

San Diego State University
Department of Sociology

Graduate Student Handbook

2017-2018

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THE SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS

San Diego State University, founded in 1897, is the largest and most comprehensive of the 23 California State Universities and Colleges located throughout the state and one of the largest universities in the nation. With a total student population of almost 34,000, including more than 6,000 graduate students, it is a university offering excellence in all aspects of research and instruction. Sixty-two different master's degrees are offered along with 14 joint doctoral programs. Over 90 percent of the university's 1300 faculty members possess a doctorate or equivalent in their fields.

The campus is an example of a well-balanced environment for pursuing graduate education. The life of a graduate student is enhanced by a yearlong schedule of concerts, plays, theater, film series and athletics. Students have the opportunity to meet people from all states of the union and dozens of different countries.

The size of the sociology graduate program at San Diego State provides a close working environment for students and faculty. It enables students to pursue individual interests with faculty sharing their expertise.

Being located in San Diego makes San Diego State University an especially advantageous and enjoyable place to undertake graduate studies. The 300-acre campus lies on a mesa providing a commanding view of the surrounding community, with mountain ranges to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The mild climate and the ecological diversity of San Diego are unparalleled in the United States. This environment is further enhanced by a metropolitan area of more than one million persons, but without many

of the usual problems plaguing most large cities.

San Diego is the second largest city in California and the seventh largest city in the United States. It is the center for many cultural and scientific institutions, such as the Salk Institute, the Scripps Clinic and Research Foundation, the Old Globe Theatre, and an impressive collection of museums, music clubs, community arts organizations, and community theaters. The world famous San Diego Zoo, miles of beaches in use all year, and proximity to Mexico are some of the reasons for San Diego's growing popularity.

FACILITIES

The **San Diego State University Library** is a fundamental resource for the intellectual and academic goals of both the students and faculty at San Diego State University. The library holdings include over 1.4 million bound volumes (monographs and bound periodicals), 652,503 government documents, 4.4 million microforms, 136,976 maps, 11,436 sound recordings, and 5,477 linear feet of archival papers.

The Library receives 4,569 periodical and serial titles, excluding government publications. San Diego State University is also an official depository for United States and California government publications, and receives selected United Nations publications. The Library has automated acquisitions, cataloging, circulation, and serials control systems. Computer based bibliographic search services are offered in over 50 databases. The Library provides interlibrary loan through a direct link with several thousand other libraries. A new addition has been completed and has over

200 PCs, which make information products available to students, faculty, and staff.

The **Social Science Research Laboratory (SSRL)** offers a complete range of public opinion polling and survey research services, including sample design and execution, polling fieldwork, coding and data reduction, and data archiving and retrieval. The facility maintains a computer system to support faculty research. The SSRL also offers workshops and demonstrations relating to computer uses and applications.

The 12,000 seat Cox Arena, the Aztec Recreation Center, and the 3,000 seat Tony Gwynn Baseball Stadium were completed in 1997 and serve the campus and local communities.

THE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN SOCIOLOGY

The Department of Sociology at San Diego State University offers a graduate program leading to the Master of Arts degree in Sociology. Students who earn an M.A. in this program may go on to pursue a doctorate in Sociology at other outstanding universities in the United States or, more directly, into research, teaching, social services, or administrative positions.

The program is designed to equip the student for further academic study at the doctoral level and for pursuing non-academic careers, and the diverse research interests of the faculty reflect both objectives. Teaching plays a key role at the university and students have access to some of the finest teachers in the field. Students may have the opportunity to work closely with faculty in designing their graduate program, in completing coursework, and in pursuing research.

A number of faculty are nationally and internationally known in their areas of specialization. A Proseminar is offered (for new graduate students). It includes presentations by faculty members who discuss their teaching and research interests and projects.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/admissions/grad/programs/sociology_ma.html

PERTINENT WEBSITES:

Financial Aid for Prospective Students:

http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/financialaid/financialaidindexpage.aspx

Information on Graduate and Research Affairs:

<https://gra.sdsu.edu/gra/>

Sociology Department Homepage:

<http://sociology.sdsu.edu/>

International Students:

http://www.isc.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/isc/

All students must satisfy the general requirements for admission to the University. Admission to graduate study in Sociology requires that a student hold a baccalaureate degree from an accredited university. The student must be in good standing at the last college attended, and must have attained **a cumulative undergraduate grade point average of 3.0; as well as 3.0 for the last 60 semester units or 90 quarter units, and a 3.0 in Sociology courses.**

In addition to an Introductory Sociology and Introduction to Social Statistics, students seeking admission to the M.A. program in Sociology should have completed the following upper division courses in Sociology: **Sociological Theory and Research Methods**. These courses can sometimes be taken over the summer. Individual preparation over the summer under the supervision of a faculty member can substitute for the courses in some cases.

Applicants need not have completed an undergraduate major in Sociology in order to apply. However, it is important to have some basic coursework in sociology or closely related disciplines. Students whose preparation is deemed insufficient by the Graduate Committee may sometimes be admitted as conditionally classified until they have completed the prerequisites for graduate coursework. This coursework is in addition to the 30 units required for the degree.

Meeting all of the indicated criteria does not guarantee admission, since there are a limited number of places in the program.

Students applying for admission should submit an electronic application at Cal State Apply:
<https://www2.calstate.edu/apply>

You will need to submit original transcripts from ALL institutions of higher education and official GRE scores to Graduate Admissions.

