

**PhD Student Handbook**  
**Johns Hopkins University**  
**Krieger School of Arts & Sciences**  
**Department of Sociology**  
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## **Introduction**

This Handbook is a resource for the Department's Ph.D. students. It includes an overview of requirements for the Ph.D. program, the Department's financial aid policy and the Department's organizational structure, among other topics. We strive to keep the Handbook current, but policy changes made in recent weeks/months may not be reflected. Accordingly, on matters of consequence, please check with your faculty advisor, one of the department staff or the Chair.

## **I. Description of the Ph.D. Program**

### **A. Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree**

The requirements for the Ph.D. program include (1) a core curriculum totaling seven courses, (2) five elective courses, (3) one Research Apprenticeship (RA), (4) a Trial Research Paper (TRP), and (5) a Teaching Assistantship (TA). Students must also (6) satisfy the University residence requirement. For the dissertation, students must (7) complete and defend a dissertation proposal at the department level and then (8) defend the completed dissertation itself in an oral examination at the University level. Students are expected to complete all University and departmental requirements other than the dissertation, including the departmental defense of the dissertation proposal, no later than June 30th of their fourth year of graduate study in the Department. Meeting this deadline is a requirement for fifth-year funding eligibility (see Section V on Funding). It is one of the indicators that the faculty use to evaluate the progress of students in the Ph.D. program. Students may request from the Chair an extension of the deadline for the defense of the dissertation proposal to August 15th. This request must be justified in writing and endorsed by the student's dissertation advisors.

In collaboration with the JHU Department of Applied Mathematics and Statistics, the Department also offers students the possibility of acquiring a joint Doctorate in Sociology and Master's in Applied Mathematics and Statistics. For details, see <http://soc.jhu.edu/graduate/jointprogram/>.

Additional detail on the Ph.D. program requirements is provided in the following sections.

### **1. Core Curriculum**

The core curriculum consists of the following seven courses:

Proseminar in Sociology (230.608)

Theory:

Classical Social Theory (230.602)

Contemporary Social Theory (230.603)

Logic of Inquiry:

Sociological Analysis (230.643)

#### Introductory Statistics:

Introduction to Social Statistics (230.600)

Linear Models for the Social Sciences (230.604)

#### A third methodology course, such as:

Categorical Data Analysis (230.605)

Panel Data Analysis (230.615)

An Introduction to Causal Inference (230.636)

Qualitative Research Methods in the Social Sciences (230.649)

Macro-Comparative Research Methods (230.650)

After the Core course requirements are satisfied, additional research methods courses from the list above may be used toward fulfillment of the seven elective course requirement (see below). To count toward degree requirements, Core Curriculum courses other than the Proseminar (which is graded Pass/Fail only) must be passed with a grade of B- or higher.

## 2. Electives

In addition to the core curriculum requirements above, five elective graduate courses are required. Graduate courses generally have a 600-level designation (230.6xx), however, courses at the 300-level or higher (e.g., 230.3xx) may be counted toward the fulfillment of the five elective courses. To count toward degree requirements, electives must be passed with a grade of B- or higher except in cases where the course is offered only on a Pass/Fail basis (e.g., as is the case with some courses offered in other departments). At least four of the five electives must be JHU Sociology department courses (230 designation). Up to four of the five electives may be fulfilled by a combination of: 1) credit awarded for previous graduate coursework that predates matriculation at JHU (IMPORTANT: the student must petition the Director of Graduate Studies for this credit during the first semester of Ph.D. study at JHU); 2) courses taken outside the department that are permissible under the Handbook rules (and taken with the Departmental advisor's approval); 3) and directed research and independent study courses within the Department (a maximum of one, as stipulated elsewhere in this Handbook).

## 3. Commitment to Full-Time Study

Except for the occasional student admitted on a part-time basis, Ph.D. candidates in the Department are required to carry a full-time equivalent academic workload during their entire time in the Ph.D. program. In general, full-time study refers to a minimum of three courses or the equivalent in a semester. Students must develop a plan of study for each semester that is the equivalent of full-time work toward the degree. Acceptable activities include regular courses, the dissertation seminar, dissertation research, dissertation fellowship semester, independent reading courses or independent research courses. The student's advisor signifies that a semester's plan has been approved by electronically releasing the student's registration hold. See the Appendix for two examples of full-time study timeline.

