

Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Sociology

Congratulations and welcome to the Department of Sociology at the University of North Texas. We are pleased you decided to join our department! We strive to provide our graduate students with a challenging and stimulating curriculum, opportunities to participate in cutting-edge research, and opportunities to engage with undergraduates in the classroom. It is our goal to provide you with the tools necessary for success in your future.

Register For Classes

- ✓ **0.** Log into your My UNT portal. <https://my.unt.edu>
- ☐ **1.** From the student tab you can see the registration calendar, view your semester schedule, make a payment, register for classes, etc.
- ☐ **2.** Click *Enrollment* to register. Then, click *Enroll/Add/Drop* to search for and enroll in courses. Select the correct term for enrollment and continue.
- ☐ **3.** Click on *Search* and in the drop-down box, choose *Graduate* as Career.
- ☐ **4.** Click *Select Subject*, and choose the appropriate subject.
- ☐ **5.** Select *Graduate* as Course Career, and then begin your search. For example, to register for SOCI 6500, click *Select* to choose this course.
- ☐ **6.** Click *Next* to add the course to your cart.
- ☐ **7.** Click *Proceed* to Step 2 of 3 to confirm enrollment.
- ☐ **8.** Click *Finish Enrolling*.
 - a. If a red 'X' shows in the Status field of the confirmation box, contact the Instructor of Record or the Administrative Coordinator to request permission to enroll in the course.
 - b. If a Green check mark shows in the Status field of the confirmation box, you have successfully enrolled in the course.

Helpful Hint: Register for classes early so that they do not get dropped from the schedule. Classes need specific enrollment numbers to be offered; if a class doesn't meet those goals, it could be cancelled.

Graduate Certificates

The Department of Sociology offers two four-course (12-credit) graduate certificates. Students can apply to the certificate programs directly or earn the certificates as part of their Master's degree. All coursework taken for the graduate certificates can be applied to a Master's degree for students who wish to continue their graduate education.

Applied Sociology Graduate Certificate:

The Applied Sociology Graduate Certificate combines formal training and experiential learning to promote rigorous, multimethod investigation of pressing research questions. This is achieved by incorporating diverse qualitative and quantitative methods and immersion in interdisciplinary environments. The knowledge and skills acquired in this certificate program position students to work in fields that value combinations of applied social science and data science skills. The courses taken for this certificate count toward the sociology MA and MS degrees.

The following course is required for the Applied Sociology graduate certificate:

- SOCI 5230 – Data Management and Visualization

Along with any three of the following courses:

- SOCI 5210 – Introduction to Social Statistics
- SOCI 5202 – Qualitative Methods
- SOCI 5940 – Sociology Internship
- SOCI 5200 – Research Methods and Design
- INSD 5200 – Digital Social Science
- INSD 5220 – Digital Research Methods

Digital Sociology Graduate Certificate:

The four-course Digital Sociology Graduate Certificate provides a cutting-edge combination of social science theory and methods with the foundations of data science. Courses cover topics including text mining, web scraping, online surveys, digital ethnography, social media analytics, human performance analytics, and a variety of sociological topics including social movements, criminology, immigration, and gender. The knowledge and skills acquired in this program position students to work in fields that value combinations of social science and data science skills. The certificate is a stand-alone program, and the courses taken for this certificate count toward the sociology MA and MS degrees.

The following courses are required for the Applied Sociology graduate certificate:

Core Requirements:

- INSD 5200 – Digital Social Science

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- INSD 5220 – Digital Research Methods or INSD 5210 Theories of the Information Society

Statistics and Methods Requirement:

3 hours from:

- SOCI 5200 Research Methods and Design
- SOCI 5210 Introduction to Social Statistics
- SOCI 6201 Quantitative Research Methods and Design
- SOCI 6202 Qualitative Research Methods and Design
- SOCI 6203 Social Science Text Mining
- SOCI 6301 Intermediate Statistics- Multiple Regression Analysis and Related Methods in Sociology
- SOCI 6302 Advanced Statistics in Sociology
- INSD 5220 Digital Research Methods

Substantive Course Requirement:

3 hours from any graduate sociology elective excluding those courses listed in the Statistics and Methods requirement.

