

**Department of Sociology  
University of Illinois at Chicago  
Graduate Manual**

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## **UIC Sociology**

Our graduate program blends strong empirical research training with a proactive engagement with public sociology as well as extensive training in teaching. We have one of the most diverse graduate programs in the country, and our faculty is diverse both demographically and with regard to substantive and methodological expertise. We train our students in multiple methodologies and encourage public engagement with communities. While inequality is the principal focus of our curriculum as a whole, we focus on a range of core areas, including: race/ethnicity, gender/sexuality, work/organizations, global & transnational sociology, political sociology & social movements, and children & youth.

This graduate manual has been prepared to assist current and potential students of the Department of Sociology in becoming oriented to the program. The document is not intended to be the sole source of information. Rather, it should be viewed as complementary to the University of Illinois at Chicago Graduate Catalog, which is the primary source of information on Graduate College policies (<https://catalog.uic.edu/gcat/>).

The Department of Sociology admits students seeking a PhD in Sociology. All students (including those who already hold an MA in Sociology from another institution) earn an MA in Sociology at UIC and then progress into our PhD program. Original research is required for the MA and PhD. Completion of the course requirements usually takes two years for the MA and one additional year of coursework for the PhD. Students generally complete the entire program within 5-7 years.

### **Program Advisors and Dissertation Chairs**

It is helpful to distinguish the different roles “faculty advisors” play in the department. In reality, faculty advisor(s) responsibilities can be divided into three key kinds: (1) a program advisor, (2) the primary reader of the publishable paper, and (3) the dissertation chair. A student can have one faculty member who fulfills all three of these roles; or a student can have different faculty members for each of these roles. The program advisor is the person who provides advice on registration and signs off on the semester plans of the student. This person also presents the student’s file to the faculty during the annual review process (see below for further information). The primary reader of the publishable paper is someone who is an expert in the field in which the student has conducted research, and who can guide the writing and submission of the publishable paper (see information on publishable paper below). A dissertation chair is chosen at the point when a student applies to the PhD program. The dissertation chair directs and advises the student on the dissertation proposal, research and writing (see more below). It is possible that throughout a student’s time in the program, she/he/they will have the same faculty member fulfill all three of these roles – that is, the same person is the initial program advisor, primary reader of the publishable paper and dissertation chair. But some students may have different faculty members fulfilling each of these roles. Generally, when a student chooses a dissertation chair, that chair takes over the duties of program advisor. This may also be true for the primary reader of the publishable paper, but students could have one faculty member who is their program advisor and a different one as their primary reader on the publishable paper.

Every student must have a program advisor who has > 0% appointment in the Sociology Department. Program advisors are assigned to incoming students by the DGS before they start the program based on shared research interests. Students are required to meet with program advisors at least once per term to discuss registration for the next term, but we encourage students to meet more regularly with program advisors to discuss progress in coursework and plans for meeting program benchmarks.

Each program advisor has his/her/their own advising style, but generally speaking, the program advisor serves as an advocate, using his/her/their/their own professional and personal experience in guiding students within the expectations of the profession, department, and university. The tasks of the program advisor include:

- Meets regularly with their advisee;
- Assists and supports students in meeting their academic benchmarks and developing as scholars;
- Models professionalization and encourages students to attend relevant conferences, helping with networking and encouraging students to immerse themselves in the profession;
- Monitors students' progress and corresponds with students about that progress;
- Communicates department and graduate college policies and resources or refers the student to the DGS if the advisor is unfamiliar with a particular policy;
- Supports students if personal issues are interfering with students' academic or professional development and refers students to institutional resources;
- Advocates for the student at the annual review and if personal or professional challenges arise.

*The Advising Hold:* Every semester an “advising hold” prohibits students from registering for classes until they have consulted with their program advisor. The advisor will notify the Graduate Student Specialist to lift this hold after talking to a student about his/her/their progress and plan of study. The program advisor and student should consult the Graduate Manual to help with course selection and benchmark planning.

Students may change their program advisor at any time, with permission from a new program advisor (and acknowledgment from the former program advisor). To change program advisors, the student should simply email the DGS (CCing both the former and new program advisors). Students can and should change program advisors during the course of the program to account for changing interests or turnover among the faculty.

Students should feel comfortable speaking to their program advisors about any challenges they are facing, about their performance on coursework, their concerns about meeting benchmarks, and their navigation of the program and the discipline. During the annual review process, a student's program advisor advocates for the student to the rest of the faculty.

When students are working on their publishable paper requirement, they are required to select primary reader who will lead them through this research, read multiple drafts of their papers and approve of the publication submission, ultimately deciding when the requirement has been completed. The primary reader must have >0% appointment in the Department of Sociology. A

second reader is also required for the publishable paper (who may or may not have a >0% appointment in Sociology, but whose expertise is appropriate to the project). The second reader must be a UIC faculty member and be approved by the primary reader. Students may choose to make their primary reader of the publishable paper their program advisor, if their current program advisor is poorly suited to their chosen topic.

