Kent State University Joint Doctoral Program in Sociology: Graduate Handbook

2014-2015 Academic Year
# Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 3  
PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS .......................................................................................... 3  
  Coursework .................................................................................................................. 7  
  Program Schedule ................................................................................................... 8  
COMPLETING THE MASTER’S DEGREE ................................................................. 10  
  The Master’s Thesis ................................................................................................. 10  
  Thesis Advisor ......................................................................................................... 11  
  Thesis Committee .................................................................................................... 11  
  Thesis Proposal ........................................................................................................ 11  
  Final Thesis Defense ............................................................................................... 11  
  Final Requirements and Submission of Thesis to the Graduate School ............. 12  
COMPLETING THE DISSERTATION .......................................................................... 16  
  Dissertation Director ............................................................................................... 16  
  Dissertation Committee ......................................................................................... 16  
  Dissertation Proposal ............................................................................................. 17  
  Examination and Oral Defense of the Dissertation ........................................... 17  
  Dissertation Credits ................................................................................................ 18  
  Final Requirements and Submission of Dissertation to the Graduate School .... 18  
  Awarding of the Doctoral Degree ........................................................................... 18  
  M.A. Thesis Proposal: Suggested Outline and Guidelines ................................. 19
INTRODUCTION

The KSU/AU Joint Doctoral Program in Sociology has been in operation since September 1973. In March of 1973 preliminary accreditation was awarded by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Final or full accreditation was awarded in April 1977. This unique concept in graduate education allows the student to enroll through either Kent State University or The University of Akron and function as a student at both schools. Students take course work and interact with faculty members from both schools and have access to the facilities located in both departments.

The joint program in sociology leads to the PhD degree. Although the MA is awarded in the course of working toward the PhD, students are not admitted who are only interested in pursuing a terminal Master’s degree. Admitted students, regardless of degree are expected to complete all required coursework. Applications are considered once a year, during the spring semester, for admission to the program starting the following fall semester. The program is generally intended for students enrolled full-time (i.e., 9-10 credit hours per semester).

Students enter into the program through either Kent State University or The University of Akron. Administratively a student is located in one of the departments but he or she does have certain privileges in both departments. The program is structured in such a way that the major requirements at both campuses are identical.

The daily operations of the program are handled by the Graduate Directors/Coordinators of the respective departments. When students have questions or concerns, they should see the Graduate Director of the department in which they are administratively based. Admission, assistantships, registration, record keeping, and degree clearance are handled by each respective administrative department.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

What We Expect from Graduate Students

The purpose of this section of the handbook is to outline expectations of all graduate students in the Sociology Department at Kent State University. To be successful in our program, it is important that you read what follows thoroughly and carefully. You should also review the American Sociological Association Code of Ethics: http://www.asanet.org/about/ethics.cfm

In addition to the handbook, you should also familiarize yourself with two web pages in the "Graduate Program" section of the Sociology Department's website:

(1) The "Forms and Docs" page provides you with easy access to annotated documents and forms that will facilitate your progress through the program and call your attention to important rules, procedures, and regulations. It is very important for you to know the rules, regulations, and deadlines. We have developed the "Forms and Docs" page to ensure that you have all the information you need. The current URL for the "Forms and Docs" page is: http://www.kent.edu/sociology/graduate/g-forms.cfm

1 This document is a modified and customized version of a document developed by Dr. Alissa Sherry, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Texas at Austin.
(2) The answers to questions that many students have had over the years can be found on the "Frequently Asked Questions" page. This page provides you with answers to the most commonly asked questions by graduate students—including those concerning coursework, procedures for theses and dissertations, etc. This page is "live" and updated regularly, so please check it first when you have a question. The URL is: http://www.kent.edu/sociology/graduate/g-faq.cfm

Being informed about the expectations others have of you and planning your work both in the short-term (e.g., weekly) and in the long-term (e.g., over the semester, the duration of your time in the program) is part of being a professional. Please read carefully through the entire Graduate Student Handbook and review the department website.

Addressing Professors

Upon entering the program, many students wonder about how to address the faculty. Even when you hear other graduate students call a professor by her/his first name, it is always professional to use the professor's title unless s/he indicates to you that it is okay/preferable to use first names. Specifically, unless a faculty member tells you to use her or his first name, you should use the titles of "Dr." or "Professor."

Respect

In our department, as in any professional setting, it is very important to behave respectfully and use appropriate language. This is particularly important when it comes to areas of diversity. There are some behaviors that will not be tolerated—behaviors involving things "unbecoming to a future sociologist," such as (but not limited to) making racial, sexual orientation, or gender slurs, making other inappropriate jokes at the expense of others, yelling at or losing your temper with faculty, staff, or students or otherwise showing disrespect, and other such behaviors.

Trusting Faculty and "The Process"

Professors do things for a reason. You may not always be aware of these reasons until after a class has ended or even until after you've graduated and have been working in the field for a while. It is very important that you place trust in your professors and believe that what they do is in your best interests. Professors are teaching the courses they are teaching and researching the topics they are researching because they are experts in these areas. Trust the expertise of faculty and make it your fallback position that things are done for a reason. If you do not agree with pedagogical styles or decisions made in courses, you will have your opportunity to provide feedback through course evaluations.

