will receive the same three questions. One of the questions will require students to trace the connections between classical and contemporary sociological theories and a second question will require students to discuss the three central theoretical paradigms in sociology.

Section 2: Methods and Statistics

All students will answer two of three questions. All students who take the exam in the same area of concentration in a given semester will receive the same three questions. One of the questions will require students to interpret statistical results in tabular form.

Section 3: Major Area of Concentration

All students will answer three of four questions covering general information within the area of concentration. All students who take the exam in the same area of concentration in a given semester will receive the same four questions.

Committee

The Qualifying Exams will be graded by a committee of three faculty members who teach or do research in the area of concentration. Prior to the final faculty meeting of each spring semester, four separate qualifying exam committees will be formed by faculty choosing to become a member of one or more areas of concentration. Each qualifying exam committee will create the exam to be used for the next academic year and select the three members who will be the Grading Committee.

Administration

The Qualifying Exam will be offered to students twice during the academic year (once during the fall semester and once during the spring semester). Students must notify the Graduate Director and Graduate Admissions Coordinator by June 1 to take the exam in the fall semester or by October 1 to take the exam in the spring semester. They will select a major area of concentration. The exam will be distributed by the Graduate Admissions Coordinator via Webcourses. The exams typically are held the week prior to the beginning of the fall semester and the week prior to the start of the spring semester. Students will have 7 days to complete all sections of the exam and submit the exam via Webcourses. The Graduate Director will then distribute the exam to the appropriate grading committee.

Students are expected to work on the Qualifying Exam alone, and all exams will be submitted to turnitin.com. Questions from students that come up during the exam should be directed to the Graduate Director who will solicit advice from the chair of the grading committee in the student's area.

Each grading committee will have three weeks to notify the Graduate Director of the student's grade on the exam (High Pass, Pass, Conditional Pass, or Fail). A grade of conditional pass on an exam will require the student to revise and resubmit one or more questions identified as insufficient by the Grading Committee. The student will have one week to complete each question that must be rewritten. If a student fails the exam, he/she must retake the exam the next semester it is offered. If the exam is failed a second time, the student will be dismissed from the Ph.D. Program in Sociology.

Accommodations for students with a documented disability will be made with advanced notice in consultation with the student and the appropriate campus office.

General Exam Issues Related to the Qualifying Examination

Students are expected to prepare for the comprehensive qualifying examination through independent study as well as course work well in advance of the exam period. The comprehensive qualifying examination is not a repetition of course examinations; instead, it represents a thorough investigation of the student's understanding of a particular field of knowledge. It focuses on both breadth and depth in sociological content. Course work is but one means of acquiring the knowledge necessary to successfully complete the examinations.

The departmental Academic Coordinator coordinates the grading of the exam. A copy of the exam will be made so that all graders may receive the exam at the same time. Graders may not consult with one another. Each grader prepares comments on the answer to each question, and each question is clearly labeled "HIGH PASS," "PASS," "CONDITIONAL PASS," or "FAIL." In addition, an overall grade of "HIGH PASS," "PASS," "CONDITIONAL PASS," or "FAIL" is provided. The overall grade is an assessment of the examination as a whole, rather than an averaging of separate questions.

Students may request a meeting with the grading committee to discuss their exam after the results have been provided to them. The student will receive a letter from the Graduate Director indicating the examination results. Copies of this letter and the examination will be placed in the student's file. Students are encouraged to discuss the comments and results with their supervisor.

Students failing a second exam in the same area will be terminated from the program.

If the student is dissatisfied with the results of their exam or would like to discuss the exam, a meeting may be requested with the examination committee. If the student wishes to appeal the grade, they should consult the "Procedures for Comprehensive Examination Grade Appeals."

Candidacy Examination/Dissertation Proposal

The dissertation proposal defense constitutes the program's candidacy examination, and students who successfully pass their proposal defense along with other requirements shall be admitted to candidacy. The proposal will encompass an overview of the dissertation topic that includes an in-depth review of relevant literature, a precise statement of the research question, and specific research design (planned methodology and analysis). The student's Dissertation Advisory Committee will supervise the preparation of the dissertation proposal and the proposal defense.