When students apply to the PhD program (at the end of their second year), they are required to identify a chair for their dissertation (and the identified chair must accept this position and submit a letter of support for the student's application). A chair must hold >0% appointment in the Sociology Department. The chair of the dissertation guides the dissertation proposal, IRB process (if necessary), and dissertation research. It is common for the dissertation chair to take over the duties of program advisor.

Each chair has his/her/their own style, but generally speaking, the tasks of the dissertation chair include the following:

- Meets regularly throughout the preparation of the proposal, the research collection and analysis, the writing of the dissertation, preparation for the defense and job market
- Helps students develop a proposal for original research
- Helps students identify other committee members who will provide expertise and support
- Guides students in proposing and using research methods and methodologies appropriate to research questions
- Guides students through the IRB process, if IRB approval is required
- Identifies services that may help students achieve research and writing goals (i.e. IRRPP write-outs, tips on time management, etc.)
- Helps students establish a realistic timeline
- Reads drafts of proposal and chapters and provides feedback in a timely fashion
- Prepares students for proposal and dissertation defenses
- Communicates with members of the committee on progress of dissertation and to organize feedback on drafts
- Writes recommendations for grants, fellowships, jobs
- Helps to prepare students for the job market and provides networking and advice during this process

## **Registration**

PhD students are required to maintain continuous registration, except for documented medical or other extraordinary reasons (see *Leave of Absence* policy below). Graduate College registration policies can be found here: <http://grad.uic.edu/registration-policies>. To register online and see the current schedule of courses being offered, please see: <http://registrar.uic.edu/registration>. Registering for courses and research hours must be done within 10 days of the semester. Registering after the 10<sup>th</sup> day is possible, but there is a fee.

### *Course Withdrawal*

Students who wish to cancel their tuition or withdraw from courses can do so without financial penalty prior to the first day of the semester. To be refunded part of the fee, students must withdraw from attendance by the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the semester. After the fifth day, students may not receive any refund. For more information, please see: <http://grad.uic.edu/financial-obligationencumbrances>.

For the MA, there is a minimum of 37 semester hours required. For the PhD, there is a minimum of 24-40 semester hours required and 19-35 dissertation research hours. The minimum number of hours beyond the Baccalaureate is 96.

Students registered for 8 credits are considered full-time students. Some international students and students who hold financial aid are required to take 9 credits per term. Students on a Board of Trustees Waiver (BOT) are required to register for 12 credits per term.

Only 400- and 500-level courses can be applied to the degree. Credit toward a graduate degree is only given for courses in which a student received a grade of A or B. Grades of C or lower are considered failing. Earning two Cs *at any point in the program* leads to immediate dismissal from the program. If a student receives a “C” or lower in a particular class, she/he/they may retake that class once.

Students receiving grades of “IN” (incomplete) must fulfill the requirements to earn a grade in those courses within 12 months or the incomplete will remain on the transcript.

Once a student has completed coursework, she/he/they should register for SOC 596 (Independent Study) credit hours with his/her/their dissertation chair, while working on the dissertation proposal. Once the dissertation proposal has been passed (and the student becomes a PhD candidate), she/he/they should register for SOC 599 (Dissertation Hours) with his/her/their dissertation chair.

For general doctoral degree information, see the following: <http://grad.uic.edu/doctoral-degrees>. For information on deadlines, see: <http://grad.uic.edu/graduation-deadlines>

Students must be registered for credit the term in which they defend their dissertation proposal (the preliminary exam requirement for the Graduate College). If the student held a 50% TA or RA appointment in the spring term and intends to defend the proposal over the summer, that student will not need to have a tuition waiver or pay for registration over the summer months.

Students must be registered for credit the term in which they defend their dissertation proposal (the preliminary exam requirement for the Graduate College). If the student held a 25-67% TA or RA appointment in the spring term and intends to defend the proposal over the summer, that student automatically receives an assistantship waiver in the summer, as long as the student does not hold a summer assistantship and is registered for 3 or more hours. In other words, if a student had a 25-67% appointment in the spring term, she/he/they can defend their dissertation proposal over the summer without needing a tuition waiver or paying for summer registration. That student would need to register for 3 or more credit hours.

Once the dissertation proposal (preliminary exam) has been passed, the student must remain continuously enrolled until she/he/they defends her/his/their dissertation and students must be registered for the term in which they defend their dissertations (including over the summer). Students may register for zero hour registration (<https://grad.uic.edu/zero-hour-registration>). International students may not be able to register for zero hour registration. International students should consult OIS about their registration requirements: <https://www.ois.uic.edu>.

NOTE: Candidates who defend the dissertation during the first 10 days of a fall or spring term, or during the first 5 days of a summer term, do not have to register for that term. A student who defends after the 10th day (5th in summer) must be registered.

### **Time Limits for Dissertation Defense**

- A year has to elapse after passing the dissertation proposal defense before the defense of the dissertation.
- Students admitted to the Graduate College for the doctorate must complete degree requirements **within nine consecutive calendar years** of initial registration as a doctoral student. Students who do not graduate by these deadlines will be dismissed from the Graduate College for failure to progress. Time spent on a leave of absence approved by the program and the Graduate College is not counted toward the degree time limit.