## 4. Research Apprenticeship (230.804)

Students are required to develop practical research expertise through professional-level participation in a research project under faculty supervision. "Professional-level" work excludes purely clerical tasks and includes such activities as data analysis, literature searches/reviews, non-routine data processing or coding, preparation and refinement of research instruments, and data and file management. Research Apprenticeships are normally completed during the student's first year in the program. The most common length for a research apprenticeship is a full academic year, however, the minimum period of apprenticeship required for certification is one semester. The standard for certification is "substantial research accomplishment" as judged by the faculty supervisor. Students working as a Research Apprentice should register for the Research Apprenticeship (230.804). Full-time sociology faculty may sponsor research apprenticeships. Upon satisfactory completion of the research

apprenticeship, the supervising faculty completes an evaluation form that describes the research experience and indicates the student's satisfactory performance using the aforementioned standard of "substantial research accomplishment," as judged by the faculty supervisor.

### **5. Teaching Assistantship (230.811)**

As part of their preparation for future academic work, graduate students are required to serve as teaching assistants for at least one semester. A teaching assistantship in Introductory Sociology is strongly recommended. At the end of every teaching assistantship, the faculty member who was assisted will place a letter in the student's file that describes the teaching assistant's duties and evaluates their performance. TAs are required to register for 230.811, but TAships do not count toward the three-course minimum that is required to maintain a fulltime enrollment status. The JHU Center for Teaching Excellence and Innovation offers training workshops for all graduate student teaching assistants, which we encourage current and prospective TAs to attend. In addition, the JHU Center for Language Education offers courses designed specifically to help prepare international students for their classroom duties. All students whose native language is other than English are required, during their first year of graduate study, to take the screening assessment offered by the Center for Language Education. The result of this assessment will determine whether enrollment in the English Language Program for International TA's is required.

### **6. Residence Requirement and Eligibility for Non-Resident Status**

The Johns Hopkins University requires a minimum of two consecutive semesters of registration as a full-time, resident graduate student for all doctoral degrees. Except in unusual circumstances, all first-year students will be in full-time residence. After the first year of full-time residence, students must maintain one of three residency statuses until all requirements for the degree have been completed and the University Graduate Board has been so notified by the Department Chair. The three residency statuses are: 1) Full-time; 2) Non-Resident (usually requested when students are away from Baltimore for fieldwork or family reasons; students in Baltimore may also request non-resident status if they are not taking courses for official credit and/or are not being employed as a teacher or TA by JHU); and 3) Term Leave of Absence or LOA (usually requested when medical conditions, compulsory military service, or personal or family hardship prevent students from continuing their graduate studies). Students on Non-Resident status are charged a reduced tuition. Students on Term Leave of Absence are not charged tuition.

Further information on University Residence Requirements can be found at:

<http://www.graduateboard.jhu.edu/residence.htm>

Applications for non-resident status and LOAs can be found at:

<http://www.graduateboard.jhu.edu/images/AppLOA.pdf>

### **7. Foreign Language**

The Sociology Department no longer requires certification of fluency in a foreign language as part of the Ph.D. requirements. Students should be proactive in gaining the language skills necessary to conduct their TRP and dissertation research, and should work closely with their advisor to determine whether additional language education is needed.

### **8. Trial Research Paper (TRP)**

The Trial Research Paper serves several important purposes. First, it gives students hands on experience with the academic research and writing process—i.e. analyzing the existing literature, formulating a research question, finding necessary data, conducting data analysis, and writing it up in a coherent and succinct form. Second, it allows students to produce an academic paper, which they can present at a conference and (ideally, but not required) publish in an academic journal before they go on the job market (an increasingly important qualification

for competitive positions). Third, for many students, it allows them to “test the waters” in a methodology, a geographic area, or a topic that they might pursue for their dissertation research, giving them a head start on a promising project and a chance to abandon a project that doesn’t pan out.

The research for a TRP project should be more extensive than that required for a course paper, but much less than that required for a dissertation. All TRPs should include a research component, but one that can be accomplished by the end of the second year and no later than the beginning of the spring semester of the third year. The project does not require collecting original data and can, therefore, rely on existing data. For students interested in collecting original data, they should plan to start early (see below for suggested time lines). Examples of TRP approaches include (but are not limited to): a theoretical analysis based on a literature review, a quantitative analysis of an existing dataset, a qualitative analysis of newspaper articles, a historical trend analysis of existing historical data (for example, in government reports or online archives), a meta-analysis of existing scholarship, or a qualitative analysis of a short ethnographic fieldwork.

**a. TRP Advisor and Second Reader.** By the beginning of the spring semester of their first year, students should invite a faculty advisor to supervise the design and execution of the TRP project. Faculty members whose positions entitle them to serve as dissertation advisors are eligible to serve as TRP advisors. While the TRP advisor will serve as the primary advisor, the instructor of the TRP seminar in the semester the student is completing the TRP will serve as the second reader. If a student and advisor require a different 2<sup>nd</sup> reader, they can make the case for the DGS to approve an exception. The TRP advisor and the seminar instructor will consult throughout the process of developing and completing the TRP. The TRP advisor will ultimately make the final determination on whether the final paper meets the standards for completing the TRP requirement.