Procedures for Comprehensive Qualifying Examination Grade Appeals:

If a student believes the comprehensive qualifying exam was not graded according to Graduate Program Guidelines procedures, or that the grade was inappropriate for some other reason, the student should meet with the graduate director and grading committee to discuss the grievance in detail. Both the faculty and the student are obligated to try to resolve their differences. If after one or more meetings the student is still unsatisfied, they may move to a formal appeal process within thirty academic days after the last meeting with the graduate director and grading committee.

An appeal is appropriate only when the awarding of a grade to the student may have involved a denial of due process through error, prejudice or capriciousness. Appeals will not be considered to resolve disputes about the student's knowledge of the subject matter. In all cases, appeals should be made in writing.

The student should present the appeal to their advisor and committee. The appeal may then be submitted to the Department Graduate Program Committee. No faculty member who was a grader or member of the area committee administering the student's exam is eligible to sit on the Graduate Program Committee deliberations. If the Graduate Committee falls below three members (including the chair) due to this exclusion, additional members will be appointed by the Department Chair and Graduate Director in consultation with the student.

The Graduate Program Committee is to conduct an investigation which includes soliciting information in writing and/or interviews from all faculty members involved in the grading or prior review of the grade (including the Supervisory Committee). If the Graduate Program Committee, after hearing the evidence, concludes that there is a clear preponderance of evidence in favor of either party, its decision will be rendered accordingly. The Graduate Program Committee is empowered to 1) change the student's grade; 2) sustain the grade awarded by the area committee, or 3) take other appropriate action. The Graduate Program Committee's findings and results will be delivered to the Department Chair within 90 days of receiving the appeal.

If further arbitration is desired, the University Appeals Process may be used by the student. All files and materials from the Departmental review will be made available to the college and university committees.

Admission to Candidacy

The following are required to be admitted to candidacy and enroll in dissertation hours:

- Completion of all required course work, except for dissertation hours.
- Successful completion of the candidacy examination.
- Successful defense of the dissertation proposal.
- The dissertation advisory committee is formed, consisting of approved graduate faculty and graduate faculty scholars.
- Submittal of an approved program of study.

Post-Candidacy Enrollment

The student must have passed candidacy and the student's dissertation committee must be reviewed and approved by the College of Sciences and the College of Graduate Studies prior to the first day of classes for the term in order to enroll in dissertation hours (SYA 7980) for that term. This form can be obtained from either the Graduate Director or the program assistant.

Doctoral students engaging in dissertation research must be continuously enrolled in at least three hours of SYA 7980 every semester, including summers, until they successfully defend and submit their dissertation to the University Thesis Editor. The three hours of dissertation enrollment each semester reflects the expenditure of university resources, particularly if more than the minimum number of hours is required for completion of the dissertation.

Dissertation Requirements

University Dissertation Requirements

The College of Graduate Studies [Thesis and Dissertation page](#) contains information on the university's requirements for dissertation formatting, format review, defenses, final submission, and more. A step-by-step completion guide is also available on the [Thesis and Dissertation Services Site](#).

All university deadlines are listed in the [Academic Calendar](#). Your program or college may have other earlier deadlines; please check with your program and college staff for additional deadlines.

The following requirements must be met by dissertation students in their final term:

- Submit a properly formatted file for initial format review by the format review deadline
- Submit the Thesis and Dissertation Release Option form well before the defense
- Defend by the university defense deadline
- Receive format approval (if not granted upon initial review)
- Submit signed approval form by final submission deadline
- Submit final dissertation document by final submission deadline

Students must format their dissertation according to the standards outlined in [Thesis and Dissertation Webcourse](#). Formatting questions or issues can be submitted to the Format Help page in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services site](#). Format reviews and final submission must be completed in the [Thesis and Dissertation Services site](#). The Dissertation Approval Form is also available in the Thesis and Dissertation Services site.

The College of Graduate Studies offers several thesis and dissertation [Workshops](#) each term. Students are highly encouraged to attend these workshops early in the dissertation process to fully understand the above policies and procedures.

The College of Graduate Studies thesis and dissertation office is best reached by email at editor@ucf.edu.

