



# **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

2023-2024  
PHD PROGRAM HANDBOOK

*Last updated: August 29, 2023*

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## **SOCIOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM**

The Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Northeastern University is home to a distinguished graduate program offering a PhD in Sociology. The primary objectives of our graduate program are: (1) to offer a strong curricular foundation in sociology and the social sciences; (2) to inculcate in students a depth of knowledge in the basic tools of the discipline; (3) to train our students to be outstanding teachers and researchers; and (4) to provide professional socialization that adequately prepares students for a career in the discipline.

The goal of graduate education is to foster lifelong habits of inquiry and learning, to provide intellectual challenge, and to stimulate critical and creative problem solving. These goals are achieved by students through completion of a research project and appropriate advanced course work. The following guidelines are intended to assist graduate students in achieving these goals.

This handbook is intended to provide helpful information for students about program requirements and resources as they pursue a graduate degree in Sociology within their chosen area of specialization.

### **Organization of the Sociology Graduate Program**

We offer a program of study leading to a Sociology Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. The degree requires a culminating written document, a dissertation which presents and interprets original research that the student conducted in one or more fields of study offered within the department.

Currently, the department supports approximately forty graduate students spread among more than 30 faculty members. We offer PhD degrees in Sociology (See the Research Foci page which has been created to help students find faculty research interest clusters:

[https://cssh.northeastern.edu/socant/research-foci/.](https://cssh.northeastern.edu/socant/research-foci/))

### **The Role of the Graduate Committee**

The Graduate Committee (GC) is responsible for monitoring the students' progress toward their degree. Other responsibilities of the GC include:

- Providing new or revised materials for the Graduate Catalog and PhD Handbook,
- Instructing students on policies of the graduate programs,
- Periodically reviewing existing graduate programs and when needed, proposing revisions, modifications and/or new programs for approval,
- Monitoring each student's progress toward their degrees by assessing annual reviews submitted by students and their advisors,
- Making recommendations to the Graduate Director regarding issues of probations

and/or separation of individual students from the program.

The GC consists of several faculty members, appointed by the Department Chair, for a one-year term who are involved in the graduate program. The GC also includes two graduate student representatives who are elected by their fellow graduate students and who possess full voting rights. Students must be in good academic standing to serve on the GC. Owing to the need to respect student confidentiality, the student representatives must recuse themselves when individual student cases are discussed. The Graduate Director directs GC activities. Students should be familiar with the GC and the Grad Director and their relationship to related offices in the university. A student should contact any GC member they feel comfortable with if assistance is needed.

The current GC (2023-2024) consists of the following faculty members:

[Dr. Tiffany Joseph \(Director\)](#)

[Dr. Valentine Moghadam](#)

[Dr. Matt Hunt](#)

[Dr. Ramiro Martinez](#)

[Dr. Phil Brown](#)

[Dr. Sasha Sabherwal](#)

[Dr. Eileen Otis](#)

Student members:

[Tiffani Elliott](#)

[Merrily LeBlanc](#)

The Graduate Program Administrator is:

[Pamela Simmons](#)

### **The Role of the Graduate Program Administrator (GPA)**

The role of the Graduate Program Administrator (GPA) is to ensure that each graduate student complies with the rules of the College of Social Sciences and Humanities (CSSH) and the department. The GPA's duties are to assist with degree audits of each student in order to make sure that coursework requirements and form filings are current and on track with the student's projected graduate date. The GPA is the resident expert in all the intricacies of the policies and procedures that affect graduate students. Thus, graduate students should first seek the guidance of the GPA regarding any question related to a student's academic standing or plan of action. The contact information for the GPA is:

Pamela Simmons

Office: RP 962

Phone: 617.373.4940

E-mail: [p.simmons@northeastern.edu](mailto:p.simmons@northeastern.edu)

## 2023\_PROGRAM\_REQUIREMENTS

### DOCTORAL PROGRAM COURSEWORK CHECKLIST

BA upon entry	credits	Advanced Entry – Sociology MA upon entry	credits
SOCL 7200: Sociological Theory	4	SOCL 7200: Sociological Theory	4
SOCL 7201: Sociological Theory II	4	SOCL 7201: Sociological Theory II	4
Statistical Analysis	4	Statistical Analysis	4
Research Methods 1	4	Research Methods 1	4
Advanced Methods 1	4	Advanced Methods 1	4
Advanced Methods 2	4	Advanced Methods 2	4
Proseminars 7001-7004 – 4 cr	4	Proseminars 7001-7004 – 4 cr	4
Elective 1 Elective 2 Elective 3 Elective 4 Elective 5 Elective 6 Elective 7 Elective 8		Elective 1 Elective 2 Elective 3	
Total		Total	
15 classes – 60 SH		10 classes – 40 SH	40

Required

#### Coursework

Doctoral students are required to complete 60 standard credit hours (SH) with a GPA of 3.5 or higher if coming in with a bachelor's degree and 40 credit hours if coming in with a master's degree in Sociology. Students admitted without a master's degree earn the MA in Sociology in

route to completing their PhD requirements (30 credits).

Required courses cover the core areas of sociological theory, research methods, and statistical analysis. All students must take courses in these areas regardless of their areas of specialization. Students must fulfill these requirements during their first year in the program. Students entering our program may be able to substitute courses taken at the prior institution for some or all of these requirements by submitting a course waiver form (a course waiver does not waive the associated semester hour requirement) or transfer of credit (courses submitted with a transfer of credit cannot have counted toward another degree).

#### Four Proseminars

Proseminars provide students structure for their first two years in the PhD program to help ensure their professionalization into the discipline and to help them move more smoothly through program requirements. Each course meets weekly for 60-minute sessions throughout each fall and spring semester for the student's first two years. Each 1-credit course will be taken on a pass/fail basis. In order to receive a passing grade, students must attend most proseminar class meetings, complete the requirements for the proseminar course in a satisfactory manner, and attend most intellectual and professional development events organized by the department. Proseminar 1 and 2 are completed in the first year; Proseminar 3 and 4 are completed in the second year.

#### Post Coursework but Prior to Proposal Defense

Students must complete two field statements prior to their dissertation proposal defense and will register for Exam Preparation—Doctoral ([SOCL 8960](#)) (with the field statement chair listed as instructor of record). Once field statements are complete and students are working on their dissertation proposal, students should register for a Research course (with their committee chair listed as instructor of record) until the proposal is successfully defended.

#### Degree Candidacy

To enter into degree candidacy (also known as ABD or “All But Dissertation” status), the student must have earned a Master of Arts degree or its departmental semester-hour equivalent, completed the four proseminars, successfully defended two field statements, and defended their dissertation proposal.

Exam Prep – SOCL 8960 – 0 credits/fulltime status
Students must register for this course while working on their field statements, must take twice.
Research - SOCL 9986 – 0 credits/fulltime status
Students must register for this course while working on their dissertation proposal.
SOCL 9000 PhD Candidacy Achieved - attained when successfully defending their dissertation proposal. Students admitted prior to Fall 2019 achieve when successfully defending 2 field statements.

Dissertation Term 1 - SOCL 9990 – prerequisite SOCL 9000

Students must register for this course during the first two semesters after successfully defending their dissertation proposal.

Dissertation Term 2 – SOCL 9991 prerequisite SOCL 9990

Students must register for this course during the second semester after successfully defending their dissertation proposal.

Dissertation Continuation - SOCL 9996 prerequisite SOCL 9991

For each subsequent semester beyond the two Dissertation registrations, students register for this course.

### **Candidacy Requirements**

Effective Fall 2019, degree candidacy is achieved upon successful defense of a dissertation proposal and their two field statements. Students who entered the program prior to Fall 2019 achieve candidacy upon successful defense of their two field statements.

Degree candidacy must be achieved within two years of completion of required coursework, and the PhD degree must be completed within a maximum of five years after the successful defense of their dissertation proposal. Under extenuating circumstances, a student may request an extension of this timeframe from the Graduate Office.