**b. TRP Courses.** In order to facilitate progress on the TRP, students register for courses that consist of one-on-one meetings with their TRP advisor (TRP I, 230.815, in the fall of the second year; TRP II, 230.816, in the spring of the second year; and, if needed, TRP III, 230.817, in the fall of the third year). All students are required to register two TRP seminars: 230.685 in the fall of the second year, and 230.690 in the fall of the third year. These courses will be graded pass/fail and will not count toward the fulfillment of the elective courses required for the Ph.D.

**c. TRP Process and Deadlines.** By the end of the spring semester of their first year, students should submit to their TRP adviser a *precis*, stating their research question, how it fits into existing scholarly literature, and ideas about how they intend to answer their question. This will enable students to conduct initial research over the summer. During the summer, students should locate the data they intend to use for their TRP research; students who wish to collect original data should do so during the summer. In the fall of their second year, students should further review the most relevant literature and begin data analysis and writing, submitting to their TRP advisor a 2-4 page summary of their revised TRP question, literature review, and data sources by the end of the fall semester. Students should spend the spring of their second year and fall of their third year writing their TRP. Students must complete their TRP by the end of the fall semester of the third year. Students may elect, in consultation with their advisor, to complete it by the end of the spring semester of the second year, in which case they are not required to take the second TRP seminar (230.690). Failure to complete a satisfactory TRP by the beginning of the spring semester of the third year could result in a student being placed on academic probation (see section on Academic Probation below).

## 9. Dissertation

The dissertation requirement is met by producing a substantial original contribution to the scientific literature in sociology and by passing a university-level examination, described below. The dissertation requirement is met when the student’s two dissertation advisors certify in a written advisors’ report to the University’s Graduate Board that an acceptable dissertation, publishable in whole or in part, has been produced.

**a. Dissertation Advisors.** In choosing a dissertation topic, students should consult with members of the faculty. By the beginning of the spring semester of the third year, students should invite a faculty member to serve as first dissertation advisor. The first advisor should be a regular Department faculty member. The student and the first advisor should then invite another faculty member to serve as a second advisor (dissertation advisors are also

called dissertation readers in some university documents). The second advisor is also usually a regular Department faculty member, but faculty members of other University departments or even of other institutions may also serve (the chair and another member of the University Graduate Board must approve the appointment of a second advisor from another institution to serve on a student's Graduate Board oral examination committee). With the approval of the Department Chair, a student may change her/his first dissertation advisor by reason of change of topic or for other justifiable cause.

**b. Dissertation Literature Review and Proposal.** The student's dissertation proposal, written in consultation with two dissertation advisors, should include a clear description of the intellectual problem to be addressed and its significance, a review of the relevant literature, a description of data to be used, and analytical procedures to be employed. Students should complete a literature review and submit it to their dissertation advisers by the end of the spring semester of their third year. They should complete their proposal by the end of the fall semester of their fourth year. Dissertation proposals normally should not exceed 40 double-spaced pages.

**c. Department Defense of Dissertation Proposal.** An oral dissertation proposal defense is scheduled by the student's dissertation advisors after the advisors have indicated that a written version of the proposal is ready for an oral defense. The purpose of the oral defense is to establish the student's readiness to proceed with the dissertation research. In some instances, the "pass" may be conditional on satisfactory completion of specific additional work required by the examining committee. Ordinarily, the examining committee consists of the two dissertation advisors and one other member of the Department faculty (a fourth examiner may participate at the student's request if the other three examiners are agreeable). The defense begins with an oral presentation by the student of no longer than 10 minutes that reviews the major points of the proposal. A copy of the approved dissertation proposal must be submitted to the Department.

Students are expected to have defended their dissertation proposal in the Department by January 31 of the fourth year of graduate study. This deadline must be met in order to maintain eligibility for fifth year funding; see Section V on funding, below. Students may request (with justification) an extension of the deadline to August 15th from the Chair. This request must be endorsed by the student's faculty advisor.

**d. Graduate Board Oral (GBO) Examination:**

To receive a Ph.D., students are required to pass a university-level Final GBO Examination of a completed dissertation. The Graduate Board Oral examination committee consists of a total of five examiners: two or three faculty members from inside the Department (two of whom are the dissertation advisors) and two or three faculty members from outside the department. Generally, the University requires that at least one of the outside department members be either an Associate or Full professor. Two alternates also are required, one from the Department and one from outside the Department. The first dissertation advisor chooses the outside examiners, in consultation with the second advisor and the student. (For eligibility criteria for GBO committee members, see <http://www.graduateboard.jhu.edu/examProcedures.htm>.)

