

Department of Sociology
East Carolina University
Graduate Student Handbook
2023-2024

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Introduction

This handbook is intended to help students navigate the requirements for a Master of Arts in Sociology degree at East Carolina University. It is a supplement to the [University Graduate Catalog](#). Each student is responsible for the contents of this handbook and to take initiative to make timely progress to graduation. Additional information is available in the [ECU Graduate Program Directors & Coordinators Handbook](#).

Graduate Faculty and Research Areas

The following faculty members are eligible to teach graduate courses and to serve on, and chair, thesis and practicum committees.

Colin Campbell	Quantitative methods, Poverty, Sociology of Education, Stratification
Mamadi Corra	Social Structure, Inequality, Stratification, Race and Ethnic relations, Immigration, Social Psychology, Theory
Bob Edwards	Social Organization of inequalities, Social Movements and Protest Politics, Environment, Organizations
A.J. Jacobs	International Development, The Automobile Industry, Urban and Regional Development Dynamics
Arunas Juska	Agrobusiness, Post-Communist Transformations, Theory, Environmental Issues
Melinda Kane	Social Movements, Stratification and Inequality, Gay and Lesbian Politics, Gender, Political Sociology
Sitawa Kimuna	Gender-Based Violence, Population Dynamics, Sexual and Reproductive Health, Aging in Sub-Saharan Africa, Immigration, Race and Ethnic Relations
David Knox	Relationships, Marriage, Family, Sexuality
Kristen A. Myers	Intersectionality, Gender, Race and Ethnicity, Work and Organizations, Sexualities
Susan C. Pearce	Culture and Politics, Ethnicity, Immigration, Gender, Collective Memory, Social Movements
Rebecca Powers	Stratification and Inequality, Immigration, Work and Organizations
Chaniqua Simpson	Race, Class, Gender Inequality, Social Change and Social Movements, Food and Environmental Inequality, Qualitative Methodology, Intersectionality, Black Feminist Theory and Methodology, Pedagogy

Dmitry Tumin	Quantitative methods, Health, Family, Stratification and Inequality
Yan Zhang	Medical sociology, family demography, aging & life course, gender & sexuality

Course Requirements

The following courses are required for all students across all options:

Required Courses

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
SOCI 6459	Modern Sociological Theory	3
SOCI 6488	Research Methods and Design	3
SOCI 6212	Social Statistics	3
SOCI 6213	Social Statistics Lab (simultaneous semester with 6212)	0
SOCI 6312	Multivariate Techniques and Analysis	3
SOCI 6313	Multivariate Techniques and Analysis Lab (simultaneous semester with 6313)	0
SOCI 6001	Sociology Pro-Seminar Series	1
SOCI 8000	Portfolio for Comprehensive Assessment	0

Electives

All students must take two graduate-level Sociology electives (at 5000 or above) at 3 credits each (6

hours) and two graduate-level electives in Sociology or another department (6 hours).

All courses taken outside of department must be approved by the Graduate Director. A minimum of 6 (12 for the extended coursework pathway discussed below) elective credits must be taken in Sociology, and a maximum of 12 credits may be taken outside of the department. This requirement may be waived in special circumstances. For instance, more elective courses outside of the department may be taken if they are part of a second graduate degree or certificate program. However, students must have completed 18 course credits in Sociology (not including thesis), along with a Teaching Mentorship, if they wish to teach an undergraduate course in the department. (Student teaching is subject to approval by the Department Chair, Graduate Director, and Undergraduate Director. See Appendix J).

Subject to Graduate Director approval, the independent study course SOCI 6523, *Readings in Sociology*, may be substituted for up to a maximum of two electives (six credits). Independent studies outside the department are not acceptable as a substitute for grad electives.

Appendix A contains a list of Sociology (SOCI) elective courses. Descriptions are available in the [Graduate Catalog here](#).

Capstone Coursework

Upon completion of these 24 credit hours (required courses plus electives), students choose *one* of the following three capstone options *or* extended coursework:

- 1) Thesis hours (6 credit hours): Completion of an independent MA thesis. Recommended as preparation for a PhD program.
- 2) Applied Social Research Practicum (6 credit hours)
- 3) A Teaching Practicum (6 credit hours plus teach one section of an undergraduate Sociology foundations course)
- 4) Extended coursework (12 graduate-level electives in Sociology or another department)

Sample Course Schedule

The table below offers a typical schedule for a full-time student who begins in the fall semester. Schedule will vary if student begins in the spring semester, attends part-time, and/or takes summer courses. The department's elective offerings vary from year to year; therefore, the chart indicates "TBD," or "To be determined." All electives, whether in Sociology or another discipline, must be at the level of 5000 or above. Any elective taken outside of the Sociology department must first be approved by the Director of Graduate Studies in Sociology.