For each of the first two semesters that a doctoral candidate has established candidacy, the student must register for Doctoral Dissertation Terms 1 & 2. For each semester beyond the two Dissertation registrations, the student must register for Doctoral Dissertation Continuation until the dissertation is successfully defended, approved by the College and submitted to ProQuest. During the terms when a student is registered for Doctoral Dissertation or Dissertation Continuation, coursework is not permitted as the course requirements for the degree have already been met. Students must be registered for Dissertation Continuation during the semester in which they defend their dissertation (including the full summer semester if that is when defense occurs). Any student who does not attend Northeastern University by registering for a course for a period of one year may be required to apply for readmission, unless a leave has been taken.

### **Required Student Timelines<sup>1</sup>**

When should students complete:

Field Statement 1 – June 1 of their second year

Field Statement 2 – March 1 of their third year

Dissertation Proposal – September 1 of their fourth year

Dissertation Defense – August of their 5<sup>th</sup> year

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<sup>1</sup> Effective Fall 2023, policy approved by faculty 4/5/23

## **Graduate Student Advising**

Receiving and providing mentorship is an essential part of the graduate school experience for students and faculty alike. It is through the advisor/advisee relationship that students learn how to develop their research interests, receive valuable professionalization skills, and successfully complete program requirements. The advising guidelines in this section of the handbook are meant to serve as a guide (though not all inclusive) for students and faculty to more effectively navigate the advisor/advisee relationship. It is important for faculty and students to recognize that a productive relationship can develop when all interested parties understand their roles and contribute to the maintenance of the advisor/advisee relationship. Thus, this advising handbook section is divided into five subsections that provide insights regarding: 1) building a team mentorship model; 2) developing a mentor map; 3) advisor/advisee meetings, structure, and expectations; 4) tracking student progress; and 5) advising resources for faculty and students.

### **Building a Team Mentorship Model**

This section provides relevant information and some strategies for approaching mentorship using the “team mentorship model.” In a team mentorship model, students identify particular professional skills that they need to develop and identify a team of mentors to assist in developing those skills throughout and beyond graduate school. Students are initially assigned a “main adviser” from whom they can seek advice and guidance. The main advisor ideally can help students navigate roadblocks when they occur, point out different resources on campus, and facilitate connections to colleagues, peers in the program and alumnae. However, other faculty will be crucial at different stages of the program as they have different kinds of knowledge, expertise, information, and networks that students can tap into. These other faculty include committee members, SGA supervisors, etc. Thus, the main adviser will work with the student to develop a plan for the program and their team mentor network.

The team mentorship model is important because no one person can meet all of a student’s needs. Team mentorship helps students build a network of individuals (both in and beyond the department) that they can consult for relevant advice as they advance through the program. This subsection includes strategies for developing a mentor map, understanding the different levels and types of mentorship in a team mentorship model, expectations for faculty and student roles in advising, and resources on mentorship.

### **Developing a Mentor Map**

The mentor map is a way for students to visualize and consider the different types of advisors and mentors that students can have in graduate school, both in their professional and personal life. Please review the mentor map at this link: <https://advance.cc.lehigh.edu/mentoring-network-map>. Consider the different needs you have in your professional life and try to think about possible individuals who you currently perceive as mentors or could potentially serve as mentors. You should consider making two mentor maps: one that is “internal” to the



Northeastern Sociology/Anthropology Department and another “external” one that focuses on building your networks outside of the Sociology/Anthropology Department.

The internal mentor map will be essential for identifying faculty in the department who can help you navigate the graduate program and meet program requirements like field statements and the dissertation. Students can meet faculty at departmental events but should also feel free to reach out to them via email and set up an introductory appointment. These can be faculty who share overlapping research interests and that you connect with through classes or student graduate assistantships (i.e., RA, TA). (See the Research Foci page which has been created to help students find faculty research interest clusters: <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/socant/research-foci/>.) Such faculty will also play a key role in helping students develop professional norms around writing, developing reading lists for field statements and research projects, and providing guidance around research design for the dissertation. These individuals will also comprise the majority of field statement and dissertation committees. The internal mentor map can also include peers who are, for example, more advanced graduate students in the department. Given that these individuals have been in the program longer and completed some of the program’s requirements, they can provide a wealth of knowledge about how to navigate the program and departmental dynamics. They can also provide guidance on working with faculty and how to apply for internal or external funding opportunities. As pre-candidacy students advance through the program, they will likely eventually become mentors for newer cohorts entering the program. More on peer mentoring is found in the section on "The different levels of mentorship."

The external mentor map will consist of faculty or more senior colleagues in other professions who may help with similar tasks as NU Sociology/ Anthropology faculty, but they are external to the department. This means that such mentors are in other departments/units at Northeastern, at other universities, or in other settings, such as industry, government, or non-profit organizations. Developing relationships with external mentors is also important for understanding more about your research interests and completing program requirements, especially completing the dissertation, which you must do to finish the PhD. Dissertation committees typically have at least four committee members: three who are internal faculty and one who is required to be an external faculty member. Beginning to identify potential external mentors for your external mentor map will help expand your professional networks in preparation for your dissertation research and professional life after program completion. Keep in mind that your external mentor map can also include peers or other graduate students from other institutions who can also provide valuable advice for things like putting together or being on a conference panel or connecting with a faculty member at their institution.

As you consider what your particular mentoring needs are, begin filling out an internal and external mentor map and then consider meeting with your assigned adviser to discuss the map and how to develop your mentor network in and beyond the department. Faculty should also propose and connect advisees with relevant scholars who share the advisees’ research interests. It is okay if you are unable to completely fill out the maps at first. Some of the mentors can be aspirational (i.e., faculty from whom you would like to receive mentorship in

the future). The idea of this exercise is for you to evaluate your strengths and areas for improvement and identify mentors who can help you improve upon both as you advance through the program.

Keep in mind that this map and your mentoring needs may change as you progress through the program. As a first-year student, your primary adviser may be your assigned adviser, but you will begin to connect with other faculty through coursework, serving as an SGA and other department events. Over time, for example when putting together a field statement and dissertation committee, you will need to have additional mentors to serve as committee members. It is not uncommon for students to change advisers at some point in their grad school career. If you want to change advisers or committee members, please notify the individuals involved about potential changes and complete the change of advisor form at <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/socant/change-of-advisor-form/>.

### **The Different Levels of Mentorship**

Mentoring via the “step-ahead” system is the ideal way to both give and get mentoring advice across multiple layers. While faculty serve as mentors to graduate students, those graduate students in turn provide mentorship to newer graduate students and to undergraduates. There are various ways in which this can occur. When faculty have organized research groups or labs, there are clear settings in which this mentoring can take place. But faculty must take the extra step to share with all levels of participants the components of mentoring. Faculty do this by modeling it on their own, but also by teaching components of mentoring in special sessions.

### **Student Step-Ahead Mentorship**

Peer mentoring is typically within the graduate student body, and when older students are mentoring newer ones, it is clearly part of the step-ahead model. But mentoring within a cohort or closely adjoining cohorts is especially important. Each person has knowledge and skills unique to them and they can impart that to others, while learning from them. This is often informal but can be formalized through departmental research foci/clusters, writing groups, and affinity groups. Groups can also form around specific milestones, such as preparations for American Sociological Association (ASA) meeting paper submissions and attendance, field statements, and dissertation proposals. When graduate students are TAs, they have an additional layer of mentoring to give to undergraduates, in which they can help undergraduates better learn the course material, but also learn about the life of graduate training and can assist students in thinking about grad school applications.

Postdoctoral fellows (also known as postdocs) are a separate category of potential mentors, and most graduate students have not had the opportunity to work directly with postdocs and hence to get mentored by them. Our department has increasingly had a number of postdocs who now bring such potential to our students. Such mentoring is especially helpful in terms of learning about the transition from doctoral student to postdoc and/or faculty status. Our department will make special efforts to prepare its postdocs to be part of the step-ahead mentorship.

A number of ASA sections have set up mentorship programs to connect faculty with students in preparation for the annual ASA meeting. We encourage this participation since faculty mentors help people select sessions to attend, talk to them about the many types of opportunities beyond specialty areas, introduce them to other faculty, and overall provide important professional socialization.