### **Leave of Absence**

Graduate students who have completed one term are eligible for a one-semester leave of absence (fall or spring) plus the summer session off without formal leave approval from the Graduate College. Students may also extend their leave to a maximum of one year. A petition must be submitted to the Graduate College by the tenth day of the semester for which leave is requested. Please see the Graduate College policy and forms here: <https://grad.uic.edu/leave-absence>. Time spent on approved leave does not count towards the time to complete the degree. After returning from an approved leave, a second leave will be endorsed by the Department for medical or other extraordinary reasons. Students on approved leaves of absence will not be covered by the health and personal accident insurance plan. Students are responsible for meeting the associated deadlines, filing the appropriate forms and resultant charges.

Students generally ineligible for leaves of absence include:

- international students whose visas require continuous registration (F-1 and J-1)
- doctoral students who are taking or who have passed their preliminary exams
- students awarded a fellowship for the term of proposed leave
- students with an assistantship appointment or tuition and service-fee waiver for the term of proposed leave (unless the assistantship or waiver is withdrawn)

International students must register each fall and spring semester due to visa requirements. If an illness, birth, or family emergency occurs, however, students with these visas may petition the Graduate College for a Leave of Absence after obtaining written authorization from the Office of International Services.

## **Board of Trustees (BOT) Waivers**

Each semester the Department receives a limited number of Board of Trustees (BOT) tuition and service fee waivers. BOT waivers are “straight” waivers that are not tied to the receipt of internal fellowships, awards, TAs, or RAs. BOT waivers are awarded by the Graduate College and individual graduate programs. A student must be enrolled in a degree-seeking program at least 12 or more hours during the fall and spring semesters (6 or more hours during summer) at the end of the add/drop period for the waiver to pay. BOT waiver recipients must NOT have eligibility for a waiver from any other source (for example, an assistantship waiver) in order to remain eligible. If a student receives a waiver, his/her/their loan eligibility may be affected. There are limited conditions in which students are eligible for a BOT waiver and students must discuss them with the DGS to determine eligibility.

## **Graduate Student Forms**

Most graduate student forms are available electronically at: <http://grad.uic.edu/graduate-student-forms>. Forms include petitions for defenses, registration, awards, and fellowships applications.

## **Degree Requirements**

The Graduate College requirements for the Master's and PhD degrees are outlined in the University of Illinois Graduate Catalog viewed at: <https://catalog.uic.edu/gcat/colleges-schools/liberal-arts-sciences/soc/>. The UIC Graduate College Home Page contains the most up-to-date information available and is updated more frequently than the print publications.

## **The Master of Arts Degree**

### **General Requirements**

The minimum number of semester hours required to earn an MA in Sociology at the University of Illinois at Chicago is 37.

### **Course Requirements**

#### *First Year Required Courses*

##### Fall

Classical Sociological Theory (SOC 585)  
Sociological Statistics (SOC 401)  
Sociological Research Methods (SOC 500)  
Proseminar (SOC 595)

##### Spring

Contemporary Sociological Theory (SOC 587)  
Sociological Statistics (SOC 402)  
Sociological Research Methods (501)\*\*

\*\* SOC 501 is the first course in the Sociology Practicum, which is a two-semester methods course, beginning each year in the spring term and continuing into the fall term. The method covered alternates each year between a primarily quantitative method and a primarily qualitative method (although often these courses include mixed methods approaches). The practicum is

taught by a faculty member who proposes a research topic for the year and the students learn about the topic and the methods covered, collect original data and then conduct coding and analysis in the fall term. These courses often allow students to collect data over the summer months. The data for these courses is often the basis for students' publishable paper requirement (see below), though it is not required that students write papers or publish out of this course. Only SOC 501 (the spring part of the practicum) is required for the MA, but students *do not have to take it in their first year*. Students can choose to wait and take 501 in their second year in the program. Students should work with their program advisors to determine the best timing for taking SOC 501.

### *Second Year Required Courses*

- Sociology of Inequality (SOC 542), including a final exam that resembles an area exam
- 500-level seminar (in a Core or Specialty Topic – see below)
- Independent Study (SOC 596), 4 credits to work on the publishable paper

\*\* Students may take more advanced seminars (in core or specialty areas) in their second year, but these are the *required* courses for the MA.

### *Core Courses*

- Race, SOC 525
- Gender, SOC 524
- Organizations, SOC 547
- Children & Youth, SOC 515
- Global & Transnational, SOC 549
- Political Sociology, SOC 565

### *Specialty Courses (520 or 540)*

These are specialty topics courses taught by faculty in areas of their choosing and close to their own research. They change in topic each year. Some examples of previously offered courses (which may be offered again) include:

- Immigration
- Sociology of the Body
- Sexualities
- Economic Sociology
- Racial Capitalism
- State Violence
- Feminist Theory
- Bureaucracy
- Race, Gender and the Law

Students are required to complete their course requirements for their MA within two years. Once students have taken this coursework, they may apply to the PhD program. No MA thesis is required to earn an MA in Sociology at UIC. Students must register to graduate in the term in which they are completing their MA. There is paperwork that is required for the completion of the MA. Please check with the DGS and Graduate Student Specialist to complete this paperwork in a timely fashion.



