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**SAINT LOUIS  
UNIVERSITY™**

— EST. 1818 —

**DEPARTMENT  
OF SOCIOLOGY & ANTHROPOLOGY  
GRADUATE STUDIES  
PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

## **PREFACE**

This document contains rules, procedures, and suggestions for completing the graduate program in sociology at Saint Louis University. Faculty members and enrolled students should use it as a guide, together with the Graduate Education Handbook (below). Because this sociology handbook primarily addresses questions graduate students might ask, it is written as if it were being read by a student.

**1. GUIDELINES: IF YOU NEED HELP OR INFORMATION**, please remember the following:

A. The Graduate Education Catalog, which you can be accessed at <http://www.slu.edu/graduate-education/current-students>, contains specific details on Graduate Education requirements and procedures specified by the University. You should always consult it first when you have a question about Graduate Education requirements.

B. Your Department of Sociology and Anthropology adviser/mentor, assigned to you when you entered the program, is the person you should first turn to for advice and assistance about departmental requirements. Normally this initial mentor is the departmental Graduate Director. You should meet regularly with your mentor-- at least once a month, or more frequently if you are having issues. The University Graduate Education Office does **NOT** offer advice regarding courses, dissertation topics, etc. You should discuss such issues with your mentor. The initial mentor is only temporary. You are encouraged to select a faculty member with whom you would like to work. When you choose this new mentor, please pick up a Change of Mentor form from the Graduate Administrative Assistant and provide the appropriate signatures.

C. You should retain a record of your progress through the program, including requirements you have met, letters to/from the Graduate Education office, and so forth. Always keep a paper trail of information.

D. Contact the Director of Graduate if you have a question about what is in your departmental files.

## **2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the master's program is to train students to use theoretical and methodological tools that will allow them to acquire and apply specific information to particular problems and improve the quality of life. Students have the opportunity to challenge themselves and others in unique and realistic ways.

Students are trained to tackle professional tasks that directly or indirectly involve human relationships. We expect our graduates to move on to careers as evaluators, researchers, volunteers, planners, managers, advisors, program directors, and policy makers. The program also provides a strong foundation for those who seek to pursue a Ph.D.

## **3. STUDENT OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT**

At the end of each semester that faculty and graduate students will meet for a focus group discussion of strengths and weakness of the program, curriculum and instruction.

#### 4. THE MENTOR-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP

The quality of the graduate education is dependent upon the establishment of a mentor-student relationship that best fits the needs of the student. It is with this in mind that we ask you to consider the following: good mentoring requires responsibility on the part of both the mentor and the student . . .

The Mentor . . .

*1). Meet with advisees to discuss status/progress*

Assists in the student's professional development and helps integrate the student into the department.

Provides feedback (both good and bad) on student's progress and relays the department's assessment.

Guides student's thinking on course selections.

*2). Assists in establishing curricular and research agenda.*

Guides student's thinking toward research questions, provides examples of successful projects.

Works with the student to develop a timeline to meet departmental and graduate education deadlines.

Discuss mentor's research projects, provides opportunities for student involvement.

*3). Works with student to develop short and long term goals, reviews progress toward these goals.*

Assists in development of goals for academic progress, professional socialization, publication and grant-writing and post-graduate career opportunities.

The Student . . .

*1). Is expected to initiate meetings with mentor on a regular basis.*

Attends set meetings, is prepared for the meeting, and actively participates

Makes an effort to find a place in the department, as well as the field. Seeks out network connections.

Hears assessments and asks questions about how these affect goals and progress. Seriously considers comments.

*2). Solidifies research interests and goals.*

Student actively pursues research interests, asks questions to learn about the management of agenda.

Register for the courses that advance their academic goals.

Is aware of institutional deadlines and informs advisor of goals and progress towards them

Explores his/her own research ideas, also participates in the mentor's projects.

*3). Understands the importance of planning and learning from the mentor. Is a goal setter.*

Actively sets and pursues goals in training, education, and professional goals.