### **Adviser/Advisee Meetings, Structure, and Expectations**

Advisers and advisees meet to assess student's progress on program requirements and how the adviser can help the student achieve those goals. These meetings can also consist of discussing research and professional development opportunities to help the student establish a presence in the academic community. Advisors are expected to meet with students at least once per semester, or more per student request. More frequent meetings are encouraged. One of the meetings in the Spring semester should be to collaboratively complete the annual review form. In principle, students can schedule open-themed meetings where they can discuss general concerns and any issues that need clarification. However, they are encouraged to set the agenda for the meeting, and send it to the faculty, as well as send any relevant materials for the faculty to read in preparation. Students can meet during office hours or ask faculty for another time to meet.

Some helpful topics of discussion for meetings are:

- What courses could/should a student take.
- Asking for feedback on whether the student is meeting the expectations of the program.
- Candid conversations about strengths and challenges so that student and adviser can identify where the adviser can provide more support or guidance and the student can persevere.
- Questions on how to navigate the professional field such as what conferences to attend, what journals to submit papers to, and what webinars to attend.
- Asking faculty for appropriate awards or fellowships that you can apply for, or how to find out about these.
- And of course, relevant sociological and anthropological topics, theories, and concepts!

In the course of their collaboration, adviser and advisee should agree on some shared set of expectations:

- Advisees can expect advisors to be receptive to meeting with them.
- Advisees should initiate meetings with advisors, provide context on the purpose of the meeting, and prepare some meeting notes to share with the adviser beforehand.
- Advisees should keep advisors updated on their progress.
- Discuss what can be expected of an advisor such as regular feedback on papers, opportunities to collaborate on research, suggestions for interacting with other faculty, suggestions for course work, readings, conferences, navigating the publication process,

applying for funding and awards, recommendations.

Furthermore, advisee and adviser should openly discuss their preferences to concretely structure their relationship:

- Possible ways to structure: set minimum number of meetings per semester.
- Adviser should clarify expectations for advisees (for example: take graduate seminar with adviser, conduct research in particular topic area, incorporating feedback on field statement/proposals, propose suggested readings).
- Adviser and advisee should agree on what kind of turn around advisee can expect for field statement and proposals.
- Lead time for writing letters of recommendation.
- Each semester, advisee should lay out goals and discuss any intermediate steps to realizing them.

### **Tracking Student Progress among Multiple Adviser-Advisee Relationships**

Navigating between contrasting expectations and expertise of different faculty can be challenging for a student. Individual faculty should be aware of this when they are participating on a field statement or dissertation committee. Faculty and students should make sure that the student has a clear way to incorporate each faculty member's feedback into their work without excessive friction. To that end, the following are some ideas for the ways in which students and multiple faculty can coordinate when they are collaborating on a student's committee.

- **Proposed solution I** – Convene full committees: for example, at the beginning of a field statement or the beginning of a dissertation to clarify the content, procedures, roles, etc.
- **Proposed solution II** - Create a digital space (e.g., Google Drive, Teams) where each student and the faculty who work with the student (i.e., committee, GPD, GPA) can communicate and go for updates to track the student's progress, have access to drafts and various notes, and ensure everyone is on the same page:
  - Important information to include in digital space: current GPA, coursework requirements progress, proseminars, any waivers or transfers, SGA assignments, probations, fellowships, committee selection for field statement, field statement requirement timeline, dissertation committee selection, dissertation proposal timeline to include proposal defense, and defense. Presentations, publications, awards should be added as awarded by the student to be reviewed yearly at the spring semester meeting.
  - Documents should be informational for planning and following progress. **No feedback** should be entered into this digital space. Confidentiality of the student should be respected. A shortened version of the yearly annual review would be available to review the online working document and give feedback of satisfactory/ unsatisfactory progress onto a separate annual review document every spring.
  - Student is advised to write up detailed revision memos addressing each committee member's feedback for each draft so that all members are up to date and can track student's revisions.

- Student should include a timeline in the digital space so that committee members know when to expect drafts and when to offer feedback (within a reasonable time frame of approximately 2-3 weeks.)

## **Advising Resources for Faculty and Students**

### Faculty

#### *Guides on Mentoring Graduate Students*

1. University of Washington's Mentoring Guide for Faculty: <https://www.grad.washington.edu/for-students-and-post-docs/core-programs/mentoring/mentoring-a-guide-for-faculty/>
2. National Center for Faculty Diversity and Development (NCFDD): <https://www.facultydiversity.org/rethinkingmentoringcwfwc>
3. Kerry Ann Rockquemore  
article: <https://www.insidehighered.com/advice/2016/10/12/how-create-effective-mentoring-program-your-campus-essay>
5. "A message for mentors from dissatisfied graduate students": <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03535-y>
6. Guide for mentoring graduate students: <https://rackham.umich.edu/downloads/how-to-mentor-graduate-students.pdf>

#### *Mentoring Students of Color and Non-Traditional Students*

1. Article on Mentoring Students of Color: <https://www.wpcjournal.com/article/view/20275>
2. "How to Support Students of Color in Academia": <https://www.bu.edu/ssw/mentoring-matters-how-to-support-students-of-color-in-academia/>

#### *Mentoring Templates*

1. Mentorship Agreement template example: <https://ictr.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/163/2016/11/MentorshipAgreementTemplate.pdf>
2. Mentoring network map: <https://advance.cc.lehigh.edu/mentoring-network-map>

### Students

#### *Mentoring Templates*

1. Mentoring Network Map: <https://advance.cc.lehigh.edu/mentoring-network-map>
2. Mentorship Agreement template example: <https://ictr.wiscweb.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/163/2016/11/MentorshipAgreementTemplate.pdf>

#### *Navigating Mentorship*

1. NCFDD: <https://www.facultydiversity.org/rethinkingmentoringcwfwc>
2. Sociologists for Women in Society mentoring program: <https://socwomen.org/mentoring-program/>
3. University of Washington's mentoring guide for students: <https://grad.uw.edu/for-students-and-post-docs/core-programs/mentoring/mentoring-guides-for-students/>
4. A Guide on Mentoring for Graduate Students: <http://www.rackham.umich.edu/downloads/publications/mentoring.pdf>

5. Managing your advisor: <https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/managing-your-advisor>
6. Article on mentoring students of color: <https://www.wpcjournal.com/article/view/20275>
7. “The Many Varieties of Mentors”: <https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/the-many-varieties-of-mentors>
8. Jessica McCrory Calarco (Chapter 2) *A Field Guide to Grad School: Uncovering the Hidden Curriculum*
9. NU Change of Advisor Form: <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/socant/change-of-advisor-form/>

## **Annual Reviews and GSAP**

All graduate students after the 1st year are required to submit an annual evaluation in the spring of each year to be reviewed and discussed with their advisor. The annual evaluation includes SGA assignments, coursework, publishing (in press, published, or under review), papers/works in progress, participation in academic conferences, fellowship and grant awards and applications, service and other academic accomplishments of the past year. Annual review meetings normally take place in January or February and the Annual Review Forms are due in mid-March. Student progress is discussed with the entire faculty at a spring GSAP (Grad Student Academic Progress) meeting and students will receive an email on their academic progress following that meeting.

Although each student will have a primary adviser, students are encouraged to develop working relationships with other members of the department as well — typically through coursework and field statements.

## **PROGRAM RULES AND REGULATIONS**

### **Northeastern Sociology PhD Probation Policy**<sup>2</sup>

The Graduate Committee (GC) monitors the performance of students to ensure that they are making satisfactory progress toward the PhD degree. The entire faculty of the Department discusses the progress and standing of all graduate students annually, usually in spring, at the Graduate Student Academic Progress (GSAP) meeting. Students will receive a letter from the Graduate Program Director (GPD) documenting their progress in the program as satisfactory, needs remediation, or unsatisfactory.

Sometimes unforeseen circumstances delay student progress. If you think you may be delayed in reaching an academic milestone, please speak with your advisor and the as soon as possible.