GBO Examinations are held throughout the academic year but must be scheduled with the Graduate Board a minimum of three weeks in advance of the exam. The principal dissertation advisor or department staff is responsible for contacting prospective outside examiners to request their participation on the Graduate Board Oral examining committee; students are not permitted to do so. When these arrangements have been completed, the Department transmits the necessary documentation to the Graduate Board. A tight schedule of deadlines governs the Final Graduate Board Oral examination: In order to be eligible for the January or May graduation dates, the exam must be completed by the posted Graduate Board Office deadline for that particular semester and the advisors' letter must be submitted by another deadline. These deadlines are strictly enforced and so should be reviewed by the student and faculty advisors early in the planning process. Also, a copy of the student's dissertation proposal, in the case of Preliminary GBO Examinations, or of the completed dissertation, in the case of Final GBO Examinations, must be made available to each member of the Examining Committee,

including the alternates, at least two weeks prior to the date of the examination. The schedule of deadlines is available in the departmental office.

Work on the dissertation should be carried out in close consultation with the two Department advisors. University guidelines for the preparation of the dissertation can be found at: <http://library.jhu.edu/services/cbo/guidelines.html>. Students should consult Department staff for information concerning dissertation delivery deadlines for the library. The Graduate Board specifies the format of the official advisors' letter; the dissertation advisors will submit this letter in consultation with Department staff. The Department will procure one permanently bound copy of the dissertation for the Department archives.

## **B. Master's Degree Requirements**

Upon satisfactory completion of the seven Core Curriculum courses and after at least one year of full-time residence, the Master's Degree may be awarded to: a) doctoral students in good standing who request it; and b) students who are leaving the doctoral program either for personal reasons or by decision of the faculty.

## **C. Exemptions**

The Ph.D. requirements apply to all students, but some students may enter the Ph.D. program having already completed coursework or other learning experiences that are similar in substance, depth, and quality to one or more of the requirements of the Department. Where appropriate, coursework completed at other institutions may qualify for exemption from a maximum of three courses in total, including at most two core (non-elective) curriculum requirements. An exemption implies that the course and accompanying credits will be applied to fulfillment of the Ph.D. requirements.

The Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) will, between May and August of each year, review the transcripts and application files of all incoming doctoral students. When the DGS sees a likelihood that a student's previous work merits a core or elective exemption, he/she may offer the student either of the following: (1) an invitation to request substitution and exemption based upon the materials and information already possessed by the Committee, or (2) an invitation to supply further information (e.g., syllabi and textbook titles from the previously taken courses) along with a request for substitution and exemption. Additionally, if the DGS does not extend such an invitation but a student thinks an exemption might be appropriate, such a request can be made to the DGS in writing anytime during the first semester of the doctoral program. The DGS will inform the student in writing of their decision and place a copy of that decision in the student's file.

All requests for exemptions based on considerations that predate a student's matriculation must be presented during the first semester in the doctoral program. In principle, no course is immune to petition for exemption, but it should be understood that the standard for granting exemptions is high, with the standard for core curriculum courses higher than for elective courses. Exemption from the Introduction to Social Statistics (230.600) and the Linear Models for the Social Sciences (230.604) courses is considered only where the DGS finds that the previous coursework in question involved statistical training at a comparable level of sophistication using sociological concepts and indices. There are no exemptions or substitutions permitted for the TRP, but if a student has completed a significant work of independent, solo-authored scholarship before coming to Hopkins, it may be possible to fulfill the requirement by extending that work.

Proposals for alternative ways to fulfill requirements and requests for exemptions based on considerations that postdate a student's matriculation are reviewed by the DGS. Such petitions should be uncommon however, and the case in support of them compelling. The Department's degree requirements have been carefully considered and it is expected that most students will fulfill them as stipulated. All petitions must be submitted, in writing, to the DGS, with a copy to the Academic Program Coordinator. The DGS will inform the student in writing of their decision and place a copy of that decision in the student's file.

## Exemption from Introduction to Social Statistics Requirement

Incoming students may petition the DGS for an exemption from Introduction to Social Statistics (230.600). If an exemption is granted, the DGS will typically recommend that the student enroll in an alternative methodology course, usually one that is more advanced.

## Exemption from the Teaching Assistant Requirement

With support from their faculty advisor(s), students may petition the DGS for an exemption from the requirement to serve as a Teaching Assistantship (TA). The department is committed to providing a TA opportunity for all students and views a teaching experience as an important source of professional development for those students embarking on an academic career. However, unique circumstances may justify an exemption from the requirement, such as prior post-secondary level teaching experience, a continuing research assistantship that is judged more vital to one's career, the completion of a Dean's Teaching Fellowship, and rapid progress through the program while oriented to a career path that is unlikely to include post-secondary level teaching.