MA/MS Degree

Master's candidates in sociology are required to take the following courses or their equivalents:

- SOCI 5050 – Sociological Theory
- SOCI 5200 – Research Methods and Design
- SOCI 5210 – Introduction to Social Statistics

For the Master of Arts (MA) degree, candidates must present evidence of a reading knowledge of at least one foreign language.

Students must establish an advisory committee and prepare a degree plan approved by the committee. The candidate's committee is composed of three faculty members with at least two from sociology, one of whom serves as the major professor.

Thesis Option:

Of the required minimum of 30 graduate hours for the master's degree, 24 hours must be graduate sociology courses, including a 6-hour thesis. A minor of 6 graduate hours in a related field must be approved by the chair of the sociology department and the student's major professor. Students must complete and defend a thesis proposal before completing and

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defending their thesis. Successful defense of a thesis completes the requirements for the master's degree.

Non-Thesis Option:

Of the required minimum of 30 hours for the master's degree, 24 hours must be graduate work in sociology. A minor of 6 graduate hours may be taken in courses outside of sociology with consent of the department chair and the student's major professor.

Satisfactory performance on the comprehensive examination completes the requirements for the non-thesis master's degree. The comprehensive examination, as determined by the candidate's advisory committee, may be written or oral. The oral exams normally last one and one-half hours and the written exam length varies by format.

Pass-Through Program

Students in the Master's Pass-Through program complete the master's degree on the way to completing the doctorate. Pass-through students do not need to reapply after completing the master's degree. Pass-through students need to complete a thesis. The preferred approach is for Pass-through students to complete the master's degree requirements, including thesis, before beginning the doctoral coursework. Communicate with your graduate advisor and the administrative specialist about your intent to apply to the Pass-through program and submit an application to the Toulouse Graduate School. Applications can be found on the Sociology website.

Sociology PhD

The minimum program for the PhD in sociology consists of 72 hours beyond the bachelor's degree or 42 hours beyond the master's degree. All students are required to complete the following:

- A minimum of 9 semester hours in research methods and statistics. All courses must be at the 6000 level, and a minimum grade of B must be achieved for each.
- A minimum of 6 semester hours in sociological theory at the 6000 level. A grade of B or better must be achieved for each course.
- A minimum of 9 semester hours in a concentration area approved by the advisory committee, including at least 6 hours at the 6000 level.
- A minimum of 9 semester hours of electives.
- A minimum of 9 semester hours of dissertation.
- A minimum of 24 semester hours must be taken at the 6000 level.

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Students may earn limited credit in an internship as part of their PhD course work.

To fulfill UNT's residency requirement, a student must carry a full load of 9 hours each term/semester for two consecutive long terms/semesters at UNT or 6 hours for three consecutive terms.

The degree plan of the individual student must be completed by the end of the first semester of the second year of graduate work or before completion of 18 semester hours in the program and completion of the doctoral qualifying paper.

Advisory Committee:

The student must also establish an advisory committee and prepare a degree plan approved by this committee.

The advisory committee is composed of at least three members with at least half of the committee being from the full-time UNT sociology faculty. Other members may be from the Texas Woman's University faculty or represent a second concentration within sociology or a minor outside the program. The major professor (chair) must be a full-time UNT sociology faculty member.

All doctoral students must choose a concentration area in consultation with their major advisor and advisory committee and submit a doctoral qualifying paper.

Doctoral Qualifying Paper:

All doctoral students must choose a concentration area in consultation with their major advisor and advisory committee and submit a doctoral qualifying paper. The purpose of the qualifying paper is to determine the student's grasp of foundational works, the current state of the literature, and how the student's proposal expands on the latter. The committee should have some indication if the proposed study is 1) feasible in the general time frame provided and 2) advances the literature, either theoretically or methodologically, in notable new ways that are not addressed by current studies.

The qualifying paper committee is the student's advisory committee as indicated on their approved degree plan. A successful defense is a necessary benchmark to move to the prospectus stage and graduate in a timely manner. To receive a "pass" on the qualifying paper, it must be approved by all members of the advisory committee following a shared rubric. The committee can require students to revise their submission and resubmit it.