E-mail Communication

- Keep e-mails short, courteous, and to-the-point: Professional e-mail (that includes e-mail to a professor) has a specific purpose such as making information requests, setting up a meeting, or communicating an important fact.
- Write the purpose of your email in the ‘subject’ line.
- Use proper greeting and ending: Start with ‘Dear Professor X,’ or ‘Hello Prof. X.’ End your message with a ‘thank-you’.
- Check your grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
• Write back promptly: Nothing is worse than getting a reply to an email you sent 3 weeks ago. Not only does it show you don’t care, but it is confusing to the original sender who has since forgotten why they emailed you in the first place. Do let people know that you received their e-mail.

• Remember that e-mail is not private: When you send an e-mail to someone, it goes through many networks before it reaches your recipient and may even leave copies of your e-mail on a server, where it may later be retrieved.

Meetings with Faculty

You should meet with faculty during their office hours if possible. Office hours are posted next to each faculty member’s door at the start of every semester. If you want to make an appointment with a faculty member, you should e-mail and ask to drop by her or his office hours, or if that is not possible, then indicate the days/times when you are otherwise available to meet (e.g., days/times that do not conflict with your courses).

Assistantship Duties

Students who are funded by the department will be assigned to work for specific faculty members for a certain number of hours each week, usually 10 or 20 hours. For example, if you are assigned to a particular faculty member for 10 hours, you should expect to spend an average of 10 hours of your time each week doing what that faculty member asks you to do as part of your assistantship. Remember, you are being compensated to do this work. It is your responsibility to budget your time such that you are able to complete your assistantship tasks efficiently and to the best of your ability. Your continued funding is contingent upon you satisfactorily completing the assigned responsibilities that come with your assistantship.

Assistantship Assignments and Additional Responsibilities

You will be given an opportunity to express your preference for GA assignments during the summer. While we make every effort to align these preferences, that is not always possible. Being involved in research is an excellent way to get to know professors and develop relationships with them. While your assigned GA tasks should always come first, we encourage you to participate in other faculty members’ research. We encourage you to be proactive and entrepreneurial about your research interests.

Your assistantship duties begin when the semester officially begins, and they end when the semester officially ends. You must be available to perform your duties as a GA for this entire period. For example, it is not acceptable for you to leave for winter vacation before or even during exam week (i.e., before the semester officially ends), in which case the faculty member to which you are assigned may end up performing a number of tasks that would otherwise have been assigned to you.

If you have an illness or life problem that interferes with your ability to complete your assistantship for two weeks or less, you need to contact your assigned professor and the Graduate Coordinator and file the paperwork for a short-term absence. For absences longer than two weeks, you should discuss taking a leave of absence. In either case, it is important that you keep your GA professor, your advisor, and the Graduate Coordinator informed regarding circumstances that prevent you from completing your assigned duties.
Class Attendance and Punctuality

Class attendance is mandatory. If you have to miss class occasionally (e.g., because you are sick), contact the professor by e-mail as soon as possible to inform her/him of your absence, preferably before the class. Please read all of your syllabi carefully so that you are fully aware of each faculty member’s expectations when it comes to absences and how they are to be handled. Please endeavor to be on time for class.

Coursework Preparation

A general rule of thumb in graduate school is: for every one hour of class, students should be spending three hours studying/reading/doing homework outside of class. Since most graduate classes are three hours, this means that you should be spending, on average, about 9 hours per week studying and working for each class.

Embracing Evaluations and Feedback

External evaluation, self-evaluation, and criticism are the "life blood" of the Academy. Every member of the faculty has been exposed to both constructive and often difficult criticism and feedback. You may find this central feature of graduate school quite difficult to adjust to because you would not be in this program if you had not excelled as an undergraduate. In graduate school and in academic work generally, even high quality work is critiqued. Learning to use criticism of your work from professor’s and in some cases, from the evaluations of your peers, constructively without taking it personally is one of the most important things you will learn to do in graduate school. There is a great deal of learning and growth that can be done if you are open and mature about the process of evaluation and criticism. So, put your feedback into perspective. Being open to feedback, even if it requires taking a few deep breaths, is one of the most important skills you need to develop right away as a graduate student, and as a professional more generally.

Writing and Other Fundamental Skills

Being a good writer does not come easily to everyone, but it is absolutely critical to your success in graduate school and beyond. Your professors and thesis/dissertation advisors should not be put in the position of being copy editors that spend valuable time line-editing your work so that your substantive ideas are communicated effectively. If you receive feedback indicating that your writing needs work, it is important for you to make use of the university's "Writing Commons" (http://www.kent.edu/writingcommons/index.cfm). Especially in the case of theses and dissertations, a faculty member may ask you to work on your writing with staff at the Writing Commons before reading and commenting on drafts of your work.

In addition to the Writing Commons, the university also offers consulting support for statistical and qualitative software, research methods and data analysis, grant writing, the publication process, and scholarly writing. If you would like additional support in these areas, we encourage you to take advantage of KSU's "Statistical & Qualitative Software Instruction and Consulting Services." The URL for this service is here: http://libguides.library.kent.edu/content.php?pid=303862&sid=2490751
Participating in Department Life

As Durkheim pointed out long ago, people who participate in the same activities and "rituals" develop a common outlook and an energy that is vital for to the overall success and health of our department. Every semester there will be a number of department events outside the normal routine of coursework, assistantship duties, and other research- and teaching-related activities, including lunches with visiting job candidates, job talks, campus visits for prospective graduate students, colloquia, and department banquets. We consider participation in the life of the department to be a crucial dimension of your professional socialization and so you are expected to attend as many of these activities as possible.