## II. Special Programs

The Department offers two optional, specialized programs: Program on Global Social Change (PGSC); and Program on Social Inequality (PSI). The programs sponsor extra activities in these fields including outside speakers, discussions of work-in-progress by program faculty and Ph.D. students; and specialized courses.

### A. Program on Global Social Change (PGSC)

This program focuses on cross-national, comparative research and on long-term, world-scale social change. The goal of the program is to give students knowledge of the various theoretical perspectives in these areas, coupled with experience in data collection and analysis, and the acquisition of expertise in one or more substantive fields. Students in the program usually will have an affiliated faculty member as the first doctoral dissertation advisor.

### B. Program on Social Inequality (PSI)

The focus of the Department's Program on Social Inequality is on the causes and consequences of social inequality for individuals' lives, the social processes that sustain it, and how social policies can reduce it. These questions are addressed in terms of class, gender, race, ethnicity, and immigration status/citizenship. Students in the program usually will have an affiliated faculty member as her/his first doctoral dissertation advisor.

## III. Faculty Advisors

The Director of Graduate Studies serves as the initial faculty advisor for the entire first year cohort. Responsibilities include overseeing the student's program of study, monitoring that requirements are being completed in a timely fashion, and accepting petitions for exemptions and waivers.

Between the fall and spring semesters of their first year of study, students choose, with the assistance of the Director of Graduate Studies, an individual faculty advisor from among the full-time faculty of the Department, who then assumes responsibility for all advising functions. The selected faculty advisor serves as both resource person and counselor for matters pertaining to the student's intellectual development. The student and their advisor work together to clarify what the student's goals for their program of study and to chart a course of action for the realization of those goals. The faculty advisor's scope of responsibility is wide-ranging, as this person serves as both advocate for and facilitator of the student's interests, so long as those interests are consistent with the overall objectives of the graduate program.

Once a first advisor for the dissertation has been selected (usually in the third year), ordinarily that person also will assume the role of faculty advisor. The student and their faculty advisor are expected to discuss the student's

progress and plans prior to each semester. This is mandatory. The faculty advisor will not release a student's on-line registration hold until plans for the upcoming semester have been reviewed and approved by the student's faculty advisor. To avoid late registration charges, it is imperative that these advisement meetings be held well before the registration deadline.

#### **IV. ACADEMIC STANDING**

##### **A. Evaluation Procedures**

Toward the end of each academic year the faculty meets to evaluate student academic progress. The Director of Graduate Studies organizes the evaluation, which considers all areas of performance in the Ph.D. program, including performance in courses, RA and TA evaluations, timely completion of degree requirements and other considerations deemed pertinent, as well as a student self-assessment. The intent is to evaluate students' professional development and prospects for completing the Ph.D. The results of this evaluation are communicated to each student by letter from the Chair.

##### **B. Academic Probation**

A student whose academic performance is deemed unsatisfactory is subject to academic probation by the Department. This includes probation that is prompted by the student's failure to defend their dissertation proposal by the end of the fourth year of graduate study. Satisfactory grades are important to remain in good academic standing, however, passing grades alone may not always signify satisfactory professional development, nor be sufficient to warrant a favorable judgment from the faculty regarding a student's prospects for successfully completing the Ph.D. program.

If a student is placed on probation, it may be coupled with the student no longer being eligible to receive Departmental funding (see "Length of Eligibility," p. 19). If the student successfully defends the proposal in the fifth year, then as of the date of the successful passing of that exam, the student is eligible for reinstatement as a candidate for Departmental funding. Such students are placed in the Departmental funding queue as having a status equivalent to a 6th and higher year student.

Except in extreme cases, students may not be placed on probation before the end of their second semester in the Department or dismissed before the end of their third semester. A student may be placed on probation at any time of the year, but it would normally occur following either the fall semester (with a letter mailed in January) or the spring semester (with a letter mailed in June). Ordinarily, dismissal is considered only after a probationary period. Exceptions in which dismissal without prior probation is an option include cases of Academic and Graduate Student Misconduct (see Section C below).

Decisions regarding probation and dismissal are made at faculty meetings held as close as possible to the end of the semester, so that course work from that semester may be used in the evaluation. However, if circumstances require, a special faculty meeting may be held to consider problem situations. When the faculty deem a student's performance so wanting as to warrant probation or dismissal, the Chair will notify the student, in writing, of the faculty's action, explain the basis of that action, and, in the case of probation, outline the conditions for returning to good academic standing. This will also require a meeting between the student and their faculty advisor. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the Dean for Research and Graduate Education in the School of Arts and as well as the Office of Student Financial Services. The probationary period (i.e., the time given to meet the conditions set out for returning to good academic standing) must span at least four months and would typically end at the completion of an academic semester. The department reserves the right to withhold financial aid from students on probation (financial aid is addressed in Section V, below).