Students who have not defended their first field statement (FS) by June 1st of the second year will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress. If they have not defended the FS by the deadline, they will be placed on probation from the program and a timeline must be submitted by June 1, and approved by the FS committee and submitted to the GC for final approval. If no timeline is submitted, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

Students who have not defended their second field statement (FS) by March 1 of the third year will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress. If they have not defended the FS by the deadline, they will be placed on probation from the program and a timeline must be submitted by March 1 and approved by the FS committee and submitted to the GC for final approval. If no timeline is submitted, the student will be withdrawn from the program.

Students who do not have an approved dissertation proposal by September 1 of their fourth year will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress. If the proposal has not been approved by the deadline, they will be placed on probation from the program until the proposal has been approved. If not defended by October 15 of their fourth year, they will be removed from the program.

Students who have not defended their dissertation by April 10 of the fifth year and have not received approval of their planned timeline to degree from the GSAP will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress and may be withdrawn from the program.

Students who have not completed requirements after receipt of a Dissertation Completion Fellowship may be withdrawn from the program, unless documentation is provided as to why the dissertation was not defended during the semester in which the fellowship was awarded.

Students will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress and will be put on probation for:

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<sup>2</sup> Effective Fall 2023, policy approved by faculty 4/5/23

1. failing to make up incompletes within a year, failing to maintain a B average overall or a B+ average in Sociology courses for two consecutive semesters,

Students may be withdrawn from the program if they're not able to rectify the above by the end of the following semester.

A student who fails their FS defense or dissertation proposal defense will be offered a second chance to defend. Every effort will be made to support students preparing to retake these requirements. However, a student who fails to make satisfactory progress toward retaking any of these examinations will be considered to be making unsatisfactory progress and will be withdrawn from the program.

Students making unsatisfactory progress cannot serve as Instructor of Record in the Department. Under special circumstances they may be allowed to petition the GC for approval.

The procedure for withdrawal is as follows:

1. A notice of intention will be sent to the student by the GPD at least two weeks prior to a GC vote. During this time, the student may solicit support for continuation in the program from faculty members.
2. The GC will review the supporting statements from faculty and the appeals from the student in a scheduled meeting. The student may attend a portion of the GC meeting to speak on their own behalf. The GC, after review, will put the matter to a vote. Based on the outcome, the GPD will forward the recommendation to the Associate Dean of the Graduate School.
3. The GPD will notify the student of the outcome no later than one week after the GC meeting.

Faculty will be notified about students who are withdrawn from the program at the next scheduled faculty meeting.

### **Recommendations to students and advisors**

Students who believe they have chosen the wrong graduate program are urged to seek counsel early in residency.

As noted, the GSAP may also recommend that students whose work in the early phases of the program is beneath the Department's standards for the PhD leave the graduate program with an MA degree after completion of the required MA coursework. Such a recommendation is reached in consultation with the student, their advisor, and others familiar with their academic work.

### **Other possible reasons for probation:**



Students who have not maintained contact with their programs for more than one month may be put on probation at the discretion of the department.

The program will make a reasonable effort to contact the student to outline what actions must be taken to return to satisfactory progress. If the effort to make contact is unsuccessful and/or if the student continues to not make satisfactory progress, the student will then be withdrawn.

### **Field Statement Requirement<sup>3</sup>**

#### Traditional Field Statement and Publishable Paper Option

Ph.D. students are required to complete two field statements in their chosen areas of concentration. Students have the option to complete one of their two field statements as a publishable paper.

The purpose of the field statement is to demonstrate expertise in two established sociological subfields by indicating familiarity with their intellectual roots, developmental trajectories, key concepts, and classical and contemporary debates.

One of the two field statements must be completed as an extended literature review of 20 to 30 pages, double spaced (around 8,000 words). The field statement should demonstrate breadth of knowledge of the specified subfield, as well as depth of knowledge in a key debate or sub-topic within the field. Students should also identify a modest intervention in the field, which may include the use of a particular method, analytic framework, or set of theoretical concepts that the student believes may push the field forward or open up new areas of future research. Students may choose to fulfill both of their field statements using this model.

Students have the option to complete one of their two field statements as a publishable paper. The paper should conform to the specific conventions of a chosen sociological journal, approved by the committee. Although this format will be quite different from a traditional field statement, students writing publishable papers should also be able to demonstrate expertise in an established sociological subfield. Students choosing to fulfill the requirement in this manner must do so with the permission and active involvement of their committee chair and other members. The paper must reflect the student's independent work; papers produced collaboratively or co-authored may not be used to fulfill the field statement requirement.

Students are expected to complete the two field statements before writing the dissertation proposal – during the academic year or summer terms of years two, three, or four in the program. In the semester that students are planning to complete and defend their field statement, they should register for SOCL 8960: Exam Prep, with the committee chair listed as

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<sup>3</sup> Revised policy approved faculty meeting on 12/13/18.

the course instructor. By the time students register for SOCL 8960, they should have assembled their field statement committee, selected their topic, and completed most of the required reading. Once they register for SOCL 8960, students have one year to successfully complete and defend their field statement. If the field statement has not been defended by the end of the year, the student will receive an Incomplete (I) for SOCL 8960 and will be required to write a “completion contract” with their field statement chair. If the exam remains incomplete for two additional semesters, the grade will change to an F. Students will register for SOCL 8960 twice during their academic program.

At least one of the two subfields should be in one of the established concentrations of Northeastern University’s Sociology & Anthropology Department. The other field statement topic may also be selected from our established concentrations, but it may be another recognized subfield of the discipline. If it is not recognized as an existing section of the American Sociological Association, then students may petition the Graduate Committee for approval of the field statement topic. Students are expected to write field statements in the specific subfields that will be most relevant for their dissertations. The two subfields chosen for field statements must be distinct in order for the student to demonstrate expertise in at least two subfields of sociology.

Field statement committees must be chaired by a full-time faculty member of the Department. The student will work closely with their chair to define the scope of the statement, identify other committee members, and establish a timeline for completion of the field statement. In addition to taking SOCL 8960, students may choose to take a directed study with their field statement chair, however it would likely be more useful to take a directed study in the semester before registering for SOCL 8960. Students are allowed to take 2 directed studies over the course of their program.

Chairs of field statement committees are responsible to communicate with students and coordinate with other committee members in a timely manner, to expedite students’ successful completion of the written statements and advancement to candidacy. Chairs should be attentive to and communicate scheduling expectations and constraints, including availability during periods off campus and during breaks, with students and other committee members. Generally, chairs will be expected to respond to students’ work within a 2-week turnaround, if somewhat longer for detailed feedback.

Committees should be comprised of one or two other faculty members in addition to the chair. Students must have three faculty members on one of their field statement committees (chair + 2 additional members) but may have just two faculty members on their other committee (chair + 1 additional member). In addition to the chair, who must be a full-time member of the Sociology & Anthropology Department, one of the additional committee members must also be a member of the department. Students may have faculty members from outside the department (but within the university) on their committee as a third committee member.

Deviations from the stated committee composition (including requests for fewer than the specified number of members or inclusion of faculty from outside of the department) can only be made with a successful petition to the Graduate Committee.

All field statements must be defended by the student at an oral defense attended by each member of the committee (either in person or virtually) by the end of the semester in which they have registered for SOCL 8960. While oral defenses are not required to be public, students may invite classmates or other faculty members with the permission of the committee. An oral defense should last one and two hours. The purpose of the oral defense is for the student to articulate the key concepts and debates identified in the written field statement or publishable paper, as well as to defend the arguments made. The student should also be able to answer questions from the committee members and discuss how they will build on this work in their anticipated dissertation. At the end of the oral defense, the student will be asked to leave while the committee members confer about whether the student performed at a passable level on both the written and oral component in order for the field statement.

Students should bring to the oral defense a printed copy of the "[Field Statement Defense Results](#)" form, with the top part completed. Upon successful completion of the field statement, committee members will sign the form and the student will return it to the Graduate Program Administrator in order to get the Graduate Director's signature and to be included in their file.