PROGRAM DESIGN AND TIMELINE

The joint program in sociology begins with regularly scheduled courses and seminars. To maximize progression and success in the program, it is important that students follow the prescribed sequencing of courses. This foundation, which includes a course to prepare students for professional careers in sociology, is supplemented by faculty advising and supervision of research projects, departmental colloquia, teacher training, and a supportive peer environment. Development of research expertise is fostered through required course offerings in theory, research design, qualitative and quantitative methodologies and statistics as well as elective offerings in a variety of substantive areas.

Coursework

Enrollment requirements for the degree are 90 semester credit hours. These include 28 credit hours of required courses, 26 hours of elective courses (9 hours in the student’s first/primary area, 9 hours in her/his second area, and at least 3 hours outside the student’s two areas), 6 Thesis I hours, and 30 Dissertation I hours. Please note that starting fall 2014, no more than 3 credits of individual investigation or research hours may be applied toward the degree as elective credits (until then it is 6 credits). Further, no more than 3 credits of 500-level (UA) or 50000-level (KSU) coursework may be applied toward the degree as elective credits. These 500- or 50000-level credits may only be taken at the home institution. Finally, no more than 6 credits of graduate-level classes taken outside the joint program may be applied toward the degree as elective credits.

Students who desire to take any graduate-level electives outside the joint program must submit a written request to the graduate education committee in their home department and receive formal written approval prior to enrolling in the class. In the request the student must indicate (1) the course name and number, (2) the department in which the course is being offered, (3) the instructor’s name, (4) the official graduate catalog description of the course (or equivalent if the course is not listed in the graduate catalog), (5) if relevant, the department area with which the course is most closely aligned (inequality, social psychology, medical sociology/mental health, and criminology/deviance), and (6) a brief explanation detailing how the course (a) contributes to the student’s program of study/interests and (b) supplements joint program course offerings. If available, the student should also include a copy of the course syllabus along with the request. First-year students who wish to take an outside course

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2 In addition to the recommended sequencing of courses, students should refine and develop their course plans in regular consultation with their advisors.

3 Beginning fall 2014.
must explain why they perceive a need to take the outside course in their first year of study instead of taking the course at a later time.

The schedule below reflects "normal" progress in the joint program for full-time students. Required courses may be completed earlier than recommended (i.e., in an “elective” course slot) but should not be completed later than in the sequencing below. More specific information about completing each facet of the program is located in later sections of the handbook. Graduate students are responsible for ensuring that required forms and paperwork are submitted on time and as required. Please see Appendix D for a complete list of the paperwork required for each step of the program.

Program Schedule

Year 1: Fall (10 hours)
- Professional and Ethical Issues in Sociology (3 credit hours)
- Early Sociological Theory (3 credit hours)
- Quantitative Research Methodology (4 credit hours)

Year 1: Spring (10 hours)
- Multivariate Techniques in Sociology (4 credit hours)
- Elective Course in primary area (3 credit hours)
- Elective Course (3 credit hours)

Year 2: Fall (10 hours)
- Advanced Data Analysis (4 credit hours)
- Elective Course in primary area (3 credit hours)
- Elective Course or Thesis Hours (3 credit hours)

Year 2: Spring (9 hours)
- Contemporary Sociological Theory (3 credit hours)
- College Teaching of Sociology (3 credit hours)
- Elective Course or Thesis Hours (3 credit hours)

(For those entering program without a thesis-based Master’s degree in Sociology, adequate progress requires thesis research to be completed and defended by the end of this semester)

Year 3: Fall (9 hours)
- Elective Course (3 credit hours)
- Elective Course (3 credit hours)
- Elective Course or Individual Investigation/Research Hours (recommended for revising thesis or other paper for publication) (3 credit hours)

Year 3: Spring (10 hours)
- Qualitative Research Methods (4 credit hours)
- Elective Course (3 credit hours)
- Elective Course (3 credit hours)

(For adequate progress, the student should advance to candidacy by the end of this semester)
Year 4: Fall (9 hours)
Elective course (3 credit hours)
Individual Investigation/Research Hours or Elective course (3 credit hours)
Individual Investigation/Research Hours or Elective course (3 credit hours)

(The elective course taken during this semester will bring the student up to the required number of hours for elective courses. While they will not count toward the degree, the student is advised to take 6 hours of Individual Investigation/Research Hours this semester to work on publications.)

Year 4: Spring (15 hours)
Dissertation (I) Hours (15 credit hours per semester)

(For adequate progress, dissertation proposal defended by end of this semester; the student should enroll in 15 hours of Dissertation I for the summer)

Year 5: Fall
Dissertation (II) Hours (15 credit hours per semester)

Year 5: Spring
Dissertation (II) Hours (15 credit hours per semester)

(Defend dissertation by end of Spring Year 5)

Course Work: Breadth Requirement

The Joint Ph.D. Program offers courses in four areas of concentration:

1. Criminology and Deviance
2. Inequality (Race, Class, and Gender)
3. Medical and Mental Health
4. Social Psychology

Students are required to identify two areas from the department’s areas of concentration and take nine (9) hours of coursework in each area. The remaining (8) elective hours for the degree can be distributed in any of the four areas. In order to determine which courses count toward specific areas, students should consult with their advisor and the Graduate Director/Coordinator.

The Coursework Approval Form must be submitted to the Graduate Director/Coordinator early in the semester in which the student is finishing up their course work. The Graduate Director/Coordinator determines whether the course requirements have been fulfilled, in consultation with the area committees if needed. A list of courses taught will be posted on the Graduate Program website for each Department and will updated each semester. The list will indicate the area(s) designation for each course.