Program Dissertation Requirements

The dissertation is the culmination of a research degree. It must make a significant theoretical, historical, intellectual, practical, creative, methodological, or substantive contribution to the student's area of research within the discipline.

The dissertation will be completed through a minimum of 15 hours of dissertation credit, which students will use to accomplish original research on a topic approved by their advisor and three committee members (one of whom shall be from a relevant field outside the discipline of Sociology or from outside the university). The dissertation must conform to standard disciplinary, institutional, and departmental practices. Students may not enroll for

dissertation credit until they have completed all examinations in their program of study and are advanced to candidacy.

As a guideline, after approval of a dissertation draft by the chair of the supervisory committee and the scheduling of a defense date, members of the dissertation committee will receive a copy of the dissertation three weeks before the defense date. Typically, no later than one week before the defense date, dissertation committee members will provide an evaluation including recommendations for changes to the doctoral candidate and the chair of the committee. Importantly, they will specifically notify the committee chair if, in their professional viewpoint, there are problems with the dissertation draft that may preclude a positive decision at the formal defense. It is the responsibility of the chair of the dissertation committee to communicate these departmental expectations to external members of dissertation committees.

Dissertation Defense

The final step toward completion of the doctoral degree is the dissertation defense. The Dissertation Advisory committee is responsible for conducting the defense. At least three weeks prior to the defense, the dissertation should be routed to the committee members for their review. At least two weeks prior to the defense, the student will submit the approved defense announcement to the program assistant who will then post the announcement and schedule the room. Generally, the format of the defense includes a presentation of the research by the student and questions from the dissertation committee. After the presentation and questions, the committee will deliberate and once finished inform the student of the outcome. The presentation and question part of the defense is generally open to the public; however, committee deliberations are restricted to the members of the dissertation committee.

Annual Review

Each Spring semester, the College of Graduate Studies sends an annual review document to all PhD students. The PhD student is expected to provide details and reflections on their annual progress in the program. The form will be reviewed by the Graduate Director and the student's advisor with input from the Graduate Committee. The results of the review will be communicated to the student and placed in their file.

Faculty Research Projects

Sociology faculty are actively engaged in research projects with topics ranging from deviant behavior to occupational culture. To learn more about the research projects, the Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences, the Violence Against Women Cluster, the Puerto Rico Research Hub, Citizen Science, and our numerous community partners, please visit the sociology department's website.

Graduate Research

Research is a critical component of training in the Sociology PhD program. Students are expected to begin research activities early in their graduate training and to pursue a research agenda throughout their graduate careers. Minimum research requirements include completion and oral defense of a Doctoral dissertation; however, students are encouraged to become active participants in the discipline and related fields by engaging in research projects beyond their dissertation research. Students are encouraged to seek out faculty with whom to collaborate on research and publications. Dissertations are designed to promote the integration of conceptual issues, research design, and knowledge of Sociology and related fields, and to provide students with the skills and experience required to conduct empirical and applied research. Active involvement in research throughout graduate training (in addition to the minimal requirements), presentation of research at conferences and meetings, and manuscript submission to scientific journals and books is expected of all students.

Sociology requires competence and sensitivity in dealing with research participants, colleagues, clients, and supervisees. Students are required to uphold the ASA Code of Ethics (www.asanet.org) and have a responsibility to monitor and evaluate behaviors that may compromise their ability to function as sociologists-in-training, and to take steps to address any problems that arise. Researchers in every discipline have a responsibility for ethical awareness as the status of the profession rests with each individual researcher. The ethical collection and use of information includes, but is by no means limited to issues of confidentiality, accuracy, relevance, self-responsibility, honesty, and awareness of conflicts of interest. Students in Sociology are also expected to maintain a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in their research and education.

All dissertations and research involving original data collection from human subjects, including surveys, must obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), prior to starting the research. Graduate students and the faculty that supervise them are required to complete training on IRB policies, so this needs to start well in advance of the research start date. It is imperative that proper procedures are followed when conducting research on human subjects. In addition, should the nature of the research or the faculty supervision change since the IRB approval was obtained, then new IRB approval must be sought. Failure to obtain this prior approval will jeopardize receipt of the student's degree.