Students who have already earned Masters of Arts (MAs) in Sociology from peer institutions *still must earn their MA at UIC*. Students coming into UIC's program with an MA in Sociology may petition the DGS to have two courses from their previous institution count towards their MA at UIC. These are usually first-year courses (like theory, methods or statistics). Students may only 'opt out' of two required courses (8 credits) in our program. And, these courses *must be replaced by advanced seminars at UIC*. In other words, students who already hold an MA in Sociology and who opt out of two UIC required courses still need to earn the same number of credits for the MA at UIC, but they may replace first-year coursework with advanced seminars.

### **Chicago Metropolitan Exchange Program**

The Chicago Metropolitan Exchange Program (CMEP) allows graduate students in a doctoral program to enroll at one of the three participating institutions to take advantage of academic courses at the University of Chicago and Northwestern University. UIC students are permitted to take a total of three quarters of classes through the CMEP program.

For more information: <https://grad.uic.edu/chicago-metropolitan-exchange-program>

### **Applying to the PhD program**

Upon the completion of MA coursework, students will apply to the PhD program during the annual review process in the spring (further information on this process is provided below). Students must submit a portfolio, including: 1) transcripts; 2) a letter of intent from the student outlining his/her/their research project plans and timeline for their publishable paper; 3) a letter from the person with whom the student took SOC 596 hours; 4) a letter from the faculty member who agrees to serve as dissertation chair. During the annual review, the faculty will evaluate each student's application and consider his/her/their grades, progress and research plans. The faculty may decide to dismiss students from the program if research progress or performance in courses is inadequate. Students must earn Bs (as a minimum) in all coursework. Earning two Cs *at any point in the program* leads to immediate dismissal from the program.

## **Doctor of Philosophy Degree**

### **Course Requirements Beyond the MA**

- Sociological Research Methods (SOC 509) \*\*
- 3 500-level seminars (between MA and PhD coursework, a total of 4 500-level seminars are required. Two of the four must be core courses; the other 2 may be core or specialty courses)
- Colloquium on College Teaching of Sociology (SOC 593)

\*\* Students can take the 509 that is associated with the practicum to fulfill this requirement, or they may take any other 509 offered in the program. Students may also take either semester of the practicum (501 or 509) more than once and the second time enrolling for either of these courses (501 or 509) can count for this 509 requirement.

Core and Specialty courses were listed above.

## Qualifying Exams

Qualifying Exams are comprised of two components: 1) Area Exam and 2) Publishable Paper.

### Area Exams

The Area Exam measures students' broad expertise in a designated substantive area of sociology which includes: 1) being able to trace the genealogy of the area and map out core debates; 2) to synthesize and apply broad theoretical approaches; and to 3) effectively communicate knowledge of the field in written form. The area exam should demonstrate not only students' command of the field and certain details of its development and expression, but students should also be able to offer their own unique analysis of the material – pointing out key lacks, making critiques of certain approaches and applying the theory to empirical cases.

Students must be admitted into the PhD program (at the end of their second year) to be eligible to sit for area exams. Students will sit for their area exams in the August before their third year in the program. Area Exams are currently offered in the following areas:

- Race and Ethnicity
- Gender
- Sexualities
- Race, Class & Gender
- Organizations & the Economy
- Global and Transnational Sociology
- Political Sociology & Social Movements
- Spatial Inequality

Students may also create a new exam area. In order to create a new exam, the student (or students) would need to secure the support of *at least* three faculty (two of whom must be >0% in the department, all of whom must be at least 0% appointments in the Department) who indicate their willingness to evaluate the exam. Students apply by submitting to the Graduate Committee: 1) a rationale for the specialty area; 2) a list of the course work, research, and other professional experience that has prepared them for an exam in that area; and 3) a draft reading list for the exam. These materials are due six months before the exam is to be taken, signed by all of the the faculty evaluators. The faculty who agree to serve as examiners will develop a final reading list (taking the students' suggestions into account). The DGS and Graduate Committee will make a decision about accepting it as a new exam area.

Exam lists are maintained and circulated by the faculty committee of each area. Exam lists will be made available to students taking the exam 4 months before the exam date. Exams are usually administered on the Friday before the start of classes in the Fall or Spring.

There are four sections to each exam, and students must pass three sections to pass the exam. (Students may fail one answer and still pass the exam). Students who fail the overall exam may retake the exam, but must retake it 4 months later (i.e. they must sit for the exam in the January following their failed first attempt). **A third exam is not permitted** and students who fail the exam a second time are dismissed from the program.

Students whose first language is not English are given an additional hour at the beginning and at the end of the exam (2 additional hours total). Students with disabilities who are registered with the Office of Disability Services may petition the DGS and area concentration committee at least 2 weeks prior to the start of the exam for additional time or specialized exam procedures in accordance with their accommodation.