A student who enters the program having taken a graduate course that they wish to count toward their two areas must petition the Graduate Coordinator who, in consultation with the graduate committee,
will decide if the course meets an area requirement. Appeals regarding the decisions of the Graduate Coordinator / Director may be made to the Department Chair.

The designation of independent investigations is made by the instructor of record. Only 3 hours of independent investigation or research hours may count toward fulfillment of degree requirements.

Choosing an Advisor

All incoming students are required to choose an advisor and submit the required form by the end of the first year. The Professional Seminar, which is taken in the first semester of the first year is designed to help you with this decision.

Evaluation of Graduate Student Teaching

As part of the evaluation of student progress, all graduate students teaching a course will be evaluated every semester by a faculty member appointed by GEC. The review is intended to provide constructive feedback, to be an opportunity for continual improvement, and in keeping with the view that high quality pedagogy is best achieved when we share our teaching experiences. Please Appendix C for the forms that are used for the evaluation.

The GEC will appoint a faculty member to complete the evaluation no later than the tenth week of the semester. The faculty member will meet with the graduate student prior to scheduling the classroom visit. During that meeting, the faculty member and graduate student will review the course syllabus, discuss areas of focus for the evaluation, and review the collegial evaluation form that will be used by the faculty member. The form is provided below. After the classroom visit, the faculty member and graduate student will hold a post-evaluation meeting. The faculty member will complete the collegial review form and submit to the GEC no later than the Friday of the penultimate week of the semester.

COMPLETING THE MASTER’S DEGREE

The Master’s Thesis

Completing a Master’s thesis is the final MA requirement for students who are making adequate progress toward the doctoral degree. The aim of this requirement is to produce a journal-length empirical paper (i.e., a thesis) that can be revised and sent out for review soon after completion of the final defense. In completing this requirement the student may conduct original empirical research, replication research, or secondary analysis. Care should be taken to select a topic and question that allows for the thesis to be completed by the end of the spring semester of the student’s second year in the program.

NOTE: All research projects must be submitted to the appropriate Institutional Review Board. No data collection and/or analysis should proceed on any empirical project until the IRB has given formal approval (or exemption) of the project.
**Thesis Advisor**

Each student should select a member of the graduate faculty whose areas of specialization correspond to the student’s own research interests. Students may select a graduate faculty member from either campus to serve as their thesis advisor. The selection of a thesis advisor may occur at any point in time prior to the completion of the first year of study (i.e., 20 hours of completed course work), but no later than end of the spring semester of the first year.

When a faculty member agrees to serve as advisor, the student should complete the appropriate form and submit it to the Graduate Studies Coordinator/Director of the student’s home campus (see the forms page on departmental website). The graduate director will then sign the form, make copies for the student and faculty member, and place the original document in the student’s file.

**Thesis Committee**

The student, in connection with his or her thesis advisor, shall select two additional graduate faculty members within the joint program to serve on the thesis committee. The thesis committee should consist of graduate faculty members from the joint program who are best suited to provide advice and guidance regarding the proposed topic under investigation.

At UA, once the three-person committee has been formed, the student is responsible for completing the necessary form(s) constituting the committee and submitting it to the Graduate Studies Coordinator/Director (see the forms page on departmental website).

**Thesis Proposal**

A written thesis proposal is to be developed by the student in consultation with her or his advisor. The proposal shall include a statement of the problem, theory and hypotheses, intended methodology, data source and data analytic techniques. Appendices may be included. The student is to submit the written thesis proposal to all members of the thesis committee no less than 10 days (but preferably two weeks) in advance of a proposal meeting date. The full committee must then meet with the student to discuss and approve/disapprove of the written proposal.

Approval of the proposal will be indicated by the signature of each member of the committee and kept on file in the student’s home department office (see the forms page on departmental website). The proposal meeting should occur no later than the semester prior to the thesis defense. Further, the approval form must be signed and IRB approval must be obtained before the student begins data collection.

**Final Thesis Defense**

When the thesis is believed to be in completed, defensible form, it is left to the discretion of the thesis advisor whether to call a formal pre-defense meeting of the committee or to poll committee members as to the likelihood of a successful oral defense of the document. At least 10 days prior to conducting the pre-defense meeting or poll, a copy of the thesis must be distributed to each committee member. When the pre-defense meeting is held or the poll is conducted, the committee may reject the thesis,
require major or minor revisions, or accept it for oral examination. A thesis may be reconsidered for defense as soon as recommended revisions (if any) have been made.

The thesis advisor will schedule the oral defense no sooner than 10 days after the (revised) thesis document has been accepted for oral examination by the committee. **A notice of the time and place of the defense will be circulated among the joint program's faculty and graduate students at least 10 days prior.** Any interested departmental members may attend the meeting.

At the conclusion of the thesis defense, the committee will vote to accept the thesis as is, accept the document once specific conditions have been met, or to reject the thesis. The thesis advisor, and any committee members who wish to do so, will examine the final thesis document to ensure compliance with the committee’s recommendations. For the thesis to be formally accepted, all committee members must sign the signature page of the thesis. **Be sure to see departmental website for all necessary forms related to thesis and degree completion.**

**Final Requirements and Submission of Thesis to the Graduate School**

Students should consult the appropriate graduate school website for required formatting instructions, submission guidelines, due dates, and thesis binding. **It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of the deadlines set by their Graduate School for graduation.** Be sure that your thesis advisor receives a final electronic copy of the completed document that is accepted by the Graduate School.