Human Subjects

If the student chooses to conduct research that involves human subjects, whether it is direct contact with humans, surveys, observation, or analyses of secondary research data that originally came from humans etc., the student must submit his/her/their protocol to the Institutional Review Board for approval before commencing new research, or before they start analysis of any secondary research. This includes research that they are conducting under another researcher's approved protocol (e.g., when their advisor's name is listed as investigator on a larger project and the student's study is a part of that protocol). As the investigator of their thesis or dissertation, the student's name should be listed as "investigator" on their IRB submission. If the student and his/her/their faculty advisor are 100% sure the student's research does not involve any human subjects/human data/specimens, then the student does not need to submit to the IRB. Instead, please write an email to the student's departmental Academic Coordinator/Program Assistant (and, if applicable, to their college specific Graduate Advising office) to update the checklist as Waived. It is imperative that proper procedures are followed when conducting research on human subjects. Should the nature of the research or the faculty supervision change since the IRB approval was obtained, then new IRB approval must be sought. Failure to obtain this prior approval will jeopardize receipt of the student's degree. The ASA Code of Ethics (www.asanet.org) provides the guiding ethical principles for the Department. In addition, the Online CITI IRB Training Program must be completed. For access to the training program please visit the Office of Research Website: www.research.ucf.edu > Compliance > IRB > Online (CITI) IRB Training program. For access to the IRB submission form and sample consent forms, please visit the Office of Research website: research.ucf.edu > Compliance > IRB > UCF-IRB Principal Investigator's Manual.

Animal Subjects

If the student chooses to conduct research that involves animal subjects, he or she must gain Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approval prior to beginning the study. For access to the IACUC submission forms, please visit the Office or Research website: research.ucf.edu > Compliance > UCF IACUC Webpage > Animal Use Approval Form.

Ethics in Research

Researchers in every discipline have a responsibility for ethical awareness as the status of the profession rests with each individual researcher. It is important to be honest and ethical in conducting research as well as in taking classes. The ethical collection and use of information includes, but is by no means limited to, the following:

confidentiality, accuracy, relevance, self-responsibility, honesty, a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and awareness of conflict of interest.

Patent and Invention Policy

UCF has three fundamental responsibilities with regard to graduate student research. They are (1) to support an academic environment that stimulates the spirit of inquiry, (2) to develop the intellectual property stemming from research, and (3) to disseminate the intellectual property to the general public. UCF owns the intellectual property developed using university resources. The graduate student as inventor will according to this policy share in the proceeds of the invention.

The full policy is available online from the [Graduate Catalog](#) > Policies > General Graduate Policies > Patent and Invention Policy.

Financial Support

The Department of Sociology makes every effort to obtain financial support for graduate students, to the extent that funds are available. The primary source of funds is the departmental assistantship. As funds are often limited, financial support cannot be guaranteed to all students, regardless of year in the program or excellence of performance. The Graduate Director in collaboration with the Graduate Committee examines the availability of assistantships and other sources of financial support (e.g., fellowships) each year. Full-time graduate assistants are eligible to receive tuition waivers for part of their tuition costs. Tuition waivers are monies used to assist graduate students to progress toward their degrees.

Students with assistantships may be assigned to assist a faculty member with teaching related duties, research related duties, or may be assigned to teach their own course. Assistantship assignments are determined based upon departmental and faculty need.

In addition to assistantships, graduate students may be eligible for fellowships, awards, loans, and work/study programs. Students should consult the Graduate Catalog (catalog.ucf.edu/index.php?catoid=4) or the financial aid office (finaid.ucf.edu) for descriptions and requirements of graduate financial support. The Graduate Director also distributes this information to students via email throughout the year as it becomes available. Many fellowship deadlines fall very early in the application process. Students interested in fellowship opportunities are encouraged to submit their application materials well in advance of the application deadline.

International Students

Several types of employment are available to international students, including on-campus employment. For more information about the types of employment available to international students, and the requirements and restrictions based on visa-type, please see the International Services Center's website: global.ucf.edu/ > Current Students > Employment.

Assistantships and Tuition Remission

For complete information about university assistantship and tuition remission, please see the UCF Graduate Catalog: catalog.ucf.edu/index.php?catoid=4 > Financial Information.