YEAR 1 FALL SEMESTER		
Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours
SOCI 6001	Sociology Pro-Seminar Series	1
SOCI 6212	Social Statistics	3
SOCI 6213	Social Statistics Lab	0
SOCI 6488	Research Methods and Design	3
SOCI Elective	TBD	3
YEAR 1 SPRING SEMESTER		
SOCI 6312	Multivariate Techniques and Analysis	3
SOCI 6313	Multivariate Techniques and Analysis Lab	0
SOCI 6459	Modern Sociological Theory	3
SOCI Elective	TBD	3
YEAR 2 FALL SEMESTER (CHOOSE 1 CAPSTONE OR EXTENDED COURSEWORK)		
SOCI 7000	Thesis Hours	3
<i>Or</i> SOCI 6992	Practicum (Applied Social Research) with Mentorship	3
<i>Or</i> SOCI 6992	Practicum (Teaching) with Mentorship	3
<i>Or</i> Elective	Extended Coursework (SOCI or other)	3
<i>Plus</i> Electives	(SOCI or other)	6
YEAR 2 SPRING SEMESTER (CONTINUATION OF CAPSTONE OR EXTENDED COURSEWORK)		
SOCI 7000	Thesis Hours	3
<i>Or</i> SOCI 6992	Practicum (Applied Social Research) with Mentorship	3
<i>Or</i> SOCI 6992	Practicum (Teaching) with Mentorship	3
<i>Or</i> Electives	Extended Coursework (SOCI or other)	9
SOCI 8000	Portfolio	0

Portfolio (for Comprehensive Assessment)

All students are required to submit a portfolio for comprehensive assessment at the close of the final semester of their program of study. The portfolio will specifically be an electronic repository of items completed during students' tenure in the MA program (e.g. a completed thesis or practicum, class papers or projects, papers or posters presented at conferences, published articles, research reports, etc.). Although the portfolio is course number SOCI 8000, students do not enroll in this course and it carries no credit hours. The Graduate Director posts the Portfolio grades under this course number.

- Grading scale for each portfolio: “Exceeds Expectations,” “Meets Expectations,” and “Does not Meet Expectations.”
- Consequences of failure to meet expectations: The student must revise and resubmit the portfolio no later than the end of the following semester. The revised portfolio must address issues noted by the evaluators.
- A second “Failure to meet expectations” grade on the portfolio will result in the student’s termination from the MA program.
- The portfolios will be graded by members of the Sociology Graduate Studies Committee.

Degree Options

Thesis Option

(31 Credits)

The Thesis, a requirement of the *Preparation for Doctoral Studies* option, consists of a student research project and document intended to replicate the sociological research process, from beginning to end.

When ready to begin the thesis process (ideally prior to the close of the second semester of graduate study), the student should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies to choose a committee chair. The Thesis Committee Chair must be a:

- 1) Tenured or tenure-track faculty member of The ECU Department of Sociology; and
- 2) Have Associate or (full) Graduate Faculty Membership standing with the Graduate School (the Graduate Director will have a list of such faculty).

With the Committee Chair, the student selects three more committee members. To qualify to serve on the thesis committee, members must meet the following:

- 1) Two of the additional members must be faculty members in ECU's Sociology Department;
- 2) The third member must be a faculty member from another department at ECU; and
- 3) At least two of these three committee members (department or outside) must have Associate or (full) Graduate Faculty Members standing with the Graduate School. The third must have at least Graduate Teaching Faculty status (The Committee Chair should check with the Graduate Director to ensure that all members qualify; the student should ask, too, as a backup for their own protection).

The committee may have more than four members if the student desires. These members serve as consultants/Ex-Officio members, and therefore do not have to meet the above criteria.

Forms: Upon formation of the committee, the student must complete a [Masters Pre-Research Approval Form available here \(Appendix C is provided below as an example\)](#). The completed form (DocuSign) is then routed to all committee members and the Sociology Graduate Program Director for their signatures (see Appendix C). An electronic copy of the completed form will be sent to all signatories and the student for their records.