Check this website for general university admission procedures:
<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/admissions/grad/index.html>

IN ADDITION to the materials sent to Graduate Admissions, the Sociology Department *requires* the following:

- **Three (3) letters of recommendation** (from those familiar with your academic work, preferably university professors).
- **A personal statement**
- **A writing sample** (preferably an academic paper – include a brief explanation describing the purpose, or context, for your paper). If this is not available, include an extended three to five (3-5) page personal statement.
- **A copy of your transcripts** (can be unofficial) to department (in addition to originals to the University)

Submit the above items via Interfolio:
<https://apply.interfolio.com/46803>

DEADLINES:

For the Fall semester, ALL materials must be received by March 1.

For Non-Tuition Resident Waivers: December 31.

International students living overseas and requiring a student visa should apply as soon as possible. Check the International Student Center:

<http://arweb.sdsu.edu/es/admissions/international/grad/index.html>

There are no Spring Admissions.

READERSHIP AND ASSISTANTSHIP POSITIONS

Contingent upon funding, and student qualifications, a limited number of

readership and assistantship positions are available. These range from 5-15 hours a week. Advanced graduate students receive higher consideration for Teaching Assistantships, whereas Graduate Assistantships and Readerships are open to all students. Applications will be sent to qualified incoming students.

Each semester students can apply for assistantships for the following semester. Students are not allowed to hold assistantships for more than four semesters.

RESIDENCY ISSUES – Out-of-State Students

There are an extremely limited number of Non-Resident Tuition Waivers, which DO NOT waive tuition entirely but reduce tuition to in-state levels. If a student applies by February 1 and is a strong candidate, the department will request a waiver from the university. However, keep in mind that the university provides very few waivers. Also waivers are available for only one year for US students and two years for foreign students.

In California, US resident students can acquire residency while they are attending the university (foreign students are not eligible). Therefore, if students follow all the proper steps they should not have to pay more than one year of out-of-state tuition. However, the determination of California residency is a complex interpretive process. The person seeking classification as a resident must **demonstrate their presence in California for one year prior to their registration as a resident as well as their intent to remain indefinitely in the state.** The California Education Code spells out the law governing residence determinations. **There is no one document that ensures a residency classification.** However, the

following documents are considered in making a residency determination:

- California Driver's License or California Identification card (one of these is necessary)
- California motor vehicle registration
- California voter registration
- Proof of opening date of a bank account in the state of California
- Proof of employment in California W-2 forms and California Income Tax forms
- Copy of a rental, lease or home purchase

Note that the dates to determine residency for these documents are very early in each semester. Please check with the university for exact dates.

Nonresident students wishing to declare resident status the following year must immediately act to create a record of California residency. Delay to do so is likely to result in a determination of non-residency and increased costs for your education.

San Diego State University determines student residency status within the Office of the Registrar. Should you have additional questions or wish guidance, please contact Paula (619)-594-4179 or pmcphillips@mail.sdsu.edu. Do not be misled by myth or misinformation!

The Graduate Bulletin is available in the Department Library.

OR

The Graduate Bulletin may be purchased at Aztec Shops, Ltd. on campus.

Steps Toward Earning a Master's Degree

Each of the following steps are sequential and mandatory. The following sections detail each step.

1. Apply for Admission to the University
 - a. Transcripts and GRE to University Admissions
 - b. Letters of recommendation, personal statement, copy of transcript and writing sample to Department.
2. Read the Graduate Bulletin and Consult Departmental Graduate Adviser
 - a. Register for appropriate classes in accordance with these consultations
3. Attain Classified Graduate Standing (if admitted conditionally)
 - a. Complete requirements and inform Adviser to change status
4. Submit an Official Program of Study
 - a. After half your courses are complete and before you Advance to Candidacy
 - b. You must do this through the Graduate Adviser
 - c. You must decide whether you are doing Plan A Thesis or Plan B Comp Exam (CE) option.
5. Attain Advancement to Candidacy
 - a. Choose a thesis topic OR Comp Exam field of study
 - b. Choose a chair
 - c. Develop a proposal (Thesis) OR Reading List (CE)
 - d. Have the Thesis Proposal Approval Form OR CE Agreement Form signed by chair and second committee member
 - e. Submit signed Proposal Approval Form or signed CE Agreement Form to Graduate Adviser to be advanced to candidacy
6. Apply for IRB Clearance if you are using human subjects or certain databases (check w/ IRB)
7. Submit a Thesis Committee Form to Grad Division (if doing Plan A)
 - a. You must be Advanced to Candidacy
 - b. You must have proof of IRB submission
 - c. Grad Division will then give you the code to register for 799A
8. Register for 799A (step 7 must be complete) if in Plan A or register for 797 (independent study) in Plan B

9. Conduct study and write thesis OR write essay and take written exam portion of CE by deadline
 - a. If this takes more than one semester must register in 799B for each semester until completed for thesis OR continue with independent studies for CE
 - b. Expect to write multiple drafts of thesis

10. Thesis defense OR oral exam for CE
 - a. Once chair has given preliminary approval and other members have reviewed the thesis you may schedule the defense OR all oral exams for CE's are done near the end of the semester according to schedule distributed by Grad Adviser each semester.