**Advancement to Candidacy**

Advancement to candidacy is accomplished when the student has written and successfully defended a 25-35 page Candidacy Paper and passed an oral examination. To be considered to be making adequate progress in the program, it is ideal for students to complete this process in their third year; this is expected for students who enter the program with an MA degree, although students who enter with a BA might start in the spring of the third year and finish in the fall of the fourth year. Advancement to candidacy is a 4-step process.

1. **Identify Focus/Topic and Committee Membership:** Doctoral students should identify one primary area of study from their two chosen program areas. This program area, should in turn, be narrowed to a specific substantive focus. Examples include the stress process (medical sociology/mental health), mass incarceration (deviance/criminology), group processes (social psychology), and the impact of intergenerational migration (inequality). Once this focus has been identified a Candidacy Committee Request Form must be submitted to the Graduate Director as specified in the Advancement to Candidacy Timeline. On this form, the student will identify the candidacy committee chair and one other faculty member and obtain their signatures, indicating they have agreed to serve on the committee. Both of these faculty members will have self-identified as a specialist in the student’s primary area. The JEC will appoint the two remaining committee members from the relevant joint program area. The JEC will work to ensure that the appointment of at least one member is from the non-home institution.

2. **Write Candidacy Proposal:** Following the Advancement to Candidacy Timeline, the student will submit a 5-10 page Candidacy Proposal to her or his committee. As a candidacy examination, it is expected that the student will develop this document in limited consultation with the committee chair and other committee members. The proposal is a description of the research agenda and the projects
that will be developed in the longer 25-35 page research proposal. Each committee member will send a short, journal-style critical evaluation of the candidate’s general plan to the committee chair. The chair will collate all of the reviews and pass them on to the student. The collated reviews will be provided to the student following the Advancement to Candidacy Timeline. It is expected that the student will work independently to incorporate the suggestions of the committee members into their final document, but she/he may meet with individual committee members to seek clarification on specific points. The student is expected to address the committee’s feedback in the form of a supplementary response memo in which the student explains how the committee members’ critiques have been addressed. The response memo should be submitted to the chair and the committee as a separate document along with the final Candidacy Paper (see below).

3. Write Candidacy Paper: The student completes the Candidacy Paper as specified in the Advancement to Candidacy Timeline. The required length of 25-35 pages is exclusive of bibliography, tables, or appendices. The purpose of the paper is to provide the student with the opportunity to develop their expertise in a sub-field of one of the department’s program areas. The topic should be narrower than an entire program area but broader than a specific dissertation topic. The research proposal should include a review of the literature of the student’s substantive focus as well as a description of at least two research projects that represent the student’s research agenda. The paper should demonstrate how the projects will address a gap in the existing literature by identifying clear research questions, discussing the significance of their proposed projects, and outline a research plan using appropriate methods. In addition, the student should also discuss dissemination plans for their projects. Ideally, this paper could be modified into independent papers for publication or chapters within the eventual dissertation.

4. Take Candidacy Oral Examination: The final requirement of the candidacy process is the oral examination lasting approximately two hours and conducted by the committee. The candidate must complete the oral examination according the Advancement to Candidacy Timeline. The research proposal must be distributed to the committee at least two weeks before the date of the oral examination.

The oral examination is divided into two parts. In the first part, the candidate’s general knowledge in their specialty area is assessed. This includes the major theoretical contributions, empirical findings, debates, and methodological issues of her or his area, including but not limited to relevant coursework (i.e., coursework taken as part of the student’s primary area of specialization). In the second part of the exam the candidate will be asked to discuss their research agenda paper. This will include discussion of the research questions, the theoretical frameworks, significance of the projects, research designs, and the dissemination plans.

At the end of the exam, the committee will confer and vote as to whether the exam is to receive a pass with distinction, a pass, or a fail. In order to pass, the student must receive at least 3/4 pass votes from the committee members. In order to receive a pass with distinction, the vote for distinction must be unanimous. Candidates who do not pass will receive in writing a summary of the committee’s concerns from the committee chair no later than two weeks after the exam. Candidates who fail the exam will have one additional opportunity to pass. The form that this takes will be determined by the committee but must involve the student successfully addressing the committee’s concerns. This may involve resubmitting a revision of the research agenda paper and/or another oral examination by the end of the fifteenth week of the following semester. A second failure will result in a JEC recommendation of dismissal from the program to the Graduate Coordinator.
Advancement to Candidacy Timeline

Throughout the first three years of the program, the student should work with their advisor to identify appropriate courses that are in the students’ areas of interest. As the student completes these courses, they should be noted on the “Coursework Approval Form.” As soon as the student has completed the coursework in both their areas, they should submit this form to their graduate director / coordinator.

The following provides the expected two-semester timeline for those who start the Advancement to Candidacy process in the fall or spring of the academic year. The timelines assume that the student is engaging in this process in Year 3, although for those who start in the spring the process will continue into Year 4. Students are always welcome to complete any of these requirements earlier, on the advice of their advisor.

End of the Third Week of the First Semester: Complete the Candidacy Committee Request Form – Submit to Graduate Coordinator/Director of home campus

End of the Fifth Week of the First Semester: Submit 5-10 page Candidacy Proposal to committee.

End of the Ninth Week of the First Semester: Chair will distribute committee reviews to student

End of the Ninth Week of the Second Semester: Candidacy Paper and response memo due to committee.

End of the Fifteenth Week of the Second Semester: Last date to complete Oral Exam

Responsibilities and Expectations

Since this process is viewed an exam, the expectations for each participant in the process are spelled out.