Thereafter, the Graduate Director will: 1) instruct the appropriate Sociology Department administrative assistant to open a SOCI 7000-*Thesis* section for the student, under the direction of their Thesis Committee Chair; and thereby 2) authorizes the student to register for three thesis credits during the next semester. No student will be allowed to sign up for thesis credits without

the completion of the Master's Thesis Pre-Thesis Research Approval Form and thereafter, consent of the Graduate Director.

Concurrent to or immediately following the forming of the Thesis Committee, any student who is conducting research with human subjects (interviews, surveys, focus groups, etc.) must complete the necessary paperwork required by the University's Institutional Review Office, which grants students permission to proceed with their research at this link. A copy of the IRB approval must be forwarded to the department's Director of Graduate Studies and must be included in the Appendix of the completed thesis. The Graduate School will not approve any thesis that involves human subjects without an IRB form.

Proposal: Working with the committee, the student prepares a thesis proposal. There are no length stipulations for the proposal, but they generally include: an introduction providing a clear definition of the problem or issue to be investigated; a preliminary literature review; a research methodology including the student's intended research design and overarching research questions; and section describing the significance of the study. Upon approval of the Thesis Committee Chair, a thesis proposal defense, in which the student makes a brief presentation to the Thesis Committee is scheduled and held.

At least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense, each member of the thesis committee should receive a copy of the proposal and a copy should be forwarded to the department's Director of Graduate Studies; the latter should display it in the department office (Brewster A-413) for review by the faculty and other graduate students.

The proposal and proposal defense should convince the thesis committee that the research can be done. Copies of proposals completed by previous sociology graduate students, which can be used as guides, are available from the department's Director of Graduate Studies. Upon the successful completion of the proposal defense, the student and committee then must complete a *Thesis Proposal Defense Completion Form* (Appendix D). At this time, the committee assigns a grade of "High Pass (HP)," "Pass (P)," or "Low Pass (LP)" for the defense on the form and then has the committee chair (or student) forward the form to the department's Director of Graduate Studies (See Appendix D). The latter records the grade and places the form in the student's file; and will also record a digital version of the form for record-keeping and forward a copy to the student.

There are no length stipulations for the thesis document. It should, however, be a scholarly product acceptable to the academic community. Copies of completed theses by previous sociology graduate students, which can be used as guides, are available from the Director of Graduate Studies.

A typical thesis would include the following chapters:

1. Introduction - States the research problem
2. Literature Review, Theoretical Context, and Research Questions/Hypotheses

3. Methodology – A description of the research methods (e.g., survey, analysis of secondary data, field research), the sample or data source, the measurement of variables contained in the hypotheses, and the methods of data analysis.
4. Research Findings – A chapter detailing the study’s research findings, with reference to appended tables or other forms of documentation.
5. Summary and Conclusions - A summary of the work and a discussion of the implications of the findings for future research.
6. References Cited
7. Appendices, including necessary Graduate School forms

The thesis document and references sections should be prepared according to ASA format guidelines, available on the [ASA website](#) and at [Owl Purdue](#).

The thesis also must include an electronic Title Page, as prescribed by the Graduate School (See Appendix B and make sure to remove the words “Appendix B” when including it in your thesis), and any necessary University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board or IRB forms (See below and <http://www.ecu.edu/irb/>).

Final Thesis Document: When the thesis document is in a form judged by the Thesis Committee Chair to be suitable, the student partakes in an oral defense of the thesis. At least two weeks prior to the scheduled defense, each member of the thesis committee should receive a copy of the most up-to-date version of the thesis for their review. At least one week prior to the defense, a copy of the thesis should be forwarded to department’s Director of Graduate Studies, who should display it in the department office (Brewster A-413) for review by the faculty and other graduate students. At this time, the Thesis Committee Chair should also announce the time and date of the student’s thesis defense to the department and invite the department faculty and graduate students to the defense.

Thesis Defense: The Thesis Defense typically is a one-hour session in which the student makes a polished 15-20-minute presentation of their work and then answers questions from the committee, similar to an academic conference presentation. Upon the successful completion of the Thesis defense, the student and committee then must complete a *Thesis Defense Passing Grade Form* (Appendix E). At this time, the committee assigns a grade of “High Pass (HP),” “Pass (P),” or “Low Pass (LP)” for the Thesis on the form and then has the Thesis Committee Chair forward the form to the department’s Director of Graduate Studies. The latter records the grade and places the form in the student’s file; and will also record a digital version of the form for record-keeping and forward a copy to the student.