11. Submit thesis to thesis reviewer OR chair must submit CE Results to Grad Adviser to Report to Grad Division
 - a. Make sure thesis formatting is correct and check deadlines each semester (Plan A)

12. File an Application for Graduation
 - a. Must be done by deadline listed in academic calendar (usually third week of the semester)
 - b. Must re-do if not finished in semester expected
 - c. If you have filed your thesis at the very end of a semester and it is not approved, you must re-file for graduation the following semester but do not need to pay registration or tuition fees.

Sociology Department Home Page

<http://sociology.sdsu.edu>

Department's Graduate Program Page

<http://sociology.sdsu.edu/graduate/index.html>

Division of Graduate Affairs

<http://aztecgrad.sdsu.edu/gra/Default.aspx>

There is a great deal of important information on these websites.

Classified Status

The first official step on the road to the Master's degree is obtaining classified status. If you had a solid undergraduate training in sociology, you may have entered the graduate program as a fully classified graduate student. However, if you had one or more undergraduate course deficiencies or if you had not yet completed your B.A., you were admitted as a "conditional" student. Removal of the undergraduate course deficiencies is required for advancement to classified status. You should take these courses over the summer or in your first year. Also, it is your responsibility to notify the Graduate Adviser of your completion of these requirements so that the appropriate Change of Status form can be submitted to the Graduate Division. If your requirement was to finish your B.A., please bring the graduate adviser a copy of a transcript showing the B.A. was conferred.

NOTE: As a Graduate Student, you are expected to check your mailbox or student folder in the Sociology Office (NH 224) and your e-mail on a regular basis (be sure we have an up-to-date e-mail address).

Course Work for the Master's Degree

Required courses

Students must complete 30 units, which include the following:

- Sociology 600 (Proseminar)
- 601(Classical Theory) & 605 (Contemporary Theory)
- 607 (Advanced Quantitative Methods) & 608 (Advanced Qualitative Methods)

These core courses are designed to present the first-year graduate student with advanced materials in theory and methods. The Proseminar is an orientation and introduction to the Department and the Faculty as well as an overview of the profession of sociology. In addition, students are required to take:

- At least two of 700-level seminar courses (excluding Sociology 710 and Sociology 796)
- Those writing a thesis must take Sociology 799A (Thesis) at the end of the program.
- Those taking the Comprehensive Exam must take an additional 700-level sociology course that is NOT an independent study or special study. Sociology seminars, Teaching Sociology (710) and Field Practicum (Soc 796) fulfill this requirement.

Electives

The six remaining units are electives. These may include any 500-, 600-, and 700- level courses in the university. However, if the course is outside of the sociology department, approval of the Graduate Adviser is required.

The six units of electives can also include special (or independent) studies. There are a variety of ways of doing an independent study. Generally, the students must find a professor to oversee the study and both must agree on a reading list and what the student is to produce (a position paper, an annotated bibliography, a research paper, etc.).

Also, once you are fully classified you may take 400 level courses as 597 special studies. Of course, you need an instructor's permission for this, and it is expected that there will be additional graduate-level work required in the course.

Another option is taking 797 in order to develop your proposal or your comp exam bibliography. This is recommended the semester before you take 799A or take the Comprehensive Exam. The student should take 797 with a professor that has agreed to serve on his or her thesis or exam committee.

NOTE: Special Studies courses in Sociology (e.g. 597, 695, 796, 797, 798) must be taken from Sociology faculty in the Sociology Department.

Transfer Courses

The University allows up to nine (9) units of transfer graduate course work, subject to approval by the Department's Graduate Adviser and the Graduate Dean.

Satisfactory Progress

You must maintain a 3.0 average or higher in your program courses in order to remain in the program. If at any point your GPA falls below 3.0 you will be considered on probation and have one semester to raise your GPA back up to 3.0 or be dismissed from the program.

Program of Study

As you move through your coursework you will begin to build your program of study. The second major step on the road to the Master's degree is the filing of your Official Program of Study. This should be done when you have completed approximately half of the 30 units of your program. Generally, a good time is during the first few weeks of your third semester. Contact the Graduate Adviser to discuss your program and to submit it to Graduate Division.

The most common reasons for rejecting the Official Program are 1) listing more than 30 units and 2) failing to include all the "catalog requirements." Catalog requirements are courses that are listed as required in the annual SDSU Graduate Bulletin, such as the Core Courses and Thesis.

NOTE: Requirements governing the Official Program are those specified in the Graduate Bulletin in effect at the time the program is approved, not the semester in which you began your coursework.

If for some reason you want to change a course on the Official Program at a later date, it is a simple matter to fill out a one page form, "**Petition for Adjustment of Academic Requirements for the Master's Degree**," on the Grad Division website or with the Graduate Adviser. This form must be approved by the Graduate Adviser and the Assistant Dean of the Graduate Division. While it is very easy to change your Official Program, it is exceedingly difficult to change a catalog requirement listed in the Graduate Bulletin.

NOTE: If you do not register for main campus classes, you must file an official **Leave of Absence** Form. You can start the process from your Webportal page.

Advancement to Candidacy

The third major step is Advancement to Candidacy; this necessitates meeting requirements for both Graduate Division, and the Sociology Department.

In order to meet Graduate Division requirements, any undergraduate deficiencies or admission conditions must have been completed satisfactorily, i.e. you must be a fully “classified” graduate student. You must also have completed 12 units or more in courses listed on your Official Program with an average GPA of B (3.0) or better. You must have completed at least three core courses, none with a grade of less than B-.