The faculty reviews the status of students on probation at the end of each semester. Within one month following the conclusion of the probationary period, the Department will inform the student of their status based upon whether the student has met the requirements as stated in the probation letter. When the faculty meet to deliberate the case, a member of the faculty will serve as the student's advocate and a decision is made to continue probation, withdraw probation, or dismiss the student.

At the time a student is placed on probation, the Chair, in consultation with the student, will select a faculty member to serve as the student's advisor throughout the period of probation. This advisor will normally serve as the student's advocate at the faculty meeting when that student's case is discussed.

Academic probation is regarded as a warning rather than an academic censure. Students on probation are eligible to participate in all aspects of student life. However, the Department reserves the right to limit certain program-related activities (e.g., service on a committee).

Students who have been removed from probation may not be placed on probation again unless there is new evidence of poor work. Students who have completed all department and University requirements, other than the dissertation, may not be placed on probation or dismissed except by invoking the standard elapsed-time provision (12 years from the time of matriculation, excluding any approved leaves of absence – see the section below on Residence Requirements) or other University-wide regulations governing doctoral candidates.

### **C. Graduate Student Misconduct**

Academic Misconduct is grounds for probation or dismissal, including dismissal without a prior probationary period. Graduate student misconduct includes academic misconduct, including but not limited to, the following: cheating or facilitating cheating; plagiarism; reuse of assignments; unauthorized collaboration; alteration of graded assignments; knowingly furnishing false information to any agent of the University for inclusion in academic records; unfair competition; lying; and falsification, forgery, alteration, destruction or misuse of official University documents or seal. Graduate student misconduct also includes the failure to comply with University or governmental rules, regulations, and laws, and the disregard of the norms of expected conduct, including nonacademic conduct that would adversely affect the integrity and reputation of the University as a whole or the Krieger and Whiting Schools. For the University policies concerning misconduct and procedures for handling misconduct, see: <http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/grad-students/graduate-specific-policies/>

### **D. Academic Dismissal**

If the Department faculty decide to dismiss a student following academic probation or for misconduct, this will be done with a formal letter citing the reason for dismissal and requires a meeting between the student and their faculty advisor. This letter will contain information regarding the readmission process, if deemed appropriate. A copy of the letter will be forwarded to the Dean for Research and Graduate Education, the Office of the Registrar, the Office of Student Financial Services, and the Office of International Students and Scholars Services (if appropriate). Academic dismissal will be noted on the student's transcript at the request of the program and with the approval of the Dean. A student may appeal this decision, first to the Department Chair and then to the Dean.

For the University policies concerning dismissal, see: <http://e-catalog.jhu.edu/grad-students/graduate-specific-policies/#misconduct>

## **V. FINANCIAL AID**

### **A. Statement of Intent**

The Department strives to provide five years of financial support for all full-time Ph.D. students, including tuition, mandatory fees, health insurance and a twelve-month stipend, so long as students remain in good academic

standing and are making acceptable progress toward completing degree requirements. The Department feels very strongly that incoming students are equally deserving and should receive the same standard financial aid package. Exceptions are uncommon, but can include salary supplements provided by the Dean's office, research assistantships funded by faculty grants, unusually onerous duties associated with departmentally funded Teaching Assistantships or Research Assistantships/Apprenticeships, external fellowships and externally funded Traineeships.

Beginning with the 2016 entering cohort, two of the five years of financial aid (four of the ten semesters) will be in the form of fellowships. Likewise, funding in the summer months are fellowships. All first-year students receive their first two semesters of funding as fellowships. (Note that the research apprenticeship in the first year is part of the academic program rather than a paid work obligation.) Students normally receive the third and fourth semesters of fellowship funding at a time that is optimal to facilitate their dissertation (and occasionally TRP) research and writing.

Requests for the remaining two fellowship semesters should be submitted by the end of the spring semester of the preceding year, after consultation with the student's faculty advisor. The Department tries to accommodate requests, but flexibility is needed when the volume of requests for a given semester creates unworkable problems in some other area, for example by leaving the Department short of Teaching Assistants. Under such circumstances, priority will be accorded advanced students and those whose dissertation research entails timing constraints.

The Department's commitment to five years of support for all students is an uncommon one among U.S. Sociology graduate programs. It is a challenge we welcome, but students too can help by securing Fellowship support from outside the University. Those who secure outside funding are rewarded by extending Departmental support into the sixth year (see Length of Eligibility section below), and we hope in the future to find ways to increase this limit. In addition to the financial benefits of outside funding, students benefit from the prestige an award can confer within the discipline and, depending on the conditions of the award, possibly freeing one's schedule from TA or RA duties.