Submission to the Graduate School: After the final version of the thesis (with any corrections required by the thesis committee) is approved by the committee chair, the thesis Title Page must be completed (typed) by the student and signed by all the members of the thesis committee and the department chairperson (Again, see Appendix B for a copy of the Graduate School's required thesis Title Page). For the convenience of the committee members and to insure the speedy forwarding of the thesis to the Graduate School, it is recommended that the student bring the completed Title Page to their Thesis Defense (and naturally, their Thesis Defense Form).

After the Title Page is signed, it should be scanned and an electronic copy uploaded along with the entire thesis to the Dean of the Graduate School for signature. This must occur at least two weeks before the end of classes for that semester, in order for a student to graduate in that given semester. The student is also responsible for making copies of the thesis for the department, the committee Chair, and committee members, if the latter so desire. The department copy must be a bound paper copy. The others may be an electronic, unless committee members request a paper bound copy.

ECU's instructions and guidelines for preparation and submission of electronic theses and dissertations (ETDs) may be found [here](#).

Applied Social Research Practicum Option

(31 credits)

This option is intended to help students to obtain skills required for research-based positions in government agencies, businesses, research firms, non-profit organizations, and similar entities. The department's graduates have secured positions in Pharmaceutical Product Development, the U.S. Census Bureau, and RTI International, for example.

The requirements for this option are exactly the same as for the *Preparation of the thesis Option* EXCEPT a six-credit Practicum and Practicum Paper replace the six thesis credits and thesis document.

The Practicum provides an alternative to the thesis and consists of 140 hours of relevant field work. During the Practicum semesters, the student enrolls in SOCI 6992 (*Practicum*) and either: (1) gains hands-on experience in applied research; or (2) designs and implements a targeted intervention program. Both culminate in the completion of a practicum report.

The Practicum (1) or (2) above may be completed under the auspices of a research center affiliated with the Sociology department, or it may be completed independent of such a center. The Practicum Committee follows the same procedures as those described earlier for the Thesis Committee (See Appendix F for the Practicum Committee Composition Form).

Proposal: Practicum Proposals for applied research should be no longer than 20 pages, including a description of the research problem, literature review, hypotheses, and methodology (including the research site, subjects, and data-gathering method with instrument(s) appended, and data analysis plan). A letter of agreement from the administrator of the research site(s) must be appended to the proposal. Practicum Proposals for program implementation should be no longer than 20 pages, including a succinct description of the need for the intervention (including any supportive data), literature review, and theoretical application. The intervention method should be described, including the intervention site, the target population, means of intervention, expected outcome, and an evaluation plan. A letter of agreement from the administrator of the intervention site(s) must be appended to the proposal.

Proposal Defense: The Practicum Proposal Defense follows the same procedures as those described above for the Thesis Proposal defense (See Appendix G for the Practicum Proposal Defense Form). The Practicum Work Experience involves a minimum of 140 hours of work experience. A mid-semester practicum evaluation form should be completed by the work site supervisor and given to the Director of Graduate Studies for placement in the student's academic file.

Practicum Report: The Final Practicum Report (excluding cover page, table of contents, acknowledgments, references, and tables) should be AT LEAST 20 pages and not more than 40 pages. The report should contain all of the elements detailed above for the practicum proposal and should use the ASA Style Guide, available on the [ASA website](#) and at [Owl Purdue](#).

Practicum Report Defense: The Practicum Defense follows the same procedures as those described above for the Thesis Defense (See Appendix H for the Practicum Report Defense Form).

After the final version of the practicum report (with any corrections required by the practicum committee) is approved by the committee chair, two copies of the report should be made, each signed by the practicum committee members and the department chairperson (allow 1 week for review by the chairperson). One copy should be delivered to the Practicum Chair and the other to the department's Director of Graduate Studies. Both must be delivered by the last day of classes that semester.

Teaching Practicum Option

(31 credits)

The *Teaching Practicum Option* is for students who are intent on pursuing a career in higher education as a faculty member. Graduates from this track have secured full-time positions throughout North Carolina's Community College system and in four-year institutions.