Also, in order to meet Graduate Division’s deadlines, you need to be Advanced to Candidacy by the beginning of the semester in which you are enrolling in 799A or taking your Comp Exam.

In order to advance, you must have: either a Thesis Proposal Approval Form signed by your chair and second committee member and submitted to Graduate Advisor; or, CE Agreement Form signed by your two Comp Exam members and submitted to Graduate Advisor.

Master's Thesis (Plan A) Procedures

Thesis Proposal

1. Select a faculty member who will serve as your thesis committee chair. In consultation with him or her, you will develop a thesis topic and some ideas for other possible committee members.
2. When you have selected your chair, you will develop a **Thesis Proposal**. The proposal is discussed in detail below. You can do this under 797 during the semester prior to 799A.

NOTE: Although you may initially be working with the thesis chair, the Thesis Proposal Approval Form must have the signature of both the Chair and second reader. We strongly suggest that your outside reader also be familiar with the proposal.

3. When you have the required approvals and signatures, bring the proposal and Thesis Proposal Approval Form to the Graduate Adviser. These will be placed in your student file. The abstract will be placed on the Graduate Studies bulletin board.
4. The Graduate Adviser will then forward notice of your Advancement to Candidacy to Graduate Division or you may walk it over.
5. Next you must obtain a **Thesis Committee Form** from Graduate Division. This form must be signed by ALL committee members and the Graduate Adviser. You must attach proof that you have submitted your **IRB proposal if necessary** and file the signed Committee Form with Graduate Division.

NOTE: All student research involving human subjects (or some data sets, you must check with IRB about specifics) must be submitted for clearance to the IRB. When the committee is busy, clearance can take several weeks. Call IRB for specifics. Advance planning is essential. The website for the IRB: <http://gra.sdsu.edu>. A tutorial may be found here.

6. After all this, you are eligible to enroll in three units of master's thesis research (Sociology 799A). Only Graduate Division can provide you with the code to enroll and they will only do so once they process your thesis committee form. **Students must enroll in "799A" by the final day to add classes; there will be no late adds.** Be sure to check the last add day and allow for time to accomplish all the prerequisites.

Enrollment in 799A or 799B (Thesis Research Extension) is considered a full course load for student financial aid. For 799B, you may obtain a letter to this effect from the Graduate Adviser.

Students may register in 799B through SDSU, or they may chose to register for 799B through extended studies (Open University) at a reduced rate if it is the only course they are taking that semester (and if they are not working on campus). If they do not finish the thesis that semester, they must be enrolled in 799B every semester until they actually complete the thesis. Remember that 799B does not carry any unit value.

NOTE: See requirements for enrollment in 799B in University Graduate Bulletin. Also, be aware that if you enroll in 799B through Open University you will not be considered a current SDSU student eligible for financial aid, readerships, assistantships, etc.

Master's Thesis

All this may sound daunting, but an important and helpful first step is to buy the **most recent version** of the official thesis preparation manual, **SDSU Master's Thesis and Project Manual**. This is available at Aztec Shops Bookstore. It contains detailed information about who may chair or serve on thesis committee, as well as information about the rules for manuscript preparation.

Be aware of the deadlines and schedule your work accordingly. In order to guarantee graduation in a given semester, students must complete the thesis, defense and revisions and submit the thesis to the university thesis reviewer before the "no risk" deadline. Submitting the thesis before the last day of the semester allows the student to submit formatting changes the following semester and graduate the following semester without reenrolling in any classes. The student will only need to pay the graduation fee (again) for the semester in which they actually graduate. The graduation fee is due early on in the semester you plan to graduate.

The Graduate Dean provides an outline of the steps for completing a master's degree. See this website: http://newscenter.sdsu.edu/gra/images/masters_programs_procedural_steps.pdf. We give some guidelines on each step in the process below:

A. Master's Thesis Overview

1. A master's thesis is an essential component of the requirement for the master's degree. The purpose of the thesis is to demonstrate your ability to execute a professional-level sociological study. The skills required include:
 - a. familiarity with previously published literature on the problem

- b. formulation of a hypothesis or research question.
- c. specification of appropriate procedures or research design
- d. collecting or accessing relevant information or data
- e. appropriate analysis of materials
- f. appropriate interpretation of the results, conclusions and the implications of your study.
- g. effective written communication of this information in an appropriate style (ASA, Chicago, APA, or MLA C see Slade, Form & Style, 11th Edition).
- h. satisfactory oral defense of the work

Collection (or accessing) and assessment of thesis information or data can begin only after the thesis proposal has been approved in writing by the thesis chair, and Human Subjects clearance has been obtained.

- 2. The thesis chair and committee will ensure that:
 - a. the student develops a clear hypothesis or research question and a study design.
 - b. the student identifies the appropriate parameters, collects or accesses firsthand the study database, and conducts the necessary analysis.
 - c. when an existing database is used, the student independently identifies the dependent/independent variables and sample criteria before collecting the necessary sample data from the larger database.
 - d. for quantitative studies the variables must be operationally defined and the data must be collected systematically using acceptable sociological procedures.
 - e. Qualitative theses must follow an appropriate qualitative methodology.
- 3. The student, the Thesis Chair, and Thesis Committee members shall ensure that master's theses comply with Department policies.