To be employed and to maintain employment in a graduate position, the student must be:

- In good academic standing, making satisfactory progress through the program, and enrolled full time

To be awarded and continue receipt of a tuition remission, the student must be:

- In good academic standing
- Making satisfactory progress through the program
- Enrolled full time
- Employed on a graduate line (GTA, GRA, GA) or receiving a University fellowship or (if employed off-campus) employed where payment is processed through the College of Graduate Studies

Generally, provided funds are available and academic progress is being made, doctoral students will be funded for their first three years in the program, beginning from their date of admission. If funding is available students may be offered assistantship and tuition support in their fourth year (full time) in the program provided they have been advanced to candidacy and are making satisfactory progress on their dissertation.

GTA Training Requirements

If the student is hired in the position of Graduate Teaching Associate, Graduate Teaching Assistant or Graduate Student Grader, there are training requirements that must be met in order for the contract to be processed. All students to be employed as Associates, Assistants or Graders must complete the required training program offered by the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. Associates must also have completed at least 18 hours of graduate courses in the discipline in which they will be teaching. These services are offered by the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) and more information can be found at the following website: www.fctl.ucf.edu > Events > GTA Programs. Registration information is found at the following website: graduate.ucf.edu/ > GTA Training Requirements.

International students who will be hired in GTA positions must be proficient at speaking English. This is determined by successfully passing the Versant test. This test (also known as the Oral Proficiency Exam) is administered by the English Language Institute and takes about 20 minutes. For international students to register for or inquire about the Versant examination, please visit the UCF Global website (global.ucf.edu/).

GTA Performance Assessment

At the completion of each semester the student is employed as a GTA, the student's performance will be evaluated by the instructor of record and/or assigned teaching mentor. These assessments will be used to review strengths and areas for growth in the student's performance in preparation for future employment. The faculty member(s) will provide a written statement of their evaluation to be shared with the student. One copy will be submitted to the College of Graduate Studies and another copy will be placed in the student's file.

Graduate Student Associations

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) is UCF's graduate organization committed to enrich graduate students' personal, educational and professional experience. To learn more or get involved, please visit facebook.com/groups/UCFgsa/.

For individual department or graduate program organizations, please see the program advisor.

Alpha Kappa Delta International Sociology Honor Society UCF Chapter promotes excellence in scholarship in the study of sociology, research of social problems, and such other social and intellectual activities as will lead to improvement in the human condition.

American Sociological Association is the national organization for sociologists.

The UCF Sociology Graduate Student Association represents the concerns and interests of students in the department. SGSA supports graduate students' academic endeavors by creating opportunities to develop their research ideas. Through roundtable discussions, members of SGSA receive constructive feedback on their research in preparation for professional conferences or publications. SGSA also utilizes its social media presence to promote published work by graduate students in the department. Learn more about the group at: <https://sciences.ucf.edu/sociology/graduate/sociology-graduate-student-association/>

Professional Development

Research is a critical component of training in the Sociology PhD program. Students are expected to begin research activities early in their graduate training and to continue a research agenda throughout their graduate career. As a part of this agenda students should present their research at professional conferences whenever possible. The American Sociological Association (ASA) is the major professional association in the discipline. Meetings for this association are held every August. In addition to the ASA, regional professional associations also hold annual meetings. A list of these regional meetings can be found on the website of the ASA (asanet.org/). Professional meetings are also held focusing on specialized areas within the broader discipline of Sociology (e.g., Criminology, Gerontology, Criminal Justice, Environment). Students are encouraged to contact faculty who present at these meetings for more specific information. When funds are available, the Department of Sociology provides financial support to students presenting at conferences through a competitive process.

In addition to presenting research, students are expected to submit research articles for publication. Publications include such items as academic journal articles, book chapters, book reviews, and technical reports. Students are advised to plan their course of study to include time to produce such publications.

Every year, the Sociology graduate faculty hosts a series of workshops including presentations on professional development activities (e.g., publishing, grant writing, the job search process). Students are strongly encouraged to attend these workshops whenever possible. In addition to the professional development opportunities available in the department, UCF also provides many opportunities through the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (fctl.ucf.edu/), the College of Graduate Studies (graduate.ucf.edu/), and Career Services (career.ucf.edu/).