For the Student:
1. You will identify your timeline and communicate to the Graduate Coordinator of your intention and timeline for completing your Advancement to Candidacy.
2. You will identify your Candidacy Chair and one additional faculty member.
3. You will ensure that you have taken three substantive courses in the primary area in which you intend to write your Candidacy paper.
4. You will consult with your Candidacy Chair on the scope and focus of your Candidacy Paper.
5. You will turn keep the proposed timeline.
6. You will work independently on all aspect of the process. While you may seek advice and consultation regarding decision points or areas of concern regarding your paper from Candidacy Chair, you should not expect the Chair to read and provide comments on drafts.

For the Candidacy Chair:
1. You are responsible to assist the student with respect to the scope and focus of their paper. This includes advising the student on the initial 5-10 page paper.
2. You are responsible to advise the student throughout the process, as it is expected that the student will have questions regarding the development of both the 5-10 page paper and the final document. This advice includes helping the student resolve issues regarding the direction, breadth and depth of the paper.
3. Since this is an exam, you are not expected to read and comment on drafts of the paper.
4. You will coordinate the Candidacy process with the other members of the committee.
5. You will convene the Candidacy Committee for the Oral Defense.

For the Candidacy Committee Members:
1. You are responsible to reading and commenting on the 5-10 page paper and the final document in a timely manner.
2. You are not expected to advise or consult with the student on the paper.
3. You are not expected to read or comment on drafts of the document.
COMPLETING THE DISSERTATION

Each doctoral candidate must complete a dissertation demonstrating his or her ability to conduct scholarly research. This dissertation should be an original contribution to the field of sociology. The dissertation work is formally begun upon completion of all course work and the comprehensive examinations.

**Dissertation Director**

The dissertation director may be from either department of the joint program and does not have to be the same person who advised the student up through the comprehensive examination process. The only restrictions are that the dissertation director must be a full-time faculty member of the joint program in sociology, and either have graduate faculty status in Category II at The University of Akron or be approved for dissertation direction at Kent State University with an F-4 graduate faculty status. **If a student chooses to select a dissertation advisor who is from the other university, then a member of the committee from the student’s home university will be responsible for the administrative details associated with completion of the dissertation.** The dissertation process will follow the guidelines of the university at which the student is administratively based in regard to formatting and completion deadlines. Once the dissertation director has agreed to serve, written notification of this decision to the Graduate Coordinator or Director is required (see the forms page on departmental website).

**Dissertation Committee**

The selection of the dissertation committee members is made jointly by the student and dissertation director. The members of this committee approve the dissertation proposal, work closely with the student as the dissertation progresses, and serve on the final oral defense examining committee.

All dissertation committees shall have at least 5 committee members, including a member from outside the joint sociology program. A majority of the committee membership must have a status on the graduate faculty that allows them to direct doctoral dissertations (i.e., Category II or F-4). In addition, a majority of the committee members (including the director) must be from the joint program in sociology.

One member of the committee must be from a department other than sociology at the student’s home university – **this member must also hold Category II (UA) or F-4 (KSU) graduate faculty status.** This member ought to be selected so as to be maximally beneficial to the student in the design and conduct of the research, providing a perspective from a related discipline.

Dissertation committees may include other graduate faculty members but these minimum requirements must be met. The dissertation committee should be formed as soon as possible after the dissertation director is selected. The intent is that the committee will have full input into the dissertation project as it is being planned and initiated, not after it has been substantially completed. At the University of Akron, once the committee is formed (including the outside member) the student must notify the Graduate Coordinator or Director, in writing, of the committee’s composition and the title of the dissertation proposal (see the forms page on UA’s departmental website). The committee composition must also be submitted to and approved by the UA graduate school. At The University of Akron, this committee notification must be submitted and approved **no later than 3 months prior to the dissertation defense. In other words, the dissertation defense may not take place until at least three**
months after the form is filed. Failure to file the form three months prior will, therefore result in a delay of a student’s defense and, potentially, commencement.)

The outside member of the committee shall function as a regular member of the committee, attending all meetings and receiving preliminary drafts or chapters as do other committee members. The outside member of the committee is usually someone who may provide additional expertise to the dissertation research from a related field and is also someone who assures that the dissertation process is conducted fairly and that quality standards are maintained.

The schedules of all committee members, including the outside member, shall be considered when selecting a time for all committee meetings, including the final dissertation defense.

**Dissertation Proposal**

A dissertation proposal is to be prepared by the student and approved by the dissertation committee. The proposal meeting should occur no later than the semester prior to the thesis defense. Further, the research proposal must be approved by the Institutional Review Board of the student’s home university prior to the initiation of data collection or analysis.

The details of the proposal are to be determined by the dissertation director and committee but would typically include:

1. Identification and explanation of the general problem or issue to be investigated.
2. A brief review of the literature.
3. A listing of the research questions or hypotheses to be investigated.
4. A brief explanation of the major concepts and/or variables involved and their operationalization.
5. The design, methodology and analytic techniques to be used.

A meeting will be held with all committee members and the student to approve or disapprove of the proposal. This meeting must take place within no less than 10 days, and no more than three weeks of the committee receiving the completed document. The proposal can be approved or returned to the student for further revision.

Approval of the proposal will be indicated by the signature of each member of the committee on the appropriate form and kept on file in the departmental office (see the forms page on departmental website). All committee members reserve the right to withhold their signatory approval until all changes to the proposal have been made and are deemed satisfactory.