Upon the successful completion of the two field statements, students admitted prior to Fall 2019 will achieve candidacy.<sup>4</sup> These students are expected to defend their dissertation proposal within six months of achieving candidacy. Deviations from this stated policy must be approved by the Graduate Committee.

#### Dissertation Proposal and Dissertation Requirements<sup>5</sup>

The culminating requirement of the Sociology Ph.D. program is the completion and successful defense of a doctoral dissertation, which is intended to demonstrate students' ability to produce original research or creative scholarship. The dissertation is overseen by a committee comprising a chair and three additional committee members. It must be defended in an oral hearing in which students will discuss the contributions of their research and respond to questions from their dissertation committees.

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<sup>4</sup> Revised 11/5/19 as per University guidelines - Effective Fall 2019, degree candidacy is achieved upon successful completion of a proposal defense.

<sup>5</sup> Voted and approved by the GC 9/11/19 and by full faculty vote on 10/30/19.

### Dissertation Committee

Students must assemble a dissertation committee consisting of a chair and at least three other members. The Chair of the committee must be a full-time or jointly appointed faculty member of the Sociology & Anthropology Department; one committee member must be an external reader from outside of the department. The purpose of the external member is to help expand the students' professional network and to enable the inclusion of perspectives that extend beyond those of the department's faculty. Students are encouraged to choose their external committee member in consultation with their dissertation chair. Of the two remaining committee members, at least one must be a member of the Department of Sociology and Anthropology (in addition to the chair). Any deviations to the committee must be approved by the Graduate Committee.

### Dissertation Proposal and Proposal Hearing

Upon composition of a dissertation committee, students must draft a dissertation proposal that contains the following elements

- Outline of the key research questions;
- Contributions to the literature;
- Theoretical framework;
- Proposed methods for data collection and analysis;
- A discussion of the project's intellectual merits;
- Timeline for completion; and
- Preliminary chapter titles.

Students are encouraged to model their dissertations on research grant proposals, utilizing the format required by the Social Science Research Council's International Dissertation Research Fellowship (IDRF), the NSF Sociology Program Doctoral Dissertation Research Improvement Grant (DDRIG) as well as NIH grants. The development of the dissertation proposal should be an iterative process, involving ongoing discussions with and feedback from the student's Chair and committee members.

Once the committee deems the proposal acceptable, the student should schedule the oral hearing of the dissertation proposal and submit the [Petition to Schedule Dissertation Proposal](#) form online. The student and all dissertation committee members must be present (in person or virtually) at the proposal hearing, including the external member of the committee. The hearing typically lasts between approximately 1 ½ to 2 hours. The student is responsible for coordinating communication among the committee members and scheduling the defense. The dissertation Chair is expected to preside over the proposal hearing. (If communication challenges arise, then the Chair can help the student facilitate communication and assist with scheduling.) While students are welcome to invite audience members to the proposal hearing (with the permission of the dissertation committee), proposal hearings are not required to be public events.

At the end of a successful hearing, all committee members must sign the [Dissertation Proposal Defense Results](#) form, which the student will return to the Sociology Graduate Program Administrator, along with an electronic copy of the dissertation research proposal. Electronic copies of proposals will be made available on the department Blackboard site if the student opts to post their Dissertation to the Graduate Student Resource Hub on Blackboard.

### Doctoral Dissertation

The content and structure of the dissertation should be developed in consultation with the Chair and members of the dissertation committee. Dissertations may take the form of either a monograph, book-style dissertation or a three-paper, article-style dissertation.

Traditionally, sociology dissertations have been written in a monograph style, with a single argument carried throughout the entire document. However, three-article dissertations are becoming more common in sociology. The particular format should be agreed upon by the dissertation committee, based on the format most suitable for the proposed dissertation research and the student's professional objectives. There may be certain research topics, research questions, and types of data for which a particular model is more or less appropriate. The dissertation format should be specified at the time of the proposal hearing.

If students choose to change format after the dissertation proposal defense, they must submit an amended [Petition to Schedule Dissertation Proposal Defense](#) form indicating the format switch. (Email verification of agreement is acceptable for non-local faculty and external readers — these should be sent to the graduate department administrator.) The form will be sent to the full committee to approve the format change. A new hearing is not necessary.

While it is understood that elements or even full sections from field statements or publishable papers may be included in dissertations, it is expected that these elements will have undergone significant revisions throughout the dissertation research and writing process. The dissertation committee will review and approve the use of duplicated material to ensure the integrity and originality of the dissertation.

### Monograph-Style Dissertation

A monograph or book-style dissertation has long been the norm for sociology dissertations. The monograph dissertation contains a series of related chapters organized around a coherent argument or central thesis. Early chapters typically include an extensive literature review which provides the basis and rationale for the research problem that is analyzed in subsequent chapters. A minimum of three empirical chapters is the norm for a monograph dissertation, although dissertations often include four or five chapters that draw from the students' empirical research. A concluding chapter summarizes the work and explores its broader implications and interpretations.

### Three-Article Model

The three-article dissertation is becoming more common in certain subfields of sociology. For dissertations conforming to this model, there must be coherence between the articles that make up the dissertation, and the rationale for grouping the three articles together must be clear. The three-article dissertation format is required to be approved by the student's dissertation committee at the proposal hearing.

The articles submitted for the defense must each be of publishable quality. It can also include articles that have already been submitted or even published prior to the completion of the whole dissertation. The dissertation committee will decide whether the articles meet the publishable standard. The question of authorship of the papers (whether the articles must be sole-authored or co-authored with the student listed as first author) should be determined by the dissertation committee. In addition to the three articles, dissertations using this format must have short opening and closing sections. The opening will provide a framing of the larger topic, the questions addressed in the three papers, and the broad themes that tie together the dissertation. Optionally, it can contain methodological details that are not otherwise addressed in the papers. It may also contain material on how the student developed their interest in the topic, and the routes they took to get there. The closing section will discuss the broader implications of the full dissertation project.

#### Oral Defense of the Dissertation

Upon completion and approval of the dissertation by the committee, students must participate in an oral defense of the dissertation, attended by all members of the committee (either in person or virtually). As specified by the Graduate Office, the student and at least two committee members, including the advisor, must be physically present at the defense. At least three weeks prior to the oral defense, students must complete and submit [Petition to Schedule Dissertation Defense](#) form online.

As per university policy, the oral defense must be held at least four weeks prior to the commencement at which the degree is to be awarded. Oral defenses of dissertations are public events, and they must be advertised publicly at least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense. Oral defenses typically last between 1 ½ and two hours. The purpose of the oral defense is for the student to articulate the contributions of the dissertation and answer questions from the committee. At the end of the oral defense, the student and audience will be asked to leave the room while the committee members confer about whether the dissertation is passable and what revisions, if any, are expected to be made before the final submission of the dissertation.

Students should bring to the dissertation defense a printed copy of the Dissertation Proposal Defense Results, as well as the [Graduate Approval Record](#) form. Upon successful completion of oral defense, committee members will sign the Graduate Approval Record form and the student will return it to the Graduate Program Administrator.

Dissertations must be formatted and submitted to the College according to the guidelines

specified here: <https://cssh.northeastern.edu/graduate/commencement/formatting-guidelines>.

### **Transfer Credit**

Course work completed prior to attending Northeastern University: Students who earned graduate credit at U.S. accredited universities other than Northeastern prior to acceptance into a departmental graduate program may petition to have credits counted toward degree requirements at the University. No more than 12 credits are permitted to be transferred.

To receive transfer credit, a student must submit a written petition, including the appropriate Credit Transfer Request Form, to the Graduate Program Administrator along with a course description, official transcript and course syllabus. A grade of at least a “B” must have been received in the course in order for it to be considered for transfer credit. Also, transfer credit is granted only for graduate course work that is deemed to be relevant to the student’s area of study and the course credits cannot have been used toward a prior degree. Final decisions for transfer credit are made by the Department Chair acting upon the recommendation of the GC.