### **Publishable Paper**

By the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year in the program, students are required to submit an original research paper for consideration for publication. The paper must be based on empirical research. The paper must be sole-authored, *or* the student must be the first author of a paper co-authored with a faculty member in our program (with the expectation that the bulk of the research and writing is done by the student). The paper must be submitted to a journal that is peer-reviewed. The paper must be submitted *after* two faculty readers (the primary and secondary reader) have approved the paper for submission (and have approved the location of submission). The primary reader must have a >0% appointment in the Sociology Department. The secondary reader may or may not have a >0% appointment in Sociology, but has expertise that is appropriate to the project and is approved by the primary reader. The second reader must be a UIC faculty member and should be approved by the primary reader. The primary reader should take the lead in advising the student on the research process, should meet regularly with the student to discuss analysis and read multiple drafts of the paper before submission.

Students should be aware of the procedures for obtaining IRB/OPRS approval and comply with the University policies and federal regulations (<http://research.uic.edu/irb/investigators-research-staff/preparation-submission>). Data collection cannot begin before receiving IRB approval. The IRB application can be accessed here: <https://oprslive.ovcr.uic.edu>.

### **Dissertation Committee**

The dissertation chair has primary oversight for advising students on their dissertation proposals. The chair must have a >0% appointment in the Sociology Department and be tenured in the department. The committee consists of four additional members. Two additional committee members must be Sociology Department faculty (with a > 0% appointment), one must be external to the department (or university), and the final member may be internal or external to the department (or university). For any members who are from another institution, students must provide this person's credentials (curriculum vita) to the Graduate College. Two members of the committee must be tenured faculty at UIC (the chair and one additional member).

The chair and committee are formally appointed by the Dean of the Graduate School. After the Dissertation Proposal Defense is completed, this committee will generally remain as your PhD Dissertation Committee, although members may be replaced if necessary. Early selection of the PhD committee provides the student with guidance especially suited to her or his interests and assures that an appropriate plan of work is developed and followed. The PhD committee will act as the student's academic advisory body throughout the pursuit of the degree. The committee is expected to be available for student program planning, discussion of professional development, and consultation and direction on dissertation research and writing. Committee members are expected to be well acquainted with the student's progress at all times after the committee's

formation. To this end, a student is expected to keep the committee members fully informed of progress toward the degree.

Members of the faculty who retire from the University may remain on PhD committees. Emeritus faculty retain their graduate faculty membership and status for a period of three years after they retire. This can be renewed for a second three-year period. Therefore, they may serve as committee chairs (if they like) as long as they were full members of the graduate faculty before they retired. In these cases, the department head informs the Graduate College of the names of the student(s) on whose committee(s) the retiring faculty is a member and requests that the member remain on the graduate faculty until the student's supervision is complete.

### **Dissertation Proposal & Defense (Graduate College Preliminary Exam)**

Students are expected to defend their dissertation proposals by December of the fourth year. The dissertation proposal is a prospectus of the dissertation. It generally includes the following components: statement of the problem; review of the literature; research questions and hypotheses; methods and data analysis; significance. The chair of the committee works closely with the student to conceive of and prepare the dissertation proposal. Other committee members may also provide valuable insight on the scope, design and substantive topic of the dissertation. While students are working on their dissertation proposals, they should register for independent study hours with their advisor, under SOC 596.

The dissertation proposal defense is considered the preliminary exam requirement for the Graduate College (<https://grad.uic.edu/preliminary-exam-policies-and-procedures>). When the committee agrees that the student has a defensible proposal, this defense is scheduled for a mutually agreeable time span of no less than two hours. A student should work with his/her/their dissertation chair to establish a timeframe for completion, for the circulation of final drafts to the committee, and for the defense.

A "Committee Recommendation Form" ([https://grad.uic.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/form-CommitteeRecommendationFormRev\\_08-2016.pdf](https://grad.uic.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/form-CommitteeRecommendationFormRev_08-2016.pdf)) naming the student's committee must be submitted to the Graduate College at least three weeks before the defense date. [If the outside member is from another institution, students must provide this person's credentials (curriculum vita) to the Graduate College.] If this form is not submitted at least three weeks prior to defense, there is no guarantee that the examination report will be prepared on time. A copy of this memo will become part of the student's departmental file. Graduate students are responsible for knowing and meeting the Graduate College guidelines for the composition of dissertation committees (see above and: <https://grad.uic.edu/preliminary-exam-policies-and-procedures>).

During the proposal defense the candidate may be asked to explain and justify any and all elements of the proposal, including the value of the question and the importance of the proposed research to the existing literature, the theoretical framework, and the proposed methods. Candidates also should receive feedback about their readiness to undertake a dissertation research project. The chair of the committee conducts this examination and all members of the proposal committee should be in attendance (in person or virtually).

At the defense conclusion the candidate will be asked to leave the examining room. At that time, each member of the committee assigns a grade of “pass” or “fail.” The approval may be conditional on the successful completion of additional work for the pass recommendation to be effective. In these cases, the committee typically does not reconvene a second time; the advisor assumes responsibilities for assuring revisions are completed. A candidate cannot be passed with more than one “fail” vote. If more than one “fail” vote is received the committee chair may (but not must) permit a second examination. A third examination is not permitted. Students are formally admitted to candidacy when they pass the proposal defense without conditions, or after fulfilling any conditions specified by their Committee.