B. Selecting a Topic

- 1. How? The following are some methods for narrowing your choices:
 - a. What area interests you?

- b. What sort of research is currently being conducted in the Department? See the listing of faculty research interests available in this brochure.
 - c. What topic is currently exciting the field?
 - d. What faculty project can you attach yourself to?
2. Survey the relevant literature in *Sociofile* by looking up key words. Often a computer search via *Soc Lit* (CD-ROM), JSTOR, PROQUEST, or other databases available in Love Library is very useful. Read articles in the current issues of the journals that show up most frequently in your search. Even the latest issues of abstracts or the most recent computer databases cannot include current articles. Besides, browsing in these journals can give you new ideas.
 3. If you are planning a quantitative thesis, take Soc. 607. If you are planning a qualitative thesis, you must have taken Soc. 608.
 4. Look over past theses. Ask staff in the Sociology office for access to these.

C. Selecting a Thesis Chair and Committee

1. Make an appointment to talk with your prospective thesis chair. Choose a faculty member based on: their area of interest and their familiarity with the methods you will be using. Feel free to consult with the Graduate Adviser in selecting a chair. Describe your ideas and ask if s/he will supervise you and, if so, what the general outlines and requirements of the project might include.
2. You must also have a second from the Sociology Department and a third member from outside the department. Description of the thesis committee and who is eligible to serve on it is detailed in the *Master's Thesis and Project Manual: SDSU*, available in the Aztec Shops Bookstore. You should purchase this document before you begin your Master's Thesis. Seek advice from your prospective thesis chair regarding who the other committee members might be. Final authority for approval of committee members rests with the Dean of the Graduate Division and Research.
3. Make certain you understand what the expectations are for all three of your committee members. You need to clarify these matters with your thesis chair and the other committee members. Often the chair will want to see your thesis chapter by chapter as you finish, whereas the other two may just want to see the entire draft once you have incorporated the feedback from your chair.

NOTE: You are strongly encouraged to meet together with all your committee members to discuss your thesis proposal after your chair has accepted it. Discuss this matter with your chair.

D. Thesis Proposal: General Considerations

The aim of the required thesis proposal is to spell out clearly what you propose to do for your thesis research study and why, so that you and your prospective committee members can discuss the details and arrive at definite decisions and agreement regarding the project. The thesis proposal is the device you will use to present your research proposal to prospective committee members in order to solicit their agreement to serve on your thesis committee.

Proposals are written in the future tense ("will") rather than the past tense ("was"). Write the proposal in journal article format, following the style of the current *ASA Publication Manual* (the Graduate Adviser has a supply of these) or Slade's *Form and Style, 11th Edition*. If there are some details or procedures you are uncertain about, include a discussion of the various ways you might proceed, indicating the pros and cons of each possible way.

1. **Title Page**
2. **Abstract:** The Abstract is a brief comprehensive summary of the project in approximately 150 to 200 words. State the problem, in one sentence if possible. Describe the subjects, specifying pertinent characteristics such as number or gender. Next describe the research procedure(s), including the data gathering procedures and the names of the tests or data gathering scales to be used, if relevant. Describe the statistical tests to be used, the interpretation of the various possible outcomes, and the implications. You will find it very difficult at first to condense your magnum opus in this manner. However, it is good practice, since submissions to most professional meetings and journals require such brief abstracts. In addition, it will help you to emphasize and clarify those basic elements that are at the core of your research.
3. **Chapter 1: Introduction:** Describe the general purpose of the study. What is the significance of your proposed research to the field of sociology and the world at large? Include anything else the reader needs to know to understand why the study is being done.
4. **Research Question:** What is the specific question (thesis, hypothesis) you propose to answer by your Master's Thesis research?
5. **Background:** You may need to give the reader some background on your topic to understand the full significance of the phenomenon you are investigating. (Could be a separate chapter if needed.)
6. **Chapter 2: Literature Review:** Describe the history of the topic, why it is of interest, and prior research findings. What are the major theoretical issues generating this line of work? What do you plan to do to extend the research in this area?

7. **Theory:** Which sociological theory or theories do you plan to use to help guide your research toward answering the research question you have posed?
8. **Chapter 3: Method and Procedure:** Describe exactly how you plan to do the project in as much detail as is currently practical. Include type and number of subjects, research design, materials and apparatus, details of procedure and anything else appropriate to how your particular research is to be done. Include a draft of any questionnaires or other such materials to be used as well as the formal feedback to be given to human subjects. If uncertain about exactly how you think some particular problem should be handled, include a discussion of the pros and cons of the various alternatives. How will you handle the data, and what statistical tests will you use, if appropriate? Which comparisons will be of particular interest? How will you analyze qualitative data?
9. **Chapter 4: Discussion:** How might the study turn out? What would it mean if it turned out as expected? What would each of the other ways it could turn out tell you? In what way could it make an important contribution to knowledge? What are the theoretical implications of the findings for each of the potential outcomes? (For a qualitative study a discussion prior to research may be inappropriate, please consult with your chair).
10. **References:** Include here the bibliography you have accumulated, following the ASA citation style.

NOTE: Developing a proposal is a critical step in your process through your program. Your chair and committee members may require numerous changes and modifications before approving it.