The course requirements for this option are similar to the *Applied Social Research Practicum Option*. The difference is the requirements for this practicum are focused on best practices in teaching. Requirements include 1) a one-semester teaching mentorship program in which the student shadows an ECU Sociology professor's SOCI-2110, *Introduction to Sociology*, course or another 1000-level or 2000-level course; 2) the development of a portfolio of teaching materials including a literature review on best teaching practices; and 3) ideally, teaching an undergraduate course in the department. If the student does not teach a course, the teaching mentorship will continue throughout the practicum. Students are encouraged to take all of their graduate elective courses in Sociology, in order to expand the substantive areas in which they can eventually teach.

Teaching Practicum Requirements:

- a) Shadow one Sociology faculty member in a 1000- or 2000-level course and receive mentoring by this faculty member across the semester. The student may assist with grading, offer guest lectures, or otherwise contribute to course pedagogy.
- b) Choose a practicum committee to direct your work, including a Chair and two other Sociology faculty members, plus one faculty from outside of the department. Generally, the Chair is the faculty member that the student shadows across the semester (but does not have to be).
- c) Complete a literature review on best practices in college teaching, making sure to include scholarship from the field of sociology. The specific focus of the literature review is selected by the student, in consultation with their Chair. Examples of previous students' practicum paper themes include: comparisons between sociology teaching in 2-year versus 4-year institutions; teaching race, gender, and class; and using science fiction as an instructional strategy.
- d) Teach one section of a 1000- or 2000-level Sociology course: preferably this will be the same course that the student shadowed the first semester.
- e) Complete a teaching portfolio that includes a combination of documents & activities from the list below.
 - i. The review of best teaching practices mentioned above;
 - ii. A teaching philosophy statement;
 - iii. A summary of the student's teaching experience (courses taught and assisted, trainings completed, etc.);
 - iv. Three syllabi: 1) course(s) taught (potentially with revisions following the semester); 2) a proposed face-to face syllabus for a 1000- or 2000-level Sociology course; and 3) a proposed DE syllabus for a 1000- or 2000-level Sociology course;
 - v. Sample course materials (i.e., tests, in-class assignments, lectures, paper

- assignments) with reflections/discussions;
- vi. A mid-semester assessment from the students in the course;
 - vii. An end-of-semester reflection that discusses how the student's course went, what worked well, and what the student might change;
 - viii. Observations of three class sessions taught by one or more faculty other than the mentor;
 - ix. Peer review reports of the course by two faculty members;
 - x. Reflections on 1) classes that the student observed; 2) faculty peer reviews of the student's course; 3) students' mid-semester reviews of the course; 4) an assessment of one teaching technique of the student's choice;
 - xi. Completion of a selection of teacher trainings available through the Office for Faculty Excellence, Office for Equity and Diversity, and/or Cornerstone. Options include completing the distance education (DE) modules required to earn an DE certificate through Cornerstone; Safe Zone & Green Zone trainings, etc.;
 - xii. (Optional): Creation of a smaller, streamlined teaching portfolio to use on the job market.

Ideally, the practicum should be taken as a two-semester sequence with the mentorship, committee formation, literature review, and relevant trainings completed during the first semester.

- f) Distribute the literature review and Teaching Portfolio to Committee members.
- g) Complete a Practicum Defense at the conclusion of the final semester. The Practicum Defense follows the same procedures as those described above for the Thesis Defense (See Appendix H for the Practicum Report Defense Form).

After the final version of the practicum documents (with any corrections required by the practicum committee) is approved by the committee chair, two copies of the documents should be made, each signed by the practicum committee members and the department chairperson (allow 1 week for review by the chairperson). One copy should be delivered to the Practicum Chair and the other to the department's Director of Graduate Studies. *Both must be delivered by the last day of classes that semester.*

Extended Coursework Option

(37 credits)

The *Extended Coursework Option* is a 37-credit, 12 course-only, alternative to the Thesis/Practicum tracks. It provides students with the opportunity to explore specific areas of interest, allowing them to take up to 12 graduate credits outside the Sociology department. This is a good option for students seeking to jointly pursue a graduate certificate in another program major. Completing this track, however, does not preclude students from pursuing a Ph.D.

Other Requirements and Policies

Grading Scale: Coursework

A = Excellent: Very high, outstanding performance; Passable for entry into a Ph.D. Program

B = Good: Average and expected performance

C = Pass: Below average, unsatisfactory performance

F= Failure: Inadequate and unacceptable performance

I = Incomplete: awarded under extreme special circumstances.