## **5. BENEFITS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS**

### Opportunities for Work and Financial Aid

The Department endeavors to provide financial assistance for as many of its incoming students as possible. The department is usually able to continue, and sometimes improve, the form of assistance for students already in residence. This is contingent on a student making satisfactory progress towards a degree. (See Graduate Program Deadlines Schedule section of this Handbook).

The major forms of financial aid available to students are as follows:

A. Teaching Assistantships. TAs work approximately 20 hours per week. They may help instructors with grading, preparation of exams, lecturing, and other teaching related assignments. They may also be assigned as discussion leaders, with responsibility for teaching weekly discussion groups for undergraduate courses.

Students are not permitted to tutor students in courses for which they serve as a teaching assistant, unless given permission by the instructor.

B. Research Assistantships. Approximately 20 hours work per week helping professors with various research related tasks, such as bibliographic investigation, construction of measuring instruments, data gathering and data processing.

C. Tuition Scholarships. Many programs have a limited number of tuition scholarships available for students. These scholarships are frequently reserved for students with serious financial need.

D. Special non-service fellowships. Occasionally, students obtain funding from special sources (the University, the College, plus federal and private granting agencies). Some of these are available to first year students, whereas others are obtained through the joint effort of the Department and students who are already in residence.

An offer of financial aid is contingent upon a student making satisfactory progress in the program, both in timing and quality of work, as well as on departmental needs and the availability of financial resources.

The faculty makes a yearly review of students' progress to help allocate financial aid. Normally, the maximum number of years that a graduate student may hold an assistantship is two years while pursuing a Master's degree.

## **6. INFORMATION FOR MASTER'S CANDIDATES**

Some rules are established by the University office of Graduate Education; others are departmental rules. Only a few of the Graduate Education requirements are reproduced below. You should become familiar with appropriate sections of the Graduate Education Handbook. All rules are subject to revision by University Graduate Education office or by the Department. Please read carefully the Graduate Education's rules on taking a leave of absence, registering for classes, and paying tuition and fees.

The University has a minimum requirement of two full semesters in residence for the M.S. degree.

*(See Graduate Education Handbook.)*

A minimum of 30 hours of course work must be completed before a candidate becomes eligible for the master's degree.

The four primary requirements for an M.S. degree are as follows:

- a methodology course
- a theory course
- a quantitative analysis course
- a thesis or two research papers and their defense (referred to below as the M.S. paper)

See Appendix A for the worksheet

### The M.S. Thesis

We strongly recommend that you complete your M.S. thesis proposal and have it accepted by the end of your third semester.

In the M.S. thesis, you are expected to demonstrate an ability to:

- review pertinent literature and integrate it into a body of theory,
- design a feasible study,
- analyze data (historical, observational, sample survey, interview, census, or experimental), and
- report the whole exercise, including the outcomes or findings, in the form of a journal article of the type one finds in *Social Forces*, *Gender and Society*, *Demography*, *Symbolic Interaction*, or *Journal of Marriage and the Family*.

### Alternatives to writing an M.S. thesis

You may elect the non-thesis tract to earn your degree. This option requires that you write two extended seminar papers that follow guidelines similar to those for the thesis (above). An example of this might be a bibliographic review paper or an outstanding term paper, modified as necessary, may be submitted as a master's paper.

### Preparing a proposal

The following guidelines are useful in preparing an M.S. thesis or paper proposal:

- Provide a succinct statement of the main problem that your paper will address (one page or less).
- Give an overview of the scholarly literature (including major citations) that has addressed this problem to date (two pages or less).
- Indicate what your paper will contribute to the above literature, such as specific propositions or hypotheses you will test or new empirical information or conceptual and theoretical insights your paper will provide (two pages or less).
- Describe your data sources and the precise nature of the data that you will use (two pages or less). If you plan to collect your data through direct observation or interviews, you will need to have your proposal reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

- Discuss your method of analysis, e.g., interpretive, statistical, etc. Will you be testing hypotheses, proposing a new taxonomy, extending an old concept, or what? (two pages or less).
- Provide a timetable for completing your paper and estimates (if any) of data acquisition, field work, and/or computer expenses (less than one page).
- Optional: Attach a bibliography of the scholarly literature relevant to your paper which could not be reviewed in your proposal.