E. Thesis Drafts and Revisions

The thesis reviewer strongly suggests that you purchase and use the latest version of the *SDSU Master's Thesis and Project Manual* during the research and writing of the thesis proposal. It is also an excellent idea to make an appointment to speak with a thesis reviewer if you have any questions on formatting or style. The thesis review page at <http://www.montezumapublishing.com/thesis1/ThesisReview.aspx> includes a lot of useful information. Use the formatting template so that you do not need to redo all the formatting at the end.

In preparing your thesis, select **ONE** style guide, APA, or ASA (you may purchase an *ASA Style Guide*, 2nd edition from the Graduate Adviser). If you select the ASA guide, and it doesn't cover something, check an ASA-published journal article for guidance. If these ASA resources leave particular questions unanswered, use the Chicago manual as backup for style and formatting questions.

Various drafts of the thesis may be required by the thesis chair and/or committee members. The student must allow *at least two weeks* for faculty responses to drafts. Note also that committee members may well respond to a draft with requests for significant revisions and alterations. Several drafts and revisions of the thesis may well precede the completion of an acceptable final draft of the thesis. In order to minimize problems and disappointments, know your deadlines, plan ahead for sufficient draft reviews and revisions, and keep your committee members advised of your desired schedule.

It is advised that students set up a schedule with their chair, working backwards from the final university deadlines.

F. Thesis Defense

After each member of your thesis committee is satisfied that your thesis is in good enough shape for the final oral exam you should:

1. Consult the committee and then schedule a room and time for the exam with the Department of Sociology Administrative Support Assistant. The Department's conference room, NH 229, is traditionally used for this purpose. You must reserve this room at least one week in advance of the defense of your thesis. Remember also to schedule your oral defense of the thesis at least two weeks before the Graduate Division's "at risk" deadline (see below) if you want to be certain you graduate in that semester.
2. Thesis defenses are to be scheduled on campus at reasonable times during regular working hours.
3. The thesis is not to be signed by the committee prior to the defense.
4. All thesis committee members are expected to be present for the thesis defense of the candidate. If any member is on leave and unavailable, a substitute may be selected by the chair and the candidate.
5. Waiver of the thesis defense will be granted only in rare cases of extreme hardship and only with the approval of the Graduate Committee.
6. Passage of the thesis defense is determined by unanimous vote of the thesis committee.
7. After you have passed the oral defense, your thesis chair will make a copy of the signed signature page. The signature page may be signed at the defense or later if there are still changes to be made. **Be sure to give a copy of this page (signed by all members) to the Graduate Adviser to be placed in your folder.**

G. Thesis Review

Next, your thesis should be typed in just-about-final form, incorporating all changes suggested by your committee during the oral exam. If you decide to use a professional formatter, we strongly recommend one who is familiar with the SDSU Sociology Thesis format. **Helpful templates will aid students in formatting their own thesis. Periodically, there are thesis template workshops.** See: <http://www.montezumapublishing.com/thesis1/Formatting.aspx>.

Before submission of your final draft to Thesis Review Service, take a copy of the signature page and a copy of the title page to Graduate Division. They will issue you a Thesis Clearance Sheet verifying that you have an almost-final copy. This takes about 5 minutes. After this, take the complete thesis, the original title page, the original signature page, and the abstract to the Thesis Reviewer.

Check: <http://www.montezumapublishing.com/thesis1/ThesisDeadlines.aspx> for detailed information.

Deadlines are considerably earlier than the end of the semester so plan accordingly.

NOTE: It is an academic tradition for the student to make an extra copy of the thesis for the Department of Sociology library.

If you submit your thesis to the Thesis Review Service during the "at risk" period (call for specific dates), the critiquing/printing procedures may not be done in time for the desired graduation period. However, as long as your thesis has gone to the Thesis Review Service, the Graduate Division considers it complete, and it will not be necessary for you to re enroll in the subsequent semester. However, you may not graduate until the following period.

A two-page summary of the procedures necessary to earn a master's degree is available in the Graduate Division and Research office, SSE 1410. You may also find it at http://newscenter.sdsu.edu/gra/images/masters_programs_procedural_steps.pdf.

The deadlines for filing for graduation, and for filing the thesis manuscript, change each semester. The dates are published in each semester's Class Schedule and the Graduate Bulletin.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taken very seriously by the Department and the University and can result in failing classes, suspension and even expulsion. See University guidelines (including definition and policy) regarding plagiarism (Source: SDSU General Catalog, Bulletin of the Graduate Division, and Announcement of Courses).

Also: SDSU Policy File: <https://newscenter.sdsu.edu/universitysenate/policyfile.aspx>

Comprehensive Exam (Plan B) Procedures

Exam Committee and Content

Students electing to pursue Plan B in their program of study rather than writing a thesis should begin the process by selecting an exam area from the list provided. The student should then form a CE committee by selecting two faculty members from those listed for that area. The two members are responsible for supervising the Exam (see below for more detail). Both members of the committee must be on the faculty of the Sociology department. Visiting or Part-time faculty may serve as appropriate and as approved by the Graduate Adviser, although the committee must include at least one full-time tenure/tenure track faculty members.

The student is required to have taken a course in the given area of study. This course could have been taken during their undergraduate degree or be taken in the graduate program as either: an undergraduate course taken for graduate credit (597), a graduate course (500-700 level), or an independent study (preferably with a committee member).

The student must have taken an additional 700 level course (not an independent study) during their time in the program (either a seminar or 796). The students may sign up for 797 or 798 during the semester of the exam but this will not fulfill the additional course requirement.