Instructor Training and Development

The Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) promotes excellence in all levels of teaching at the University of Central Florida. To that end, they offer several programs for the professional development of Graduate Teaching Assistants at UCF.

Preparing Tomorrow's Faculty Program

This certificate program (12-weeks for domestic students, 16-weeks for international students) consists of group and individualized instruction by Faculty Center staff and experienced UCF professors. International students are provided the same training, as well as information regarding language immersion and tricks and cultural awareness as a way of knowing what to expect from American students.

For more information fctl.ucf.edu/ > Events > GTA Programs or call 407/823-3544.

Graduate Research Forum

Sponsored by the College of Graduate Studies, the Research Forum is an opportunity for students to showcase their research and creative projects and to receive valuable feedback from faculty judges. Awards for best presentation in each category will be given, and all participants will receive recognition.

Pathways to Success Workshops

Coordinated by the College of Graduate Studies, the Pathways to Success program offers free development opportunities for graduate students including workshops in Academic Integrity, Graduate Grantsmanship, Graduate Teaching, Personal Development, Professional Development, and Research. For more information and how to register, please visit graduate.ucf.edu/pathways-to-success/.

Graduate Excellence Awards

Each year, the College of Graduate Studies offers graduate students who strive for academic and professional excellence the opportunity to be recognized for their work. The award categories include the following:

Award for Excellence by a Graduate Teaching Assistant

For students who provide teaching support and assistance under the direction of a lead teacher. This award focuses on the extent and quality of the assistance provided by the student to the lead instructor and the students in the class. (Not intended for students who are the instructor of record)

Award for Excellence in Graduate Student Teaching

For students who serve as instructors of record and have independent classroom responsibilities. The focus of this award is on the quality of the student's teaching and the academic contributions of those activities.

Award for the Outstanding Dissertation

To recognize doctoral students for excellence in the dissertation. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's dissertation. Excellence of the dissertation may be demonstrated by evidence such as, but not limited to publications in refereed journals, awards and recognitions from professional organizations, and praise from faculty members and other colleagues in the field.

For the nomination process and eligibility criteria, see graduate.ucf.edu/awards-and-recognition/.

For more information about the Council of Southern Graduate Schools (CSGS) thesis and dissertation awards, please see their website: csgs.org/ > Awards.

Departmental Graduate Excellence Awards

In addition to the awards offered by the University, the Sociology Department also offers several graduate excellence awards.

Excellence in Graduate Teaching

This award recognizes graduate students who have taught their own courses. Eligibility is open to any Sociology graduate student who has been an instructor of record for their own course while a student at UCF.

Graduate Student Paper Competition

This award recognizes excellence in a professional paper written by a graduate student. Eligibility is open to any Sociology graduate student who has written a professional paper that goes beyond a term paper for a course.

Details about the application requirements and deadlines will be announced at the beginning of each spring term.

Developing Leader Award. This award recognizes a student who demonstrates strong leadership within the department in support of our departmental learning community.

Public Scholarship Award. This award recognizes a student who demonstrates a commitment to scholarship that moves beyond the academy to engage public audiences.

Service to Sociology Award. This award recognizes a student who demonstrates a commitment to service within the department, university, field, and/or community.

Excellence in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Research Award. This award recognizes a student who engages in research that supports issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion in research.

Excellence in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Teaching Award. This award recognizes a student who engages in teaching that supports student learning of issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion.

Pedagogical Innovation Award. This award recognizes a student who incorporates novel approaches to classroom instruction and student engagement.

MA Thesis Award. This award recognizes a student who demonstrates excellence in MA thesis completion. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the student's thesis to sociology and/or related fields.

MA Applied Project Award. This award recognizes a student who demonstrates excellence in completion of an MA Applied Project. The focus of this award is on the quality and contribution of the project to a problem in sociology and/or related fields.

Other sites of interest:

[Harbor House](#) (Orange County's domestic violence shelter)

[Coalition for the Homeless](#) (See the Community Outreach page to see how we relate to the Coalition)

[Second Harvest Food Bank](#)

Job Search

Graduates from the Sociology doctoral program are employed in both academic and applied settings. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all department workshops and consult with faculty on the job search process. Visit the [Sociology program](#) website for the calendar of professional events.