Thesis and Non-Thesis. The Candidate for a research Master's degree must write a thesis that reflects thorough knowledge of the subject field, the power of independent thought, and the completion of original research. In addition, two scholarly essays, pertaining to some phases of the major field discipline, is required for the non-thesis degree.

Graduate Education requires the formal appointments of three Graduate Faculty readers of the thesis, one of which is the student's mentor. The acceptable thesis must be approved in writing by all three readers. The Department requires the appointment of three Graduate Faculty readers of the essay, one of which is designated as the student's mentor.

Paper evaluation. The quality of the M.S. thesis or papers will be evaluated by a three-person committee (an advisor and two members), chosen by you and approved by the Director of Graduate Studies. The chair must be from the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at SLU. All committee members must be members of the SLU graduate faculty. The Arts and Sciences Graduate faculty committee must approve committee members who are not graduate faculty.

Master's proposal conference. This conference should be held with all three M.S. committee members before you proceed with data collection and analysis. Its purpose is to assess the feasibility of the proposed research and give you the benefit of suggestions from committee members. You should let the graduate administrative assistant know that the conference is being held and should make sure that the committee chair returns to the form indicating that the M.S. proposal has been accepted.

Admission to Candidacy for an M.S. A student in the M.S. program who wishes to obtain a master's degree must apply for admission to candidacy by the deadline shown in the Graduate Education "Calendar of Events". You should be certain that you have removed any condition attached to your admission or any conditions imposed at a later time.

You must apply for the degree for a specific commencement. To graduate at that commencement, you must apply by the deadline shown in the "Calendar of Events". Application cards are available in the Graduate Education. A candidate for a master's degree applies for candidacy and degree at the same time.

Oral defense. There must be an oral defense of the M.S. thesis and papers. This constitutes the final M.S. oral examination. (You must be registered the semester in which the master's paper is defended).

This examination should be scheduled after the final courses for the M.S. are completed or are in progress. It should be held only after all members of the committee have had an adequate opportunity to review a draft of the thesis or papers that you are prepared to submit as the final draft. Your M.S. committee chair is responsible to the members of the committee for determining that the draft is in an appropriate form for their evaluation. The committee may, at the time of the final oral, but not later, require alterations and corrections. Your committee chair is responsible for verifying that the changes required by the committee have been made, or may delegate this responsibility to the committee member(s) who imposed the requirements.

Following the final M.S. oral examination, the examining committee reports to the Director of Graduate Studies its evaluation of the paper and knowledge of the field, using the following criteria:

Paper acceptability. Is the paper acceptable or unacceptable at the M.S. level?

A master's candidate who fails the master's oral examination may not re-take the exam a second time until at least three months have elapsed. No student may take the examination a third time without approval by the Arts & Sciences Board of Graduate Education.

When these requirements have been met, the title pages of the M.S. thesis or papers should be signed by the chair and other members of the student's committee and three copies of the thesis or papers should then be given to the Graduate Education Office. Be sure to follow the Graduate Education guidelines in preparing your paper for submission. The proper form should be filed with the Department graduate administrative assistant. You can submit your thesis or papers in electronic format.

Good Academic Standing and Academic Probation. A Classified student is in good academic standing when s/he is making progress toward a degree within the time period established for that degree. If the cumulative GPA of a Classified student falls below 3.0 (on the four-point scale, "B" = 3.0), that student is automatically placed on academic probation (not to be confused with Probationary admission).

Academic Progress and Ordinary Time to Degree. The entire Master's degree program is expected to be completed in a five year time period, beginning with the first course applicable to the degree. Should the five years pass without the student completing all degree requirements that student cease to be in good academic standing unless s/he petitions a successful extension to be approved by the Director of program and the Associate Dean for Graduate Education.

Academic Integrity . The University is a community of learning, and its effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. As members of this community, students share with faculty and administrators the responsibility to maintain this environment. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty in submitting an assignment, test, research report, or any other documentation required to validate the student's learning. In a case of clear indication of such dishonesty, the faculty member or administrator has the responsibility to apply sanctions to protect the environment of integrity.