The Comp Exam consists of three parts: the Written Test, the Essay, and Oral Defense. The content and format of the Comp Exam will depend upon a contractual agreement that the student develops with the first and second committee members. In each case, the student should work to put together an appropriate bibliography of content for which s/he will be responsible in that field of study and have this content amended as necessary and approved by the committee member grading that portion of the exam. *This bibliographic work must be completed: 1) prior to gaining committee members' signatures on the exam form, and 2) prior to the semester in which the student plans to take the exam.* Once the bibliography is complete, the CE Agreement form should be signed by the committee members and submitted to Graduate Advisor.

Exam Format

The configuration of the exam will depend upon the agreement the student makes with each of the two committee member. The **Written Test** is designed to evaluate the student's knowledge of the "breadth and core concepts" of their chosen area of study. The **Essay** is designed to evaluate the student's in-depth knowledge of the seminal debates in their chosen area of study.

Written Test

Written tests can either take place at home with an open-book format, or take place on campus in a closed-book format, as per the agreement with each examining committee member. Open-book test should each be completed within 72 hours. Closed-book tests should each be completed within 4 hours (at a pre-arranged computer on campus). To receive

a “pass,” written test must include a comprehensive review of appropriate literature and a cogent discussion in response to the questions assigned. Dates of the tests will be scheduled each semester in accordance with the university schedule for exam completion.

Essay

An analytical essay should be 20-30 pages. The essay may take various forms including but not restricted to the following: a position paper, a literature review, a syllabi with an analytical justification for its content, or a research paper with a research question and empirical data. The product must be analytical in content, including a comprehensive review of appropriate literature and a cogent discussion of the topic; a purely descriptive account or narrative would be insufficient. The student must confer with the supervising committee member about the essay content and structure during the time s/he is writing. The essay will be due in the department office on the first day of the written exams. Failure to complete the essay by that date constitutes failure for the essay segment of the comprehensive exam.

Oral Defense

An oral defense is mandatory. **Both committee members must attend.** Students are responsible for arranging in advance the date and time of the oral defense within the period specified as Oral Exam Period, in conjunction with their committee chair. The exam (both essay and written test) materials will be provided to both committee members prior to the oral.

Repeat Exams

Students who fail in one or both aspect of the exam may re-take that segment in a subsequent semester. Only one re-take will be permitted. There is no oral defense on repeat exams. Students who fail twice on any portion of the exam will not be awarded the MA.

No comprehensive examinations will be offered during the summer semester.

Schedule

- Exam week is around the third to last week of classes.
- Orals exams are given between the last week of classes and the beginning of finals period.
- After the oral exam, the CE committee must fill out CE Evaluation and submit it to the Grad Advisor, two days before the date set by Grad Division.
- The student also should fill out Report of Final Exam with the Grad Advisor and submit it to Grad Division.

Exams should be completed within one year of completion of all course requirements.

Role of the Chair:

The chair will have the following duties in addition to serving as a committee member:

- 1) Ensure that the student is making satisfactory progress.
- 2) Provide a consistent connection between the department and the student (although the student should consult with each member on their segment).

- 3) Take charge of filling out the paperwork at the orals and filing the evaluation with the Graduate Adviser.

Comp Exam Areas and Faculty:

Areas	Faculty
Criminology	McCall, Liu
Culture/Media	Kim, Roberts
Demography	Ojeda, Beck, Gibbons, Marcelli
Education	Choi, Semm, Beck
Family	Ojeda, Lui, Beck
Gender	McCall, Kim
Globalization	Choi, Semm, Roberts
Health	Beck, Gibbons, Marcelli
Immigration	Esbenshade, Kim, Marcelli
Political Sociology/Social Movements	Choi, McCall, Johnston, Roberts
Race	Esbenshade, Choi, Gibbons, Kim, Johnston, Roberts
Stratification/Class	Esbenshade, Beck, Gibbons, Marcelli, Roberts
Theory	Choi, Semm, Roberts
Urban	McCall, Gibbons, Roberts

**CURRENT FULL-TIME SOCIOLOGY FACULTY AND
THEIR SPECIAL AREAS OF EXPERTISE
(Area Code is 619)**

BECK , Audrey N., Assistant Professor (Ph.D., Duke University) Health, Stratification, Family, Education, Demography, Immigration, Research Methods, Statistics	594-1321 NH 214
CHOI , Jung M., Associate Professor (Ph.D., York University – Toronto) Race/Ethnic/Minority Relations, Social Organization, Political Sociology	594-1319 NH 204
ESBENSHADE , Jill, Associate Professor (Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley) Labor, Immigration, Public Policy, Race, Global Economy	594-5519 NH 221
GIBBONS , Joseph, Assistant Professor (Ph.D., University of Albany, State University of New York) Urban Sociology/Organization, Race/Ethnic Relations, Health Disparities, Spatial Analysis	594-1859 NH 217
JOHNSTON , Hank, Professor (Ph.D., University of California San Diego) Social Theory, Social Movements and Collective Action, Ethnicity, Social Psychology, Mobilization Processes	594-1323 NH 220
KIM , Minjeong, Associate Professor, Graduate Adviser (Ph.D. University of Albany, SUNY) Gender and Sexuality, Masculinities, Family in International Migration, Asian American Studies and the Media	594-5463 NH 215
LIU , Ruth X., Professor (Ph.D. Texas A&M University) Criminology and Deviance, At-Risk Youth, Quantitative Methods Social Psychology	594-6995 NH 222
MARCELLI , Enrico A., Associate Professor (Ph.D., University of Southern California) Urban Sociology, International Migration, Health, Demography	594-5459 NH 219