Students are not required to complete the IRB before the defense, but students should be aware of the procedures for obtaining IRB/OPRS approval and comply with the University policies and federal regulations (<http://research.uic.edu/irb/investigators-research-staff/preparation-submission>). Data collection cannot begin before receiving IRB approval (or before affirming that their project is not human subjects research). The IRB application can be accessed here: <https://oprslive.ovcr.uic.edu>.

### **Registration Post-Proposal Defense**

Students must remain registered from the time they defend the dissertation proposal until the dissertation defense. They cannot take a leave of absence. Students who are hired as an RA or TA for the department can continue to register for hours of SOC 599, as their positions include a tuition waiver. If students are no longer being funded by a TA or RA appointment (at UIC), they must either obtain a Board of Trustees waiver (BOT) or register for zero hours. Information about zero hour registration is available here: <http://grad.uic.edu/zero-hour-registration>. Students must be registered (either for hours in SOC 599 or with “zero” hour registration) in the term they defend their dissertations. International students may not be eligible for zero hour registration (please consult OIS for further information about international student registration requirements: <https://www.ois.uic.edu>).

### **The Dissertation**

The PhD dissertation is based upon the student’s approved proposal and presents the results of an original investigation. It must represent a contribution to knowledge, be adequately supported by data, and be written in a manner consistent with the highest standards of scholarship. It is expected that PhD research will culminate in one or more peer-reviewed journal articles and/or a published research monograph.

The dissertation, like the proposal, must be approved by a five-member committee. This is usually but not always the same committee that approved the proposal. Students may change their committee membership ([https://grad.uic.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/form-RequestChangeThesisTitleorCommitteeMembersFormRev\\_08\\_2016.pdf](https://grad.uic.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/form-RequestChangeThesisTitleorCommitteeMembersFormRev_08_2016.pdf)). The composition of this committee is governed by the same rules as the dissertation proposal committee.

For more information, see the Graduate College policies on dissertations: <http://grad.uic.edu/thesis>

## Dissertation Defense

The oral dissertation defense is scheduled after the dissertation is complete and once the committee has approved its completion. Prior to the defense, each committee member should confirm with the Chair of the Committee that the dissertation is defensible. The dissertation defense must take place at least one year after the student has defended his/her/their dissertation proposal. The approval of the dissertation requires a formal defense hearing that is open to the public. The Graduate College must receive the Committee Recommendation form three (3) weeks prior to the oral defense ([https://grad.uic.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/form-CommitteeRecommendationFormRev\\_08-2016.pdf](https://grad.uic.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/form-CommitteeRecommendationFormRev_08-2016.pdf)). The Graduate Student Specialist will help the student secure a room for the defense, help set-up any technology needed, and publicly announce the event one week prior to its occurrence. (Committee members may participate in the defense remotely.)

The examination typically begins with the student (and everyone in attendance who is not on the committee) leaving the room, so that the committee can discuss how the defense will proceed. The student is then asked to return to the room and give a brief presentation, which summarizes the theoretical framing, the research methodology and the major findings and significance. Each committee member will pose questions to the candidate on any and/or all aspects of the research and final report. When the committee finishes its examination the candidate (and everyone who is not on the committee) will be asked to leave the room while the committee votes either “pass” or “fail.” More than one vote of “fail” means the candidate failed the defense.

After the vote, the committee members sign a copy of the Examination Form which also requires the signature of the department head or Director of Graduate Studies. It is sometimes the case that the student receives a “conditional pass” linked to the fulfillment of specific requirements. Upon successful completion of the final oral exam and any requirements stipulated by the committee the student has fulfilled the department’s (but not the Graduate College’s) requirements for a doctoral degree.

The successfully defended dissertation must be submitted to the Graduate College. Please follow closely the Graduate College’s requirements regarding the defense: <https://grad.uic.edu/doctoral-dissertation-defense>.

Please see this website for Graduate College policies on graduation and deadlines: <http://grad.uic.edu/graduation-deadlines>

NOTE: Candidates who defend the dissertation during the first 10 days of a fall or spring term, or during the first 5 days of a summer term, do not have to register for that term. A student who defends after the 10th day (5th in summer) must be registered.

### Time Limits for Dissertation Defense

- A year has to elapse after passing the dissertation proposal defense before the defense of the dissertation.
- Students admitted to the Graduate College for the doctorate must complete degree requirements **within nine consecutive calendar years** of initial registration as a doctoral

student. Students who do not graduate by these deadlines will be dismissed from the Graduate College for failure to progress. Time spent on a leave of absence approved by the program and the Graduate College is not counted toward the degree time limit,

## **Annual Reviews**

Each year in May, the faculty holds an annual review of all graduate students. In April (the precise deadline of which is communicated in advance by the DGS and/or Graduate School Specialist), students submit an annual report along with a current CV and current transcripts (if the student is still taking coursework). Prior to this review, students should share their annual reports and have a conversation about their progress with their advisors. Advisors serve as advocates for students during the meeting. The advisor presents the case of each student to the rest of the faculty and provides information on the student's progress, any challenges s/he may be facing and any achievements or accomplishments as well. After the meeting, the DGS writes an individualized letter to each student reflecting the concerns or advice of the faculty, outlining benchmarks that need to be met and by what date, and any consequences for failure to meet these deadlines. Students who have failed to meet benchmarks by the timeline presented in this manual, may be told they are in poor standing. Students may be ineligible for department funding if they are in poor standing. During the annual review, faculty may also determine that a student will be dismissed from the program. For students who have applied to the PhD program, their admission will also be decided during this annual review, and those students who are meeting all expectations of the department will be granted entry into the PhD program.