All student work in the Department must comply with the Academic Integrity code of Graduate Education and the College of Arts and Sciences. For questions please visit the site for definitions of academic integrity and resources for plagiarism prevention.

<http://libraries.slu.edu/node/148>

Any clear violation of academic integrity will be met with sanctions. In a case of dishonesty within a course, the instructor may assign an appropriate grade and/or recommend further sanctions to the

Ethical behavior is also expected of students and faculty in the academic setting and extending into professional life. For example, sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation will not be tolerated and will be sanctioned. See the latest Student Code of Conduct

<http://www.slu.edu/x24293.xml>

### Suspension/Dismissal.

The student who is judged guilty of an act of serious academic dishonesty or lapse of ethical behavior may be suspended for a specified time period or dismissed altogether. Suspension or dismissal may also be warranted for reasons other than academic dishonesty including but not limited to: unauthorized solicitation or distribution of controlled substances; endangering one's self or another person; or abusing alcohol or illicit drugs.

### Procedures for Academic Appeals

If a graduate student wishes to appeal any academic decision in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), that appeal should first be made to the faculty member or faculty involved and, if necessary thereafter, to the department chairperson. The initial appeal must be made within 30 days after the academic decision was communicated or made available to the student. If the appeal is carried forward to the department chairperson, this must be done within 30 days of the faculty's decision. The department chair reviews the materials and either supports the instructor's recommendation or determines an appropriate outcome.

Should the student wish to continue the appeal process, the next step involves the Board of Graduate Education (BGE) of the College of Arts and Sciences. An appeal to the BGE must be made in writing and submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Education within 30 days of the decision by the department chairperson or program director. The Associate Dean will notify all parties involved of the appeal and will provide both parties an opportunity to submit any supporting documentation they believe the BGE should review. Written submissions will be limited to 10 pages, with additional appendices if necessary, from each side in the dispute.

The appeal may be heard as an agenda item at one of the regularly scheduled BGE meetings, or a special meeting may be called. A quorum of the BGE, excluding ex-officio members, must be in attendance. When the BGE sits as appeals board, a graduate student selected by the Graduate Student Association will be appointed to the board as a voting member. This student must be a graduate student in the College of Arts and Science but not from any departments involved in the appeal. Since this is an internal and not a legal procedure, students involved in the appeals process may be accompanied by someone who is not acting as an attorney or representing the student in his/her capacity as an attorney. If a member of the BGE is a member of the department or program



involved in the appeal, that BGE member will abstain from active participation in the appeals process. The Associate Dean for Graduate Education shall be present throughout the entire process, but shall not be allowed to propose or second any motion, or to cast a vote on any motion related to the appeal.

The BGE will hear the case presented by the student and others supporting the student's appeal and will also hear the presentations of the other parties involved. Then, the BGE will conduct a discussion. If the BGE finds that insufficient information has been presented, it may request a period of no longer than 30 days to obtain the information, meet again, and reach a decision. The BGE will consider the merits of the student's appeal and the adequacy of procedures followed in the department. The BGE may support the decision being appealed, overturn it, or change the penalty imposed. The Associate Dean will inform the student in writing of the BGE's decision.

Should the student wish to appeal the decision beyond CAS, a written appeal may be submitted to the Associate Vice President for Graduate Education. This must occur within 30 days of the decision by the BGE. The AVP will review the documents as submitted to the BGE and may request additional information to determine whether or not the process as outlined in this section was appropriately followed. The AVP cannot overturn a decision but can remand the decision back to CAS for further investigation if the process was not followed.

Address of all relevant administrators for the program

**Department:**

**Dr. Richard Colignon**  
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## Appendix A – Class Worksheet



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## **SOCIOLOGY MS WORKSHEET**

Required	Year
Quantitative Research Methods	
Organization Theory & Behavior	
Research Method	

Thesis Track		Non Thesis Track	
Class	Year	Class	Year
Thesis (3)			
Thesis (3)			