[The American Sociological Association](#) is an excellent resource for information on careers in sociology. It provides an employment service and a job bank for positions in the field.

The Chronicle of Higher Education's [job page](#) is a resource for finding research and faculty positions in the sociology discipline.

UCF's Career Services department offers a wide range of programs and services designed to assist graduate students. These services include evaluation and exploration of career goals, preparation for the job search and job search resources. To learn more, visit their website at www.career.ucf.edu.

Forms

- [College of Graduate Studies Forms and References](#)
A complete listing of general forms and references for graduate students, with direct links, may be found here.
- [Dissertation Committee Status Form](#)
Dissertation committees must be in place and approved by the Graduate Program Director, the Department Chair/Director, and the College of Sciences Associate Dean of Graduate Studies prior to a student's advancement to candidacy and enrollment into Dissertation Research (SYA 7980).
Committee Composition: 1. Chair (Requirements: Sociology Full Graduate Faculty) 2. Minimum of four committee members (Requirements: terminal degree or appropriate discipline recognition) 3. At least three must be Sociology graduate faculty. 4. At least one must be from outside the student's department. 5. Majority UCF faculty
- [Graduate Petition Form](#)
When unusual situations arise, petitions for exceptions to policy may be requested by the student. Depending on the type of appeal, the student should contact his/her program adviser to begin the petition process.
- [Registration Forms](#)
If a registration attempt results in a time conflict between two courses, in order for the student to be registered, this form must be completed. This form accompanies the override of the course they are into for which they are unable to register. This form is submitted to the College of Sciences Director of Graduate Services for approval and course enrollment.
- [Transfer Request Form](#)
If a registration attempt results in a time conflict between two courses, in order for the student to be registered, this form must be completed. This form accompanies the override of the course they are into for which they are unable to register. This form is submitted to the College of Sciences Director of Graduate Services for approval and course enrollment.
- [Traveling Scholar Form](#)
If a student would like to take advantage of special resources available on another campus but not available on the home campus; for example, special course offerings, research opportunities, unique laboratories and library collections, this form must be completed and approved.

Useful Links

- [Sociology PhD](#)
- [College of Sciences](#)
- [College of Graduate Studies](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Bookstore](#)
- [Campus Map](#)
- [Counseling Center](#)
- [Financial Assistance](#)
- [Golden Rule Student Handbook](#)
- [Graduate Catalog](#)
- [Graduate Student Association](#)
- [Graduate Student Center](#)

- [Housing and Residence Life](#)
- [Housing, off campus](#)
- [Knights Email](#)
- [Library](#)
- [NID Help](#)
- [Pathways to Success](#)
- [Recreation and Wellness Center](#)
- [Shuttles Parking Services](#)
- [Student Health Services](#)
- [Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\)](#)
- [UCF Global](#)
- [University Writing Center](#)

Graduate Faculty

Armato, Michael

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Gender (through intersectional lens). Specific focus on men & masculinities and how masculinities are associated with power/authority, how masculinities get promoted through explicit and tacit means in institutional settings.

Contact Info: michael.armato@ucf.edu

Cares, Alison

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Intimate Partner Violence, Campus Sexual Violence, Teaching About Victimization, Program and Policy Evaluation, Criminal Economic Sanctions

Contact Info: alison.cares@ucf.edu

Carter, J. Scott

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Racial and Gender Inequality, Attitudinal Measurement, Urban and Regional Subcultures, Race and Politics, Inequality and Education

Contact Info: carter@ucf.edu

Carter, Shannon

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Reproduction, Social Inequalities, Sociology of Health and Medicine

Contact Info: skcarter@ucf.edu

Corzine, Jay

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Homicide, Violent Crimes, Geographical Patterning of Crime, Immigration, Neighborhoods and Crime

Contact info: jay.corzine@ucf.edu

Cox, Jonathan M.