Resubmissions have a time frame of one month to address the comments of committee members. The successful completion of the qualifying paper is a prerequisite for admission to candidacy for the degree. Admission to candidacy is granted by the appropriate graduate dean upon recommendation of the student's advisory committee, and the department chair and graduate director, and also is based upon the student's academic record.

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Dissertation Proposal:

Students will complete a thesis or dissertation proposal in consultation with their committee. The purpose of the proposal is to set out a plan for the project. It is best to see the proposal as an agreement between the student and the committee. You must orally defend a proposal that meets the approval of your committee before you begin the process of writing your thesis or dissertation.

A well-formulated proposal should be about 15-30 double-spaced pages. Proposal formats can vary, so consult with your committee for more precise information.

Dissertation:

Under the direction of the advisory committee, the candidate must write a dissertation representing original research. It must make a significant contribution to the discipline of sociology in the student's area of concentration.

The student must defend orally a written dissertation proposal that meets with the approval of the student's advisory committee before the dissertation is written.

The final written dissertation must be defended orally before the committee and approved by them.

Degree Plan

Once you have chosen your major professor, you need to file a degree plan with the graduate school. Degree plans can be found at: <https://sociology.unt.edu/graduate-program/graduate-program-forms> or pick up a copy at the front desk. You should complete your degree plan under advisement from the graduate director and your major professor. The degree plan must be filed before completion of 18 semester hours in the program and for doctoral students, no later than the second year of graduate work and prior to taking the concentration exam.

Proposal Defense

You must orally defend a proposal that meets the approval of your committee before you begin the process of writing your thesis or dissertation.

Oral Defense

The oral defense is the final step for either a thesis or dissertation. Each member of your Committee must attend. Other faculty and students may attend as well. A defense lasts at least one hour. Talk with your chair about how the defense will be conducted. Generally,

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committee members ask questions about how you conducted the research and analyzed your data. Then other faculty and peers may ask questions as well.

If a majority of committee members vote that you successfully defended your thesis or dissertation, you pass. The vote is conducted in "closed session" where students are not present. Often a committee will recommend a pass with revisions. All edits/revisions must be completed before the thesis/dissertation can be submitted to the graduate school.

Submitting Your Thesis/Dissertation to Toulouse Graduate School

UNT uses an online application, Vireo, for submissions. More information about uploading to Vireo can be found in the Vireo Submission Guide found, on the TGS website at <https://tgs.unt.edu/thesis-manual>. The submission will be reviewed, and any recommended edits or format revisions must be completed and submitted prior to graduation.

Graduation

UNT has three graduation dates (Spring-May, Fall-December and Summer-August). However, the university hosts only two commencements, in May and December. August graduates are invited to attend the December Commencement Ceremony. More information about the graduation process and deadlines can be found at: <https://tgs.unt.edu/new-current-students/graduation-information>

Commencement information, including regalia information, can be found on the commencement webpage: <https://commencement.unt.edu/>

Funding

There are many opportunities for graduate student funding within and outside the department. Graduate students are encouraged to seek external funding as well.

There are a number of university-wide scholarships available. The deadline for the general scholarship application is March 1. More information can be found at:

<https://financialaid.unt.edu/how-apply-scholarships>

The Toulouse Graduate School offers a \$1,000 Academic Achievement Scholarship that includes a waiver for out-of-state tuition costs for graduate students. The scholarship and waiver are granted automatically, provided that fully admitted graduate students that meet the eligibility requirements submit a general application on UNT's Eagle Scholarship Portal. You can find more information here:

<https://tgs.unt.edu/future-students/funding-your-graduate-education/awards>

The department also offers graduate student scholarships. The deadline for the scholarship application is in mid-to-late February. A minimum 3.5 G.P.A. is required by all of the

scholarships. More information about the various scholarships and how to apply can be found on the sociology website:

<https://sociology.unt.edu/graduate-program/funding>

Employment Within Sociology

Generally, funding priority is given to pass-through and doctoral students. Pass-through students can be funded up to 5 years and doctoral students who are admitted with a Master's degree can be funded up to 3 years. Students can receive funding by working for the department in a variety of ways.

Teaching Assistants (TAs) require up to 20 hours per week of assisting sociology professors and instructors. TA positions come with up to 6 hours of paid tuition in both the fall and spring semesters. In order to qualify for this tuition benefit, a student must be in good academic standing and be a full-time graduate student. Students are considered for a renewal of this position based on funding availability, past TA performance, and satisfactory progress in the program.