Students must earn Bs (as a minimum) in all coursework. Earning two Cs *at any point in the program* leads to immediate dismissal from the program. If a student receives a "C" or lower in a class, she/he/they are allowed to retake that course a single time.

Graduate College policies on annual assessments can be found here:  
<http://grad.uic.edu/university-regulations>

## **Funding**

If a student meets program requirements and benchmarks, funding in the form of at least a 50% teaching or research assistantship is guaranteed for 5 years. For basic information about graduate funding, please see: <http://grad.uic.edu/graduate-funding-overview>

## **Assistantships**

There are three types of graduate assistantships: (1) teaching (TA), (2) research (RA), and (3) graduate assistant (GA). Due to a negotiated contract with the Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) and the university, graduate students cannot work over 26.8 hours a week (67% appointment) and maintain their tuition waivers. Assistantships are paid through appointment, and if benchmarks and progress is made, generally students are awarded a 50% TA or RA appointment, which equals 20 hours a week. Students are allowed to secure an additional 17% appointment, and generally these come from a variety of sources, but they are not guaranteed.

For more information on the differences between assistantships, please see:  
<http://grad.uic.edu/assistantships>

### *Teaching Assistantship Resources*

The Graduate College constructed a manual to help teaching assistants in their work:  
<http://grad.uic.edu/teaching-uic-handbook-teaching-assistants>

The Center for the Advancement of Teaching- Learning Communities is also a valuable university based resource: <http://grad.uic.edu/center-advancement-teaching-learning-communities>

### **Hourly Positions**

Some individual faculty also hire graduate students as “graduate hourly positions” to assist with their research needs. These appointments are at the discretion of the faculty supervisor. These positions are paid hourly and do not come with tuition waivers. Students who have a tuition waiver from a teaching or research assistantship at a 50% appointment cannot exceed 6.8 hours a week (17% appointment) from their graduate hourly appointments and still keep their tuition waiver. Minimum hourly wages are determined by the university, see here:

[https://www.hr.uic.edu/classification\\_and\\_compensation/minima\\_for\\_graduate\\_appointments/](https://www.hr.uic.edu/classification_and_compensation/minima_for_graduate_appointments/).

### **Graduate Employees Organization**

The Graduate Employees Organization (GEO) is the union that represents UIC graduate student employees. For more information on the GEO, please see: <http://uic-geo.net/mainsite/>

- For a copy of the GEO contract with the university please see: [http://uic-geo.net/mainsite/?page\\_id8](http://uic-geo.net/mainsite/?page_id8)

### **Fellowships**

Fellowships are available to UIC graduate students for a variety of different purposes, usually related to research. Graduate College fellowships are competitive and come with a tuition waiver. Fellowships range from providing financial resources for research costs to enabling a student to decline TA or RA positions to focus on their research (though students can combine fellowships and TA or RA appointments). For a list of university fellowships, due dates, and requirements, please visit: <http://grad.uic.edu/graduate-college-fellowship-andaward-deadlines>.

For general information on Graduate College fellowships, please see:

<http://grad.uic.edu/graduate-college-fellowships>.

## **Teaching Observations and Teaching Assignments**

### **Teaching Observations**

Each graduate student assigned to his/her/their own course as a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI) and who is teaching a course for the first and/or second time, and any new course prep thereafter, must be observed and evaluated by a faculty member. It is up to the student to arrange this observation. All forms are available through request from department staff and must be turned into department staff for filing.

Each observation and evaluation consists of four parts:



- (1) Materials: faculty observer will be provided with any relevant materials for the class session (handouts, PowerPoints, etc.) as well as the course syllabus. GSI will provide a “Part 1, Pre-Observation Form” to the faculty member prior to the observation.
- (2) Instructor (GSI) Evaluation, Part II: faculty member will conduct a review of relevant course materials, the structure of the course (assessments, relevant materials, and pacing) and syllabus prior to the observation.
- (3) Instructor (GSI) Evaluation, Part III: Observation. This section of the evaluation focuses on the specific classroom and teaching behaviors of the GSI. This is an overall assessment that is to satisfy the gestaltic principle that the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. The observer is asked to rate various specific aspects of the class on a scale, including a “not applicable” if needed. The form provides space for observer comments that can provide useful feedback on the ratings.
- (4) After the observation is complete, the faculty member will provide the GSI with all parts of the evaluation (Parts II and III). The GSI is free to raise additional points or comments verbally or in writing. Any written response will be included in the final evaluation materials. Both faculty member and graduate student will sign the evaluation and it will become a part of the graduate student’s file and copies will be provided to the GSI.