Financial aid is intended to support full-time graduate study for the academic year. University guidelines stipulate that full-time students may not work more than 20 hours per week during the academic year. Students should be especially wary of outside work commitments that do not tie in with the purposes of graduate study. The student's faculty advisor, as part of planning for the upcoming year, must approve outside work commitments. According to University guidelines, students may work up to 20 hours per week during the academic year. Starting with the 2015 cohort, students are funded on a year-round basis, and therefore the same 20 hours per week paid work limit applies in the summer, winter vacation, and intersession. Please note that the hours a student works at multiple (concurrent) jobs within the Hopkins community (including departmental teaching assistant and research assistantship positions) all count toward the weekly limit and are tracked.

When a student's work commitments are considered excessive, either outside activities will have to be curtailed or, when exceptional circumstances justify, the program of study will be adjusted. The Department's overriding concern is that students move through the graduate program in a timely fashion. This normally requires full-time commitment. The Department does not provide financial support for part-time study and will reduce or eliminate its financial commitments to students whose total work commitment during the academic year, inside and outside the University, exceeds 20 hours per week during the academic year.

## **B. Eligibility**

To be eligible for full financial aid, students must be full-time doctoral students, in residence and in good academic standing. Students on Term Leave of Absence are not eligible for assistance. Students on non-Resident

status are eligible for tuition support and fellowship stipends but the University does not allow non-resident students to work on campus as teaching assistants or lecturers.

### **C. Length of Eligibility**

Financial aid ordinarily is for five years, with eligibility for fifth year funding dependent on passing the oral examination of the dissertation proposal at the departmental level by the end of the fourth year of graduate study (June 30th). Students, with the endorsement of their advisor, may request an extension from the Chair until August 15th.

If Departmental support is declined in one or more semesters because the student has secured funding for graduate study from outside the university (e.g., a non-university funded fellowships), the department will strive to extend eligibility for departmental funding for a period equivalent to the semester(s) the student is off funding, but not to exceed one year. For example, a student fully supported for a year by an outside dissertation fellowship in his or her fifth year may receive departmental funding in the sixth year, but a student funded in their fourth and fifth years by an outside dissertation fellowship would be eligible for one additional year (not two additional years) of departmental support.

Funding extensions beyond the fifth year are not guaranteed: they depend on student progress (as determined by the Department Chair, in consultation with the student's faculty advisor) and the financial situation of the Department (as determined by the Department Chair).

If a student secures a dissertation fellowship or other award during their first five years that provides a stipend but not tuition, the department will strive to cover the cost of tuition (resident or non-resident tuition, depending on circumstances) during the period of the fellowship; however, such tuition support will reduce the amount of departmental funds for which the student is eligible in their sixth year. For example, if a dissertation fellowship covers stipend but not tuition in the fifth year, and the department pays the resident tuition, eligibility in the sixth year would be for stipend support only. As another example, if the Department provides non-resident tuition support in the fifth year — which is half the dollar amount of resident tuition — sixth year eligibility would be salary plus half of the resident tuition fee.

Occasionally, the Department's need for TA or RA assistance exceeds the pool of students eligible for financial aid. When that happens, the Department and Departmental faculty may hire students in their sixth year and beyond who have exhausted their financial aid eligibility. This is done on a fee for service basis and is not an extension of the right to financial aid. Students should not count on such opportunities being available as they happen only rarely.

The Department Chair, in consultation with the student's faculty advisor, makes final decisions about eligibility and granting of financial aid.

### **D. Types of Support**

#### **1. Tuition Fellowships**

Tuition fellowships cover university tuition. Students who receive fellowship stipends, departmental teaching assistantships and research assistantships are generally also awarded tuition fellowships.

#### **2. University Teaching Assistantships/Instructorships**

The faculty member having primary responsibility for each course specifies duties for the TA. Average time spent in class attendance, discussion sections, grading and counseling is 15 hours per week on a semester basis. TA responsibilities are not done until final grades have been submitted, and so may extend into the exam period.

Teaching assistantship pay is subject to federal and state taxes. For Teaching Assistantships in other departments, the duties, conditions of employment, etc. are governed by the policies of that department.

All Teaching Assistantships/Instructorships that are funded through the University, with the exception of the Dean's Teaching Fellowship, are counted as financial aid when determining whether a student has exhausted their five-year eligibility for financial aid.

The "Dean's Teaching Fellowships" are competitive fellowships that provide the opportunity for advanced graduate students to design and teach undergraduate courses. Fellows teach a one-semester course. Salary is set by the Dean's office. One of the primary purposes of the Dean's Teaching Fellowships is to prepare graduate students for their future teaching responsibilities. Applicants must be nominated and supervised by a faculty mentor. The letter of nomination from the faculty mentor should explain the relevance of the proposed course to the student's area of specialization and its importance for the department's undergraduate teaching program. Applicants must have completed the dissertation proposal and passed the Department Oral Examination prior to teaching in this program.