Teaching Fellowships (TFs) require that graduate students either teach two courses independently each semester or teach one course as an instructor and serve as a teaching assistant in another course. The Graduate Director and/or Department Chair makes specific work assignments based on the department's teaching needs and student research/teaching interests when possible. TF positions come with up to 6 hours paid tuition in both the fall and spring semesters. In order to qualify for this tuition benefit a student must be in good academic standing and be a full-time graduate student. Students are considered for a renewal of this position if they are enrolled in the MA-PhD pass-through or doctoral programs based on funding availability, past TF performance, and satisfactory progress in the program.

Research Assistant (RA): An individual faculty member may hire a RA to assist with preparing, conducting and/or writing research. These positions are often funded through external grants.

Summer funding is limited. There are some Teaching Fellow and Teaching Assistant positions available, but it is rare to be able to fund all interested graduate students. International students should take particular note of the limited summer funding because students with F-1 student visas are generally not permitted to work off campus in the summer. International applicants with questions about work and funding should visit <https://international.unt.edu>

Time to Completion

All coursework and other requirements towards the master's degree must be completed within five years. Credits more than six years old at the time of first registration for graduate work are not transferable from other institutions. Individual courses which are over 10 calendar years old lose all value for degree purposes. There is no opportunity to appeal for extending the 10 years that a course is valid.

All work to be credited toward the doctoral degree beyond the master's degree must be completed within a period of 8 years from the date doctoral credit is first earned. No course credit beyond the master's degree that is more than 10 years old at the time the doctoral program is completed will be counted toward the doctorate.

Time limits are strictly enforced. Students exceeding the time limit may be required to repeat the comprehensive exam, replace out-of-date credits with up-to-date work, and/or show other evidence of being up-to-date in their major and minor fields. Students anticipating to exceed the time limit should apply for an extension of time before their seventh year of study. For time extension procedure and forms, visit gradschool.unt.edu/extension.htm

Ws, Is, and LOAs

Withdrawal (W) - A student may withdraw from UNT at any time prior to two weeks before the first day of final examinations for fall or spring semesters or the equivalent dates for summer sessions by making a request in the Dean of Students Office. For withdrawals processed prior to the end of the sixth week of classes for fall or spring semesters or the equivalent dates for summer sessions, the grade of W is recorded for each course in which a withdrawn student was enrolled. After the sixth week of classes for fall or spring semesters or the equivalent dates for summer sessions, a withdrawn student receives grades of W only for those courses in which there were passing grades at the time of withdrawal; otherwise, the grade WF is recorded.

Incompletes (I) - Incompletes are non-punitive grades given in the last fourth of the semester only if the student is (1) passing the course; and (2) has a justifiable and documented reason (such as serious illness) for not completing the work on schedule. The student must file a Request-for-Incomplete form signed by both the Instructor and Department Chair. This form must clearly indicate what work needs to be completed and must set a maximum time (1 year or less) for completing the work. A student who does not complete the work within the designated time receives an F. Excessive Incompletes on your student record can jeopardize your graduate funding. Incompletes should be an **exception**, never a routine practice.

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Leave of Absence (LOA) - Leave of absence applies to graduate students who wish to discontinue work toward the degree for a specified period of time due to exigent circumstances. If approved, the leave of absence may "stop the clock" for a maximum of one year on the time limit for the degree. A leave of absence form must be submitted to the Toulouse Graduate School and must have approval of the student's department chair or academic associate dean prior to submission to the Toulouse Graduate School. Once a student returns from an approved leave of absence of one year or longer, the student must submit an application through www.applytexas.org to reactivate the student record.

Leaves will only be granted under conditions that require suspension of all activities associated with pursuing the degree. Scenarios such as military deployment and medical leave (including childbirth, adoption of a child, or to care for a sick parent) are examples of a leave of absence that may be approved to "stop the clock" on degree time limits.

More information on these and other academic policies can be found in the graduate catalog, <http://catalog.unt.edu/index.php>.

Helpful Information

DEPARTMENT ADDRESS

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DEPT. WEBSITE & EMAIL

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Your 1st Point of Contact

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