Q= In Progress: Only used for capstone courses such as internships and practica. Upon successful completion, the "Q" grade is replaced with a grade of "R." Not averaged into overall GPA.

S= Satisfactory progress in thesis research. Not averaged into overall GPA.

U= Unsatisfactory progress in thesis research. Not averaged into overall GPA.

R= Replaces the grade of "Q" or "S" upon successful completion of capstone courses. Not averaged into overall GPA.

Incompletes

“Incomplete” Policy: Must be completed within one calendar year from the beginning of the enrolled semester or it automatically reverts to a grade of “F.” The Graduate School allows no exceptions to this policy. NOTE: No student is allowed to graduate with an “I” on his or her record. *Students and Instructors/Professors requesting an Incomplete must notify the Graduate Director as soon as possible. Incompletes can affect eligibility for continuous enrollment eligibility, graduate assistantship, and out-of-state remission funding (See the sections of this handbook: Other Requirements and Policies, Assistantship Support; and Out-of-State Remissions).*

Note: Graduate School requirements state that a student may carry a grade of “Incomplete” in a course for no more than one academic year from the beginning of the enrollment in that course. However, it is the Department of Sociology’s policy to have those students receiving an “Incomplete” fulfill all the requirements for that course by the end of the next semester, if at all possible, as university rules are subject to change. If a grade of “A,” “B,” or “C” is not assigned by the end of the following semester (the Spring Semester for courses taken in the Fall, the Fall Semester for courses taken in the Spring or Summer), a grade of "F" will automatically be assigned.

Students with Incompletes may also be ineligible for funding if they have not made satisfactory progress towards graduation (i.e., The Graduate School defines satisfactory progress as having completed 80 percent or more of the credits they have attempted). Students with incompletes may also be ineligible for regular enrollment standing (i.e., placed on probationary status) if they

have not made satisfactory progress towards graduation. The Graduate School defines satisfactory progress as having completed 80 percent or more of the credits they have attempted).

Transfer Coursework

Upon approval by the Sociology Department's Director of Graduate Studies and the Graduate School:

- Students may transfer up to two courses (six semester hours) towards their MA Degree that were taken while they were a non-degree status student.
- Students may transfer up to two courses (six semester hours) towards their MA Degree that were taken at the graduate level (equivalent to 5000 or above) at another university.

Research Skills Requirement: The ECU Graduate School mandates that students fulfill a research skills requirement. Students in the MA Degree Program in Sociology fulfill this requirement by earning a grade of "C" or better in the required Multivariate Techniques and Analysis (SOCI 6312) course.

Graduate Assistantship: Please note that for all semesters except the final semester, the ECU graduate school requires that any student with a graduate assistantship be registered for 9 semester hours.

Changing Options: If at any time the student is not making satisfactory progress toward completing their thesis or practicum in a timely manner, ECU's Sociology Director of Graduate Studies has the authority at his/her/their discretion, to request and then change the student to the non-thesis, extended course work option. This would usually occur in the third semester, upon consultation with the Thesis Committee Chair. This is necessary in order to allow for the student to complete the MA program in a timely manner, generally within four semesters. A student may switch to a non-thesis option later, if it is deemed by the Graduate Director as the most appropriate and expedient method in which to facilitate their graduation. If a student switches or is switched to Non-Thesis, they and the Graduate Director must complete a Thesis-to-Non-Thesis Change Form and then forward to the Graduate School. This form is available in PDF here <https://gradschool.ecu.edu/wp-content/pv-uploads/sites/118/2020/02/Thesis-to-NonThesis-Change-form-update-2021-1.pdf>. (see Appendix I).

Continuous Enrollment and Time Limits

- Students must be registered each semester (except summer terms) from the beginning of their coursework until graduation. Under special circumstances, exceptions may be approved by the Dean of the Graduate School.
- The time limitation for completion of a MA degree is six years from the beginning of coursework.

- Students who have completed their coursework but need extended time to finish a thesis, practicum, or other independent project must register for every semester (except summer terms) until all degree requirements are completed and filed with the registrar.
- Students must be enrolled for at least one credit hour during the semester that they intend to graduate unless that is a summer semester and they had been registered for the prior spring semester. In this case, students should enroll in GRAD 6999, a graduate school one-credit hour course with no actual requirements.
- During the semester of graduation, students may petition the Graduate School for an exception to the continuous registration requirement if all degree requirements are completed prior to the first day of class for that semester.