Approval to take a course outside Northeastern University: Students wishing to take a graduate course outside Northeastern University must seek prior approval from the departmental director of the graduate program. A written petition, including a course description and syllabus, should be submitted at least four weeks prior to the beginning of the semester in which the course would be taken. The course must be deemed to be relevant to the student’s field of study. Only courses that are not offered within the Department or not comparable to those offered by the Department will be considered for transfer credit.

### **Directed Study**

A directed study is an individual reading and research course arranged between a student and faculty member. A directed study is an opportunity for more in-depth analysis of a particular topic, or the study of a subject matter typically not covered in the department’s curriculum.

Prior to the start of a directed study, the student should complete the Directed Study process. This will list required readings, writing assignments, and other work to be performed by the student, as well as the criteria for determining the student’s grade and amount of credits earned, which can be between 1 – 4 credits. This document represents a contract between the student and faculty member that clarifies the responsibilities and expectations of each party. The Directed Study form requires approval of the instructor, graduate program administrator, and College graduate office.

### **Course Waivers**

Waivers typically are granted only when you have taken a course or courses with equivalent content prior to matriculating at the Department of Sociology Ph.D. program at Northeastern

University.

**PROCEDURE:**

Contact the GPA for the form, obtain a copy of the syllabus for the course you have taken that covered content equivalent to the course you wish to waive. Attach a copy of the syllabus and your transcript showing a grade of B or better to the waiver form.

Provide the form, your syllabus, and transcript to your faculty academic advisor and obtain a signature of approval. Bring or email the signed form to the GPA, who will forward it to the Graduate Program Director for approval.

**Withdrawals**

In order to withdraw from a course, a student must officially drop the course through their Student Hub accounts. Students should be cognizant of deadlines published at the registrar both regarding when a course is dropped and when it is a withdrawal with a 'W' grade. Ceasing to attend class, or simply notifying the instructor of intention to withdraw, does not constitute an official withdrawal. Upon withdrawing or dropping a course students should consult with the Student Financial Services Office to determine the effect of the withdrawal on their student bill or financial aid.

**Incompletes**

The period for clearing an incomplete grade or for changing a grade other than an incomplete or failure (F or U) is restricted to one calendar year from the date it is first recorded on the student's permanent record. An incomplete grade may be reported by the instructor when a student has failed to complete a major component of a required course, such as homework, a quiz or final examination, a term paper, or a laboratory project. Students may make up an incomplete grade by satisfying the requirements of the instructor or, if the instructor is absent, the chair of the department. Be aware that instructors' policies on the granting of incomplete grades may vary and that the final decision on an incomplete grade is up to the instructor. To request an incomplete grade, the student must obtain and complete in consultation with the instructor an [Incomplete-Grade Contract](#) on which the precise agreement for clearing an incomplete grade is specified and which is signed by the student and the instructor. Copies of the form are kept by the student, the instructor, and the Office of the Dean of the college in which the course is offered. Any exception to this policy on change of grades must be recommended by the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) of the college in which the course was offered and must be forwarded in writing by the ASC to the registrar for implementation. (Finishing the agreed-upon coursework must be completed within one calendar year from the end of the term in which the course was offered.)



University policy states that any grade outstanding for 12 or more months cannot be changed. Any exception to this policy on change of grades must be recommended by the ASC of the college in which the course was offered and must be forwarded in writing by the dean to the Office of the Registrar for implementation.

### **Time Limitation**

For PhD students who achieve candidacy, there is a five-year limit for completion of the dissertation. Course credits earned in the program, or accepted by transfer, are valid for a maximum of seven years unless the GC grants an extension.

### **Commencement Clearance**

Students must initiate the commencement process by registering for graduation via your Student Hub. The process usually becomes available in the fall semester prior to the year in which the student plans to graduate. This will place your name on the commencement list and start the commencement process. Students should register even if there is a chance that all your requirements will not be completed in time to graduate on a specific commencement date.

Students are responsible for ensuring that all grades have been recorded, all incomplete courses made up, and that petitions forwarded to the department or to the College have been acted upon prior to registration for graduation clearance. The student's departmental file must also be complete with official transcripts from all undergraduate and graduate programs attended.

## **ACADEMIC RESOURCES AND FUNDING SUPPORT**

### **Graduate Certificates**

The Graduate Program in Sociology offers students enrolled in any of its degree programs the option to complete graduate certificates in Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies or Digital Humanities. For more information or to contact a certificate administrator, visit the [Women's, Gender, and Sexuality Studies](#) or [Digital Humanities](#) webpages.

The certificates' requirements will normally match those posted in the [Academic Catalog](#) for the student's year of entry. Students seeking a graduate certificate must complete the course requirements of the certificate prior to meeting coursework requirements for the primary degree program. Certificate coursework cannot extend beyond the point in time when degree requirements are met.

### **Intellectual Events Committee (IEC)**

### **Proseminar/Professional Development Workshops**

Every semester there are invited guest speakers in addition to Graduate Professional

Development workshops various Thursdays from 3 pm – 4:30 pm and Tuesdays from noon – 1 pm. All students with funding are encouraged to attend as these are part of a student's professional development and being a part of the department's community.

### **Stipended Graduate Assistantships**

A Stipended Graduate Assistant (SGA) is a graduate student who is given tuition remission, a stipend for financial support, and health insurance for work in an academic unit. There are two main types of SGAs: teaching assistants and research assistants. Additional SGA assignments are also given in the form of Fellowship Opportunities, see the next section for fellowship information.

A teaching assistant (TA) is a graduate assistant whose work primarily involves an instructional assignment. TA responsibilities vary greatly and may include, but are not limited to:

- Giving guest lectures on occasion
- Tutoring individual or small groups of students
- Holding office hours and meeting with students
- Administrative support for the course
- Assisting with the grading of homework or exams or written assignments
- Administering tests or exams
- Assisting a faculty instructor with a large lecture class by teaching students in recitation, laboratory, or discussion sessions
- Helping software users in a computer laboratory

A research assistant (RA) is a graduate assistant whose work primarily entails assisting a faculty member or members with academic research. RAs are not independent researchers and are not directly responsible for the outcome of the research. They are responsible to, and report to a research supervisor or principal investigator (PI). RAs' responsibilities vary greatly and may include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting literature reviews or library research
- Collecting, coding, cleaning or analyzing quantitative, qualitative, or textual data
- Conducting interviews
- Preparing materials for submission to funding agencies and foundations
- Preparing materials for IRB review
- Coding computer programs to automate processes
- Writing reports or designing conference presentations
- Organizing conferences or workshops
- Supervising other team members, including undergraduate research assistants

The graduate director along with the department chair and graduate program assistant (also known as the graduate leadership team-GLT) work collectively to assign SGAs in the semester preceding the one in which SGAs begin their duties due to college deadlines for course planning each semester. For example, for SGAs assignments in a fall semester, the GLT usually begins

discussing such assignments in mid-late summer. By early/mid-August (for fall) or early/mid-December (for spring), the GLT usually has completed and alerted faculty and SGAs of that semester's SGA assignments. However, sometimes due to late changes for the upcoming semester, SGA assignments may need to be modified. Some reasons or unanticipated circumstances may include: course cancelation, faculty member(s) receiving a grant for course release or to have an RA, or faculty or student-related emergencies or leaves due to medical or other reasons that make them unavailable or unable to teach a course or serve as SGA. In such unavoidable cases, the GLT will alert the faculty supervisor and assigned SGA or other relevant parties (e.g., a new SGA who may need to be reassigned) about those changes as soon as possible. However, in some cases, this can occur very close to the start of the semester without much notice. The GLT will attempt to provide additional support and resources as necessary to ensure a smooth transition and start to the semester under such conditions.

**Instructor of Record:**

As part of professional development and to receive more in-depth teaching experience, graduate students who have reached candidacy may request or be offered the opportunity to become the instructor of record for a course in Sociology or another suitable unit based on the course topic. Serving as instructor of record is valuable because it allows students to learn and implement the mechanics, process, and pedagogy for designing and implementing a course from beginning to end. Such preparation is important particularly for students who want to pursue an academic career. And for students who do not, the written and oral communication and organizational skills needed to teach a course independently are useful for working in non-academic contexts. This includes ongoing preparation that happens before and for the duration of the semester in terms of developing a syllabus, designing course assessment measures (i.e. exams, papers, project), meeting with students throughout the semester, and assigning final grades at the end of the semester.