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Racial and Ethnic Identities, Racial Ideology, Social Psychology, Critical Race Theory, Experiences of College Students, Qualitative Methodology, Pedagogies

Contact Info: Jonathan.Cox@ucf.edu

Donley, Amy

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Poverty and Homelessness, Intersection of Homelessness and Crime, Urban Sociology, Research Methods, Applied Sociology

Contact Info: Amy.Donley@ucf.edu

Ford, Jason

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Substance Abuse, Criminological Theory, Crime and Deviance over the Life Course

Contact Info: Jason.Ford@ucf.edu

Grauerholz, Elizabeth

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Gender, Media, Social Psychology, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, Animals and Society

Contact Info: elizabeth.grauerholz@ucf.edu

Hawthorne, Timothy

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Geographic Information Systems, Mixed Methods, Social and Environmental Inequalities, Citizen Science, Participatory Methods, Drones, Belize, Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, STEM education

Contact Info: Timothy.Hawthorne@ucf.edu

Hinojosa, Melanie

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Families and Health, Health Disparities, Race and Ethnicity, Child Health, Health Outcomes, Health Policy as it relates to health outcomes, mental health, behavioral health, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, Parental Strain/Family Stress as it relates to child health, family caregiving, Caregiver Strain, Long Term Care, Community Based Participatory Research

Contact Info: Melanie.Hinojosa@ucf.edu

Hinojosa, Ramon

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: American Veteran Family Reintegration, Veteran Reintegration Processes, Veteran Identity Construction, Identity, Bodies, and Health, Medical Sociology, Qualitative Methods, Visual Sociology, Grounded Theory, Critical Masculinities, Gender and Reproduction

Contact Info: Ramon.Hinojosa@ucf.edu

Huff-Corzine, Lin

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Criminology-included but not limited to homicide, mass murder, human trafficking, domestic and intimate partner violence; Race, Gender and Class as they relate to crime and treatment by the criminal justice system; Foodways and Food Inequalities

Contact Info: Lin.Huff-Corzine@ucf.edu

Jasinski, Jana

College: College of Sciences & Vice Provost for Faculty Excellence

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Intimate Partner Violence, including risk for victimization and law enforcement response, Geographical Patterning of Crime, Women in Higher Education, Community Based Applied Research, Quantitative and Qualitative Methods

Koontz, Amanda

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Social Inequalities, Identities, Social Psychology, Culture and Consumption Contact

Info: Amanda.Koontz@ucf.edu

Li, Yingru

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Geographical Information Systems, Social and Environmental Inequality, Health Disparities, Obesity, Retail Location Analysis, Environmental Pollution and Water Quality, Geospatial Modeling

Contact Info: Yingru.Li@ucf.edu

Mustaine, Elizabeth

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary Affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Criminal Victimization, Violence, Routine Activity Theory, Violence against Women, Stalking, Sexual Offenders and Policies, Child Abuse, Impact of Legal Changes

Contact info: libby@ucf.edu

Park, Hyung

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Environment (Climate change, energy, health disparities), Medical Sociology, Organization Theory, Policy Analysis, Research Methods, Quantitative Analysis (Statistics, Social Network Analysis)

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Reckdenwald, Amy

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Violent Victimization and Offending, Intimate Partner Violence, Homicide

Contact Info: Amy.Reckdenwald@ucf.edu

Rivera, Fernando

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Sociology of Health and Medicine, Disasters, Race and Ethnicity

Contact Info: fernando.rivera@ucf.edu

Sikorska, Elzbieta

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Social Gerontology, Medical Sociology, Sociology of Organizations, Quality of Life and Care, Successful Aging, Alternative Housing for Older Adults, Hospice/Palliative Care, Medical Education

Contact Info: Elzbieta.Sikorska@ucf.edu

Thakore, Bhoomi

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Structural Inequality, Race and Gender in Media, Qualitative Methods, Interventions Research (race and gender diversity in STEM careers)

Contact Info: Bhoomi.Thakore@ucf.edu

Vergara, Angela

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology

Research interests: Race and Ethnicity, Gender and Sexuality, Reproductive Health, Global Inequalities

Contact Info: Angela.Vergara@ucf.edu

Woerner, Jacqueline

College: College of Sciences

Disciplinary affiliations: Sociology and Psychology

Research interests: Interpersonal Violence, Substance Abuse, Relationships, Health Risk Behaviors

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Contact Info

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