**Examination and Oral Defense of the Dissertation**

When the dissertation is completed, the Dean of Arts and Sciences must be notified at KSU so that a Graduate Faculty Representative may be appointed. Once the appointment is made (KSU), a printed copy in final form must then be submitted to each committee member and the Graduate Faculty Representative (at KSU) for their evaluation. The dissertation director should schedule a preliminary meeting of the committee, known as the pre-oral, to decide if the dissertation is ready for defense. If the dissertation committee and the (KSU) Graduate Faculty Representative judge the dissertation ready
for defense, a date and time for the defense will be established. The oral defense date must be no less than 10 days (but preferably two weeks) after the pre-oral meeting. The dissertation director must inform the student of the result of the pre-oral and any changes that may have been requested to be made to the document prior to the oral defense. The director will also inform the student as to whether a new written version of the dissertation is to be submitted to the committee prior to the oral defense. If so, such written work should be given to the committee at least 10 days prior to the oral defense date so that the committee members have a chance to review the document.

**Notification of the dissertation defense must be sent to all members of the joint program in sociology. This notification must include dissertation title, date, time, place and an invitation to attend (but not vote).** This notification should occur at least 10 days prior to the scheduled defense. At the oral defense, the committee and outside Graduate Faculty Representative (at KSU) will examine the student on all relevant and pertinent aspects of the dissertation.

The committee may reject the dissertation document, require major or minor changes, or accept the dissertation. At the end of the oral defense, all committee members will be polled for their vote on the oral defense (pass or fail). A maximum of one “fail” vote is allowed for the student to pass. More than one “fail” vote constitutes failure for the student. A failed dissertation defense may not be repeated. If further changes to the dissertation document are necessary, they should be made as quickly as possible. All committee members reserve the right to withhold their signatory approval until all changes have been made and are deemed satisfactory.

All committee members will affix their signatures to a single form signifying their vote (see the forms page on departmental website). The completed form will be sent to the Graduate School indicating that the defense has been held, and that the student has passed or failed. All appropriate forms must be on file in the Graduate School at the appropriate times. **It is the responsibility of the student to know which forms must be completed and filed, and at what times.**

**Dissertation Credits**

Students must complete at least 30 semester hours of dissertation credit. More than 30 hours may be taken but only that amount will count toward the degree. These credits will be assigned to the dissertation director.

**Final Requirements and Submission of Dissertation to the Graduate School**

Guidelines for preparing a dissertation can be found on the home university’s graduate school website. These requirements will specify the final details of submission, including binding fees, submission fees, and other administrative details for final submission. **It is the responsibility of the student to be aware of requirements and deadlines set by the Graduate School of their home university.**

**Awarding of the Doctoral Degree**

The Ph.D. degree will be awarded from the school at which the student is administratively based. The fact that either the dissertation director may be from the other campus does not affect where the degree is awarded. It is usually possible for a director from the other campus to attend the home university’s graduation ceremonies and to “hood” the student receiving the doctoral degree.
APPENDIX A: Thesis Outline

M.A. Thesis Proposal: Suggested Outline and Guidelines

This suggested outline is intended as an aid for the student and his or her thesis advisor in preparing the thesis proposal. The nature of the problem to be investigated and the procedure to be used in the investigation will result in differential emphases and details on the various outline sections. These should be worked out in consultation with your advisor.

I. Introduction and Statement of problem
   A. State the general problem/question to be investigated.
   B. Introduce the reader to the main goals and contributions of your proposed project.

II. Literature Review
    Review theoretical and substantive literature related to your topic. This section should be guided by your general research question(s) and cover the literature relevant to answer that/those questions. In this section, most authors introduce a “guiding” theoretical framework, which may also help to better specification of your final research questions, hypotheses, and analytic approach.

II. Research Questions and hypotheses
    State your specific research questions/hypotheses that emerge from the preceding literature review.

III. Methods
    Identify and explain the data and measures that you will use to investigate your research questions/hypotheses. The particular research methods employed depends on the nature of the problem and/or the state of knowledge in the area. This should be worked out in consultation with your advisor.

IV. Data Analysis
    Indicate your analytic strategy – i.e., how you will evaluate your data in relation to your research questions/hypotheses.

V. Conclusion
    Restate the importance of your proposed project and the contributions that completing the project will make to the relevant literature(s).

NOTE: If it is determined by the graduate faculty that completing a doctoral degree is no longer possible or desirable, the M.A. degree may be completed through the “non-thesis option.” Please see Appendix A for the non-thesis process.
APPENDIX B: FORMS

Coursework Approval Form

Prior to advancing to candidacy, students must complete coursework in three of the four substantive areas offered by the joint graduate program (Criminology/Deviance, Inequality, Medical Sociology/Mental Health, or Social Psychology). Students are required to take 9 hours of electives (three courses) in a first/primary area, and 9 hours of electives (three courses) in a second area.

Complete the following form at the completion of these requirements and submit to the graduate coordinator / director at your home campus.

Student Name: ____________________________________________________/ Date ______

1. Primary Area of Specialization ________________________________________________

   Course 1: ________________________________________________________________
   (Course Number and Title) Completed ______ (Semester / Year)
   Course 2: ________________________________________________________________
   (Course Number and Title) Completed ______ (Semester / Year)
   Course 3: ________________________________________________________________
   (Course Number and Title) Completed ______ (Semester / Year)

2. Second Area of Specialization _______________________________________________

   Course 1: ________________________________________________________________
   (Course Number and Title) Completed ______ (Semester / Year)
   Course 2: ________________________________________________________________
   (Course Number and Title) Completed ______ (Semester / Year)
   Course 3: ________________________________________________________________
   (Course Number and Title) Completed ______ (Semester / Year)

Approval: _________________________________________________________ / _____________
   (Graduate coordinator / director) (Date approved)
Committee Request Form

Please fill out the first three sections and submit to the graduate director / coordinator at your home campus by September 15th of your third year. After the appointment of the full committee, you will receive a copy of this form so you can contact your committee members.