Retention and Graduation

In order to graduate with an MA in Sociology, students must:

- 1) maintain an cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher;
- 2) maintain an 80% completion rate (hours completed divided by hours attempted, cumulative);
- 3) complete their program by attempting no more than 150% of the hours required to finish the degree.

Students who do not meet these standards are placed on academic probation and cannot graduate. Once on probation, failing to raise their GPA by the end of the next semester will cause the student to be terminated from the program. There is no “grade replacement” policy for graduate students.

Advising

The Advising for MA Program Graduate Student enrollment in coursework is the responsibility of the Director of Graduate Studies in Sociology. Students should make an appointment with and consult with the Graduate Director before registering for classes. It is not the responsibility of other faculty members to enroll students in courses. *Therefore, while students may ask the advice of other faculty members, the student should not enroll in courses without consulting with and ultimately receiving approval from the Graduate Director. As noted earlier, this is especially important when registering for courses outside the department.*

Appeals

Grade appeals and any other requests for reviews of decisions made by Faculty or the Graduate Director should be directed to the Chair. The same is true for any faculty issues with a student, such as violations of the academic conduct or integrity/academic dishonesty honor code.

Tuition and Financial Aid

Billing Cycles

Returning students and those currently admitted and registered will receive a Cashier's billing statement, for both fall and spring semesters, approximately 30 days prior to the published date on which classes begin. Summer billing statements will be received approximately three weeks prior to the first day of classes. Fall and spring payment of tuition and fees will be subject to a late payment charge, if not paid by a published deadline, which usually precedes registration day by about two weeks. To avoid having class schedules canceled, tuition, fees, room and board (if applicable) must be paid no later than the close of business on the last day before registration day.

Financial Aid Requirements

Students should be certain that the tuition for the courses in which they enroll is covered by the financial aid they receive, particularly undergraduate courses. Graduate student enrollment in undergraduate courses cannot be covered unless the course can be demonstrated to be a prerequisite for a graduate degree/certificate in the unit or is preparatory in nature for a graduate degree/certificate. Verification of this is usually provided to the Office of Student Financial Aid (OSFA) by the Graduate Director. The student is encouraged to consult with the Graduate Director, as well as the OSFA financial aid counselor, before registering to determine that verification documentation is provided.

Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) and Intellectual Property

Please be familiar with the information about Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD) and Intellectual Property Rights in Chapter 11 of the [Graduate Program Directors & Coordinators Handbook here](#).

Helpful (Important) Tips

- Make sure to check your ECU email regularly. This is the central place for communications from the Graduate School and the Sociology Department.

- Check your department snail-mail mailbox regularly for announcements, returned assignments, etc.

Appendix A

Elective Courses

The ECU Sociology Department offers between 3 and 4 electives per academic year, chosen from the following. Click on the course names for a link to the course description in the catalog.

- [SOCI 5100 - Seminar in Social Inequality and Diversity](#)
- [SOCI 5200 - Seminar in the Sociology of Health](#)
- [SOCI 5300 - Seminar in Juvenile Delinquency](#)
- [SOCI 5318 - Social Aspects of Death and Dying](#)
- [SOCI 5400 - Seminar in Gender Roles](#)
- [SOCI 5500 - Seminar in Population](#)
- [SOCI 5600 - Seminar in Aging](#)
- [SOCI 5700 - Seminar in Social Interaction](#)
- [SOCI 5800 - Seminar in the Family](#)
- [SOCI 6010 - Seminar on Immigration](#)
- [SOCI 6100 - Aging and Health](#)
- [SOCI 6300 - Seminar in Environment and Society](#)
- [SOCI 6400 - Social Issues in Regional Development](#)
- [SOCI 6430 - Society and the Individual](#)
- [SOCI 6500 - Qualitative Methods](#)
- [SOCI 6521 - Readings in Sociology](#)
- [SOCI 6523 - Readings in Sociology](#)
- [SOCI 6600 - Society and Coastal Policy](#)
- [SOCI 6900 - Special Topics Seminar](#)

Appendix B

TITLE

by

Student Name Here

APPROVED BY:

DIRECTOR OF THESIS: _____ (Name, Degree Here)

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____ (Name, Degree Here)

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____ (Name, Degree Here)

COMMITTEE MEMBER: _____ (Name, Degree Here)

CHAIR OF THE DEPARTMENT: _____ (Name, Degree Here)

DEAN OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL _____