McCALL , Michael M., Associate Professor (Ph.D., Washington University in St. Louis) Criminology, Group Decision Making, Gender, and Formal Methodology	594-5457 NH 216
OJEDA , Norma, Professor, Department Chair (Ph.D. University of Texas at Austin) Demography, Family, Reproductive Health, Gender, U.S.-Mexico Border Studies	594-1320 NH 223
ROBERTS , Michael J., Associate Professor, Undergraduate Advisor And Advisor for Alpha Kappa Delta (AKD) (Ph.D., City University of New York, University Center and Graduate School) Social Theory, Labor Studies, Popular Culture, Critical Theory, Social Movements, Sociology of Music	594-4245 NH 213

NOTE: If you are unable to reach a professor by using his or her direct office telephone number, please call (619) 594-4826; the office staff will take your message and place it in the professor's mailbox.

RECENT THESIS TOPICS (2010-2016)

2016

Haroutun Bursalyan

Using chess as a tool for progressive education

Kathryn M. Durant

The maker movement and 3D printing: a critique

2015

Lisa Marie Riccardi

The last sprinkle of magic : the staging of a real illusion of Disney theme park performers

Joseph Douglas Sly

Understanding terminology: how race and ethnicity are used and conceptualized

Sandy Somo

Work-life balance and policies among tenured/tenure-track professors in California public institutions of higher education

Jarrett Robert Rose

Blowback : the American military empire, “free-market” globalization, the Iraq Wars, and the rise of Islamic State

Ankit Ahlawat

GIS tool showing cultural impacts on the United States from immigration

2014

Matthew A. Haulman

Trends and correlations of hate crime reporting in the United States

Sarah Meghan Lee

The sociology of photojournalism : the adoption of video by newspaper staff photographers

Tiffany M. Ulmer

The "anchor baby hypothesis": the link between fertility, legal status, and permanent settlement

Jimmy Talamantes

Cashing in on the discourse of liberation: how the commodification of art debases expressions of resistance

Lea T. Marzo

Challenging boundaries : exploring academic success and marginal identities

Helga Hiim Staalhane

A critique of the au pair scheme in Norway in light of neoliberalism

Gina L. Spidel

Gender expression: a qualitative study of the reflections of recent LGBT high school graduates' experiences

Roberto Danipour

Marx on alienation and freedom a reinterpretation of the economic in the social

Karina A. Russ

The surveillance network

2013

Jane G. Gonzales

Art and the anti-Vietnam war movement

Carolina Valdivia Ordorica

DREAM ACTivism : college students' offline and online activism for undocumented immigrant youth rights

Kelly S. Meehan

Gender variant neologisms

Stacey Bryley Livingstone

Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness : Latina/o Iraq veterans' articulations of identity and citizenship in the contexts of service and war

Marisa D. Salinas

Mestizas in the Academy : Latina faculty and the negotiation of their personal and professional lives

Timothy D. Bolin

Overcoming oppression : praxis and the ethics of "the other"

Susan Phay

Traditional Southeast Asian funeral practices a study of cultural maintenance, environmental adaptations, and effects of western funeral practices in the United States

2012

Sherry M. Shopoff

Sacred comedy : reconciling religion and humor

Alexa Elizabeth Megna

"Comrades in the struggle" a qualitative exploration into the lives of men who participate in LGBTQ activism programs

Lauren M. Tracey

Finding forever homes a qualitative study on the experiences of foster parents in San Diego County

Jelena Postic

Gender at the intersection of feminist and queer organizing in the post-Yugoslav context

Venoosheh Khaksar

Indigenous resistance to neoliberal globalization the struggle to just be

Amy Renee Guidry

Kara Thrace and her special destiny a qualitative content analysis of the character Kara "Starbuck" Thrace in the television series Battlestar Galactica

Lyndsey Brooke Reynolds

Mining conflicts in Peru exploring the ramifications of the neoliberal order

Molly R. Hansen

Sleep behavior and happiness among Brazilian and Dominican migrants

Tasha Iglesias

Union staff unionization

Stephanie Alyson Laufenberg

"When did Facebook become my girlfriend?" gender and self-presentation on Facebook

2011

Ryan Michelle Fawcett

Sustainability in higher education : developing a community college course

Mariko Ono

Critical perspectives on the current educational system in Japan and alternative education creating ethical and democratic society

Tashina J. Vavuris

Education and ethics of peace the missing link in life

Christopher Sangalang Vito

Hip-hop manifesto an analysis of Immortal Technique through a theoretical lens

Yushan Zhong

Parental roles and children's socialization in Mosuo's matrilineal family

Jessica Lyn White

What sociology teaches us about gender the underlying messages within
introduction to sociology textbooks

2010

Heidi L. Strasser

Conceptions of family in social work education

Christine Anna Payne

The domination of objects for the liberation of subjects revisiting the Dialectic of
the enlightenment

Nicole M. Rangel

Restoring that which makes us human : facilitating student healing through
education

Chad Joseph Smith

Surfing and social theory the significance of surfing and its social contexts

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