Prerequisites for Being Instructor of Record: this would be included as part of section four

A student can be offered or requested to serve as an Instructor of Record under the following circumstances:

1. Advanced to candidacy (required)
2. Has TAed for a course with the same/similar topic for a faculty member for at least 2 times (preferred)
3. If extenuating circumstances arise such that a course of a particular topic needs to be taught in the dept for course enrollment purposes, but the faculty member who usually teaches the course becomes suddenly unavailable or unable to teach the course.

Should a student be offered or requested to serve as an Instructor of Record, they have the option to decline. The GLT will not assign a student to serve as an Instructor of Record without prior consultation or consent. Students are approached about serving as Instructor of Record the semester or two prior to the teaching assignment. The Instructor of Record is equivalent to a 20-hour a week SGA. If a student accepts serving as Instructor of Record, additional resources may be requested to assist in preparation for the semester. The student will consult with the GLT to determine what resources can be provided for this purpose.

### **Supervisory Roles for Faculty**

Faculty supervisors should treat SGAs with respect as colleagues-in-training. Faculty members should meet regularly with the SGAs they supervisor to discuss the collective goals for the semester in teaching or research, the SGA's progress toward these goals, and the ways in which the faculty member will support the student in achieving these goals. Faculty supervisors should serve as mentors, which entails explaining the course design and providing insight on pedagogical choices and teaching philosophy, research aims and project trajectories, and/or perspectives on department service.

When supervising TAs, faculty members should provide guidance and regular constructive feedback on all aspects of class lectures, grading, and other tasks of TAs.

Faculty members supervising RAs should provide guidance and regular feedback on all aspects of the work, including grant or fellowship applications, the IRB process, and conference presentations.

Both students and faculty are allowed one business day to respond to emails, and no response should be expected outside of business hours (9am-5pm). Email should be utilized as the primary means of communication between students and faculty, with personal cell phones being a secondary and optional means of communication.

In cases where the SGA is working for their advisor as either a TA/RA, the advisor should not include comments on TA/RA performance in the Annual Review/Advisor Meeting Form.

Faculty members should recognize that a graduate assistant's SGA responsibilities are only one part of a student's workload. An SGA should never be asked to skip a class or delay course assignments. An SGA should not be asked to provide personal services for a supervisor.

CSSH graduate administrators are requesting more detailed information on SGA performance on a semester basis. As a compromise, the graduate director has agreed to request feedback on SGA performance that will only be shared among the graduate leadership team for the purposes of making future SGA assignments. However, faculty supervisors can provide feedback on SGA performance at the end of the semester. The grad director will contact all SGA supervisors soliciting any feedback, particularly regarding unsatisfactory SGA performance, at the end of the semester. SGA supervisors can submit such feedback via email. If an SGA receives unsatisfactory feedback, the SGA will meet with the grad director. **If such a meeting occurs, the student should also be able to review the feedback and provide a response.** This feedback will only be reviewed by the department chair, graduate director, and grad program assistant and kept at the department level for consideration when making future SGA assignments. Such feedback will not be shared with the college unless there is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

#### **Dates of Employment and Weekly Workloads**

All graduate assistantships are either 10 or 20 hours per week beginning on the first day of classes and ending the last Friday of finals week. The work requirements for 10-hour TA/RA-ships are different and more limited than those of the 20-hour SGA assignments. 10-hour TA-ship should be reduced to the comparable duties of a grader (simply grading assignments, tests, and papers). SGAs on 10-hour TA/RA-ships will be holding two at a time, often split between two faculty members. This necessitates the need for coordination between both of the faculty members and the SGA over the appropriate use and sharing of the SGA's work obligations. SGAs should meet with both faculty members at the start of the semester and fill out a form (make a form) defining the work obligations for each faculty member.

The dates that a TA can be expected to work are regulated by the academic calendar. TA/RA duties begin on the first day of the semester and end on the last day of finals, in accordance with college and university-level policy. Although there may be weekly variation in the workload of a graduate assistant, the workload should not be too heavy or too light in any week. If the TA's assignment is connected to a course, the TA must be ready to start work by the beginning of the semester of the instructional assignment. This might involve a small amount of preparation before the start of the semester. When the TA is finished with all assigned duties for the course, no more work should be expected.

The dates that an RA can be expected to work are regulated by the payroll dates of the assignment and should be discussed and worked out before the assignment begins. SGA assignments should be 20 hours per week *for each week in the semester*. Therefore, SGA

assignments should not “bank” or “store” hours across the weeks in the semester. SGAs do not have to work on University Calendar-designated Holidays. For each holiday in a week, the SGA can deduct 4 hours per day from their 20-hour workload expectations. If there is one holiday day in a week, the SGA’s workload changes to 16 hours, if there are two holiday days in a week, the SGA’s workload changes to 12 hours, and so on.

### **University Policies and Additional Resources**

Graduate Assistants, faculty supervisors, and academic units are all subject to the rules and regulations of the university. These include, but are not limited to, Northeastern University’s policies on Sexual Harassment and Discrimination, the Student Code of Conduct, and the Graduate Academic Regulations. For a more complete list of regulations and resources about teaching and research, please visit the Office of Graduate Studies website.

### **Procedure for Grievances**

SGA appointments usually end at the end of a designated period of appointment. They may also be terminated at any time for reasons, such as for failure to perform the required duties of the position. But in the event that an appointee becomes ineligible for continued appointment through unsatisfactory academic progress, failure to maintain the minimum required credit hours per semester, or through failure to continue enrollment as a student, the appointment may be terminated at any time.

Efforts should be made to resolve concerns informally between the SGA and the Faculty Supervisor. But when issues cannot be resolved informally, the SGA and or faculty supervisor should raise the issues with the Graduate Program Director and/or Department Chair. The Graduate Program Director and Department Chair should be viewed as resources for both the SGA and the faculty member, and can be consulted at any time.

Employment disputes by SGAs are handled according to departmental review policies, recognizing the need for confidentiality, preserving trust, and acknowledging the power differential present in student-faculty relationships. The order of review for employment disputes is as follows:

- the faculty member employing the SGA;
- the Graduate Program Director;
- the Department Chair;
- the Associate Dean for Graduate Affairs

### **SGA Pay Schedule**

Stipended Graduate Assistants are paid the 15th and the last day of each month. If either of these days falls on a weekend day, the payday is the Friday prior.

## **Fellowship Opportunities**

Effective Academic Year 2020, CSSH will offer competitive semester-long fellowship opportunities to its full-time PhD students. These will include: [\(1\) experiential fellowships](#); [\(2\) fieldwork fellowships](#); and [\(3\) dissertation completion fellowships](#) (in partnership with the Provost's Office). The college anticipates awarding 1-3 of each type of competitive fellowship each semester.

Semester-long **experiential fellowships** will facilitate experiential endeavors for students interested in a placement with an external partner who is not able to otherwise financially support the student. Semester-long **fieldwork fellowships** will permit students to retain their stipend while they collect data or conduct fieldwork directly related to their own dissertation work. Dissertation completion fellowships are for students approaching degree completion and are awarded in what is expected to be the final semester.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

To qualify for the **experiential fellowship**, the student must have identified and secured interest from an external partner organization. For both the **fieldwork fellowship and dissertation completion fellowship**, the applicant must have successfully defended their dissertation proposal at the time of application. For the dissertation completion fellowship, the student should be in the final stages of writing/revising (this is particularly important given the Provost's Office's expectation of a successful dissertation defense in the term of the award).