Each teaching assistant (TA) and reader/grader will be evaluated at the end of the semester. After the evaluation is complete, the faculty member will meet with the graduate student to discuss. If the TA or reader/grader wishes to raise any additional points verbally or in writing, they may do so. All written submissions will be added to the final evaluation. Both the faculty and TA or reader/grader will sign off on the evaluation and it will become a part of the graduate student’s file as well as be provided for the graduate student.

### **Teaching Assignments**

Teaching assignments are decided by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) and the Director of Undergraduate Studies (DUS)/Associate Head. Assignments are contingent on meeting minimum class enrollment (10 students) and decided based on departmental need and graduate student expertise. If program benchmarks and progress are being met, graduate students are guaranteed 5 years of teaching or research assistant funding (at a 50% appointment). After the first five years, additional years of funding will be granted based on student’s progression in the program as well as departmental needs.

Graduate students can teach their own courses [become Graduate Student Instructors (GSI)] once they have completed the master’s coursework and publishable paper, and have taken either the departmental teaching course (593) or the Graduate College course Foundations of College Teaching (GC 593). The Graduate College also offers Seminar in College Teaching (GC 592) that students wishing to receive additional teaching training might consider. See <https://grad.uic.edu/certificate-foundations-college-instruction> for more information.

Graduate student instructors are required to have their syllabi reviewed and approved by a faculty member each semester. The Graduate Student Specialist and/or Associate Head will identify a faculty member to review and approve the graduate student's syllabus well in advance of the start of the fall/spring semester (and summer term, if applicable). Graduate Student

Instructors (GSIs) are responsible for submitting a complete draft of the syllabus to the faculty reviewer by the deadline indicated by the Graduate Student Specialist and/or Associate Head. Graduate Student Instructors are also responsible for addressing and revising components of their syllabi (including assignments) requested by the faculty reviewer in a timely manner. Clear deadlines for this process will be noted by Graduate Student Specialist and/or Associate Head each semester (and summer term, if applicable) and Graduate Student Instructors are expected to complete this process by the noted deadlines.

To facilitate teaching appointments, the Graduate Student Specialist will request that students indicate which classes they are interested in teaching or TAing. The DGS and DUS/Associate Head will use these preferences to guide their decisions, but preferences are not guaranteed because of the many competing scheduling issues, such as when graduate courses are offered, as well as department needs.

Summer teaching assignments are more limited and the eligibility criteria will be communicated to students when summer teaching assignments are being completed by the DUS/Associate Head and DGS.

## **UIC Resources**

### **International Students**

Services for international students can be found at: <https://www.ois.uic.edu/>

### **University Policies**

For information on academic integrity, filing an academic grievance, or student disciplinary procedures, please see: <http://grad.uic.edu/university-regulations>

### **Departmental Resources**

Funded students receive office space, access to a phone and computer in their office.

#### *Computer Lab*

All graduate students have swipe access to the computer lab in the department computer lab (BSB 4133). The Graduate School Specialist provides this access. The computer lab door must be locked at all times.

#### *Department Doors*

Department doors are locked between 8pm and 7am every day. Graduate students can ask the Graduate School Specialist to give them card access for hours outside of 8pm-7am.

### **NET ID and UINs**

Each student receives a net ID (example: [kmarx2@uic.edu](mailto:kmarx2@uic.edu)) and a university identification number (UIN). Both forms of identification are necessary for email access, billing, online registration, and other important functions. For more information, please see:

<https://www.uic.edu/apps/netidclaim/manage>

### **My.UIC.edu**

My.UIC.edu is an important portal that allows students to register for classes, check midterm/final grades, assign grades as instructors or TA's, access financial aid reports and submit acceptance of financial aid, as well as view billing/account status.

My.UIC.edu also holds employment information such as time sheets (for hourly appointments) and direct deposit information: <http://my.uic.edu>

It is crucial that students holding graduate hourly appointments submit their time sheets on time, which is every other Friday during the academic year. If students have not worked hours, they do not need to submit hours to the college. However, if hours are worked and no time sheet is submitted, students will be paid late and it will create additional paperwork for both the department's Business Manager and the student.

### **Student IDs**

Student IDs (I-cards) are available in the Student Services East building, suite 1790 at 1200 W Harrison Street (corner of Racine and Harrison). IDs are also available on west campus at 242 Student Center West at 848 South Wolcott Avenue. <http://idcenter.uic.edu/>

### **Transportation**

All full time UIC students pay a fee for the U-Pass. The U-Pass entitles the student to unlimited rides on all Chicago Transit Authority buses and trains. For more information, please see: <http://idcenter.uic.edu/cta-u-pass/>

Students may also purchase parking annually or by semester. The Parking Office is in the Student Services East Building at 1200 W Harrison in suite 2620. For more information, including availability and parking rates: <https://parking.uic.edu/>

### **Housing**

UIC offers housing for graduate and professional students on campus: <https://grad.uic.edu/housing-campus-chicago> UIC also hosts a list of local vacancies off campus. This list is only accessible to UIC graduate students and those who list their units need to be affiliated with the university to post: <https://housing.uic.edu/>