The Department also occasionally hosts an internal teaching competition for advanced graduate students who otherwise have exhausted their eligibility for Departmental aid. For example, the Doris Roberts Entwisle Graduate Teaching Fellowship, in honor of Doris Entwisle, provides a one semester financial aid package and the opportunity to teach a course of the student's own design in the area of their dissertation research. Teaching in the Arts and Sciences summer and intersession programs does not count against financial aid eligibility. All proposals for independent teaching under the Department's auspices require faculty sponsorship and oversight.

### **3. Research Assistantships**

Research assistantships are considered financial aid, whether funded through grants, contracts or General Funds administered by the Department or the University. This includes projects directed by the Department's faculty, including faculty holding part-time and joint appointments, as well as projects located at University research centers on the Homewood Campus (including the Center for Social Organization of Schools, the Institute for Policy Studies and the Baltimore Education Research Consortium), the School of Hygiene and Public Health, and the School of Medicine. Research assistants are chosen by the project director. Number of hours worked and wage or salary level is a decision based partly on the amount of funding available and partly on a mutual agreement between the project director and the graduate student, but research apprenticeships ordinarily will entail a work commitment averaging 15 hours weekly on a semester basis, the same as Teaching Assistantships. Pay is subject to federal and state taxes. Additionally, Research Assistants are not obligated to work on University holidays, Fall break day and during Spring break, and should be accorded two weeks vacation during the academic year (September 1 – May 31) (a list of University holidays is posted). The research assistant and project director should work out details of the vacation schedule and other conditions of the assistantship (e.g., the weekly work schedule) before the work commences. The scope of work and the time commitment should be determined by the supervising investigator and agreed to by the student before work commences. Potential disagreements regarding such matters should be resolved before work commences, preferably by the principals involved. Under extraordinary circumstances, the Chair may mediate disagreements or refer the matter to the Graduate Committee for its consideration.

### **E. Assignment of Financial Aid**

TA and RA assignments usually are announced during the summer preceding the year to which they apply. The work assignment will vary as a function of departmental need for student services, the faculty's needs, and a student's needs, interests, and level of preparation to perform various duties. In making assignments, the

Department strives to match student preferences and faculty needs, but the two may not always align, and even when they do align, the department may not always be able to accommodate them.

For first year research apprenticeship assignments, the Department will solicit information about apprenticeship opportunities available for students from faculty, including adjunct faculty. Students will receive this information and indicate their preferences for sponsors/projects. Faculty likewise will indicate their preferences for particular students. With that information in hand, the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Chair will strive to best match student and faculty interests and the opportunities available.

After the first year, students are encouraged to seek research assistantships with faculty who have grant monies or other funds to pay for their work. Though the Department will not ordinarily fund Research Apprenticeships/Assistantships beyond the first year, it will seek to provide students with information about potential research positions.

## **APPENDIX A**

### Department Facilities and Computer Resources

#### A. Department Reference Materials

The Department archives a bound copy of each completed dissertation. These copies are filed in the Department office and can be examined there by students and faculty. Archives are also maintained of dissertation proposals and trial research papers.

#### B. Milton S. Eisenhower Library

Each year the Chair selects a member of the faculty as liaison with the MSE Library to aid in the Library's selection of new books and journals of relevance to the discipline. Students may request library acquisitions through the Department's faculty representative. Special requests for new materials can be directed to the MSEL Resource Librarian for the Social Sciences (410-516-4156).

#### C. Seminar Series

Each academic year a planning committee organizes two series of special seminars. In the first series, speakers from outside the Department are invited to present research talks. In the second series, faculty members and advanced graduate students in the Department are invited to present and discuss research papers (which are distributed to students and faculty in advance). Graduate students engaged in writing their dissertations are encouraged to present their research as part of this series. Participation in both types of seminars is regarded as an integral part of graduate training and all resident students are expected to attend. Additional seminars and meetings may be scheduled by the Department's two special programs.

In addition, the department organizes professional development seminars each academic year. These seminars address topics including publishing in academic journals, participating in professional conferences, research funding opportunities, and the job market. All resident graduate students are expected to attend these seminars.

#### D. Computer Facilities

The department computer lab is available to full-time members of the Department free of charge. Computers are shared among students on an informal first-come, first-serve basis. Students are responsible for maintaining the security of this room to prevent theft by keeping the door closed at all times, and for observing the no food or drink policy.

All other JHU IT Resources can be found at [my.jh.edu](http://my.jh.edu) – Technology.