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

1. Students will submit an application [here](#) (DCF applicants must also submit the required materials to the [Provost's Office](#)). It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure all required materials are submitted by the application deadline:
2. [Application](#) for the fellowship, specifying the type of fellowship and including sufficient detail about the opportunity and information about past and current funding from Northeastern or from external sources. Supporting materials should be emailed as attachments to [gradcssh@northeastern.edu](mailto:gradcssh@northeastern.edu) with the subject "CSSH fellowship application supporting materials"
3. If applying for an experiential fellowship, please provide a description of the opportunity and its connection to your research program and attach a letter of interest or intent from the proposed partner entity or organization (a copy of an email will suffice). Please send supporting materials to [gradcssh@northeastern.edu](mailto:gradcssh@northeastern.edu)
4. If applying for a fieldwork fellowship or dissertation completion fellowship, please provide a description of the current status of the dissertation with a detailed timetable for completion, a copy of the approved dissertation proposal, and evidence of IRB approval. Please send supporting materials to [gradcssh@northeastern.edu](mailto:gradcssh@northeastern.edu)
5. Letter of recommendation from the advisor that describes the importance of the work and includes a clear assessment of the feasibility of the proposed activity. Letters of recommendation for fieldwork and dissertation completion fellowships must include a

- statement about the student's timeline and likely program completion trajectory.
6. Letter of support from the Graduate Committee (and/or Graduate Program Director) evaluating the merit of the proposed activity and the fellowship application. The letter of support should describe the student's standing in the program and must include a statement regarding the feasibility of the student taking a fellowship semester (should one be awarded).

The letters of recommendation and support should be delivered in sealed envelopes to the graduate office (or via email to [gradcssh@northeastern.edu](mailto:gradcssh@northeastern.edu) with the subject "fellowship recommendation" and the applicant's last name).

### APPLICATION DEADLINES

June 15 (for Fall semester fellowships)

October 15 (for Spring semester fellowships)

February 15 (for Summer semester fellowships)

A college ad hoc faculty subcommittee will review applications and make recommendations to the Dean (or her delegate). Incomplete applications will not be considered. Notification of fellowship decisions will be sent to applicants and their advisors within approximately 30 days of the application deadline.

### **Travel Funding and Business Cards**

#### Travel Funding

The department supplies each PhD student \$500 in travel funds each fiscal year (July 1 –June 30) to enable students to present research or gain knowledge in venues that will provide professional development and visibility to enhance careers. Receipts should be submitted along with an expense reimbursement form, which the department can also provide. The PhD Network also allows requests for travel funding with a match from the department (up to \$500, your allotment for the fiscal year) follow this [link](#) for information on how to apply.

If students do not have any plans for travel, the \$500 funds can be used for other professional development purposes, ie. books, software, the department will need to approve the purchase before the purchase is made.

#### Business Cards

The department provides students the ability to order business cards for yourselves. Go [here](#), click Students, then Northeastern Business Cards, and follow the prompts. Students will need to pay for them initially (~\$25 for 100) and get reimbursed. Receipts should be submitted to Tracy Johniken at [t.johniken@northeastern.edu](mailto:t.johniken@northeastern.edu) along with an expense reimbursement form, which she can also provide.



## **Department Summer Research Funding**

The Steering Committee invites brief (2-3 page) proposals to support graduate student research every summer. Typical funding includes three types of proposals: (1) those that support fieldwork leading to development of a dissertation proposal; (2) those that accelerate completion of the doctoral dissertation.

The Steering Committee will judge applications on the basis of intellectual merit, likely impact (i.e., that will accelerate student's completion of the degree), and practicality (e.g., how well planned and manageable the project seems). Successful proposals should explain how the proposed research is relevant to scholarship in the discipline, outline a clear research strategy, and identify specific deliverables that will emerge from the proposed project (e.g., dissertation proposal, draft publications, conference presentations,).

Anticipated funding is approximately 5-10 grants, each of which may range from \$500 to \$2,000. Funds may be used to support fieldwork or to cover research-related expenses such as: travel (local or at a distance), data acquisition, software licensing fees, and printing and postage. As in the past, we will make a decision about whether to fund transcription only after we know more about the available budget and number of submissions. In other words, the committee views transcription expenses as a lower priority than other research expenses.

All proposals should provide:

- a brief review of the relevant research literature,
- a statement of the research question,
- a description of the data collection and analytic methods to be used,
- a brief timeline\*
- a draft budget indicating how the funds will be used
- the candidate's CV
- applicants should ask their advisers to send a substantive letter of support to Pamela Simmons (p.simmons@northeastern.edu).

Materials and funding announcement will occur in March of every year.

## **PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES**

Graduate students are encouraged to participate in professional associations relevant to their particular career goals. These associations publish a variety of journals; bulletins announcing local, regional, and national meetings, panels, calls for papers, and general reports; and newsletters containing short articles of interest, not to mention career advice and networking opportunities.

American Sociology Society (ASA): <https://www.asanet.org>  
Eastern Sociological Society (ESS): <http://www.essnet.org/>  
Society for Women in Sociology (SWS): <https://socwomen.org/>  
Society for the Study of Social Problems (SSSP): <https://www.sssp1.org/>

## **Additional Northeastern Resources**

The following is contact information for other Northeastern offices you may need to get in touch with as you transition to being a graduate student. You can find a full listing of Northeastern offices at <http://www.northeastern.edu>.

Office of the University Registrar  
<http://www.northeastern.edu/registrar/>  
271 Huntington Avenue Suite 276  
617-373-2300 or registrar@northeastern.edu

### [Northeastern Ombuds for Graduate Students](#)

Disability Resource Center  
[www.northeastern.edu/drc](http://www.northeastern.edu/drc)  
20 Dodge Hall  
617-373-2675

CSSH Graduate Student Academic Services  
[www.northeastern.edu/cssh/graduate](http://www.northeastern.edu/cssh/graduate)  
180 Renaissance Park  
617-373-5990 or gradcssh@northeastern.edu

Information Services  
<http://www.northeastern.edu/infoservices/>  
1st Floor Snell Library  
617-373-4357 or help@northeastern.edu

Student Employment Office  
<http://studentemployment.northeastern.edu>  
271 Huntington Avenue Suite 271  
617-373-3200

Student Financial Services  
<http://www.northeastern.edu/financialaid/>  
354 Richards Hall  
617-373-5899 or gradsfes@northeastern.edu

University Health & Counseling Services  
<http://www.northeastern.edu/uhrs/>  
1st Floor, Forsyth Building, 135  
617-373-2772 or [uhrs@northeastern.edu](mailto:uhrs@northeastern.edu)

Bookstore  
<http://northeastern.bncollege.com>  
4 Ell Hall  
617-373-2286

Campus Activities  
<http://www.northeastern.edu/csi/>  
434 Curry Student Center  
617-373-2642

Career Services  
<http://www.northeastern.edu/careers/>  
Stearns Building, Suite 103  
617-373-2430 or [careerservices@northeastern.edu](mailto:careerservices@northeastern.edu)

Center for the Advancement of Veterans  
<https://www.northeastern.edu/military>  
271 Huntington Avenue in Boston, MA 02115  
617-373-2392 or [nuvets@northeastern.edu](mailto:nuvets@northeastern.edu)

Office of Global Services  
<https://www.northeastern.edu/ogs/>  
405 Ell Hall  
617-373-2310 or [ogs@northeastern.edu](mailto:ogs@northeastern.edu)

University Libraries <http://library.northeastern.edu/>  
Snell Library  
617-373-2350

Office of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion  
125 Richards Hall  
Northeastern University  
Boston, Massachusetts 02115 617.373.2133

Mark Jannoni  
Assistant Vice President for University Equity and Compliance/Title IX Coordinator  
Email: [titleix@northeastern.edu](mailto:titleix@northeastern.edu)

Phone: 617.373.4644

Center for Advancing Teaching and Learning Through Research (CATLR)

215 Snell Library

Email: [catlr@northeastern.edu](mailto:catlr@northeastern.edu)

Phone: 617.363.3157

NU Writing Center

412 Holmes Hall,

Northeastern University, 360 Huntington Ave.

Boston, MA, 02115

Email: [WritingCenter@northeastern.edu](mailto:WritingCenter@northeastern.edu)

Phone: 617.373.4549