Name:_________________________________________

1. Area of Specialization ____________________________________________
(Criminology/Deviance, Inequality, Medical Sociology/Mental Health, or Social Psychology)

2. Area of Sub-Specialty: ____________________________________________

2. Courses within primary substantive area (must complete at least two courses in primary area prior to advancement to candidacy)

   Course 1:______________________________ Completed______________ (Semester / Year)

   Course 2:______________________________ Completed______________ (Semester / Year)

3. Student Committee Selections (with necessary signatures)

   Chair: _________________________________ ___________________________ / ________
   (print / type name)                   Signature of faculty                Date

   Member: _________________________________ ___________________________ / ________
   (print / type name)                   Signature of faculty                Date

4. Appointed Members:

   Member: _________________________________ ___________________________ / ________
   (print / type name)                   Signature of faculty                Date

   Member: _________________________________ ___________________________ / ________
   (print / type name)                   Signature of faculty                Date
Appendix C: Collegial Review of Teaching

Collegial Review of Teaching: Traditional Delivery

Date _________________________

Instructor __________________________

Faculty Reviewer ____________________

Course Name and Number__________________________________

Rating scale (1=very poor, 2= weak, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent, N/A=not applicable)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONTENT</th>
<th>1</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<td>Higher order thinking was required</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructor related ideas to prior knowledge</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course content reflects state-of-the-field</td>
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<td>Introduction stated organization of lecture</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective transitions (clear w/summaries)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clear organizational plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concluded by summarizing main ideas</td>
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<th>INTERACTION</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectively held classes attention</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Achieved active student involvement</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student-instructor interaction is respectful and appropriate</td>
<td></td>
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<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-to-student interaction is respectful and appropriate</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>VERBAL/NON-VERBAL</th>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spoke clearly and audibly</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Absence of verbalized pauses (er, ah, etc.)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructor spoke extemporaneously</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rate of delivery was appropriate</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident &amp; enthusiastic</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<th>COURSE MATERIALS</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Powerpoint clear &amp; well-organized</td>
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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course learning objectives clear</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course learning objectives appropriate for level of class</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course objectives consistent with established student learning outcomes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies are described comprehensively</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies are consistent with department &amp; university policy</td>
<td></td>
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<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regular feedback about student performance provided in a timely manner throughout the course</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
NOTES:

**STRENGTHS:** (e.g. use of comparisons & contrasts, positive feedback, opportunity provided for student questions)

**NEEDS IMPROVEMENT:** (e.g. unable to answer student questions, overall topic knowledge, relevance of examples)

Collegial Review of Teaching: Online Delivery

Date _________________________
Instructor __________________________
Faculty Reviewer ________________
Course Name and Number__________________________________

*Rating scale (1=very poor, 2= weak, 3=average, 4=good, 5=excellent, N/A=not applicable)*

**CONTENT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher order thinking required</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course content reflects state-of-the-field</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**ORGANIZATION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course is well-organized and easy to navigate</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>N/A</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course design presents course material clearly throughout the course</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>All web pages are visually and functionally consistent throughout the course</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course uses a variety of technology tools to appropriately facilitate communication and learning</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Course optimizes internet access and effectively engages students in the learning process</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>All web pages are visually and functionally consistent throughout the course</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional and Assessment activities are closely aligned</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</table>

**INTERACTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course provides multiple visual, textual, and/or auditory activities to enhance student learning</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course provides multiple activities that help students develop critical thinking</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appropriate level of student-instructor interaction</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>N/A</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**COURSE MATERIALS**

| Powerpoint clear & well-organized | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

**Syllabus:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course learning objectives clear</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tr>
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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regular feedback about student performance provided in a timely manner throughout the course

|   | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

NOTES:

**STRENGTHS:** (e.g. use of comparisons & contrasts, positive feedback, opportunity provided for student questions)

**NEEDS IMPROVEMENT:** (e.g. unable to answer student questions, overall topic knowledge, relevance of examples)

Adapted from: http://www.csuchico.edu/roi/the_rubric.shtml
Appendix D: Required Paperwork

1st Year
Declaration of Advisor Form Due: End of Spring Semester
Progress Report & Vita Due: End of Spring Semester

2nd Year
Notice of Approved Thesis Topic Due: End of Fall Semester
Note: must be submitted the semester before graduation.

MA Thesis Forms:
Notice of Thesis Defense Announcement
Report of Thesis Final Examination
Signature Title Page

Post-Defense:
Application for Graduation (online)
Thesis Preparation Approval Form (submit to College)
Notice of Matriculation (submit to College)
Progress Report & Vita Due: End of Spring Semester

3rd & 4th Year
Candidacy Committee Request Form Due: 3rd Friday of Fall Semester
Coursework Approval Form Due: Final Semester of Coursework
Report of Candidacy Completion Due: After Oral Candidacy Exam
Progress Report & Vita Due End of Spring Semesters

5 Year
Notice of Approved Thesis Topic Due: End of Fall Semester
Note: must be submitted the semester before graduation.

PhD Thesis Forms:
Notice of Thesis Defense Announcement Due: Two weeks before Pre-Oral
Report of Thesis Final Examination
Signature Title Page

Post-Defense:
Application for Graduation (online)
Thesis Preparation Approval Form (submit to College)
Notice of Matriculation (submit to College)