



**Kent State University Doctoral Program in Sociology and Criminology:
Graduate Handbook**

2026-2027 Academic Year



INTRODUCTION

This is the handbook for the MA and PhD programs in Sociology and Criminology at Kent State University. The M.A. and Ph.D. programs in Sociology and Criminology at Kent State University allow students to choose from a wide range of courses and provide the opportunity to work with faculty in many cutting-edge fields. Our graduates hold tenured positions in universities all over the country, work in government agencies and departments, and are analysts and administrators in the private sector.

Our MA program was founded in 1939 and the PhD program was established in 1973. Sociology has a venerable history at Kent State. When the university first opened in 1912 as the Kent State Normal School the first semester consisted of four courses; Agriculture, History of Education, Psychology, and Sociology.

Distinguished alumni of our graduate program include Oscar Ritchie, the first African American to achieve the rank of full professor in the Ohio Education System; Glen H. Elder, the Howard Odum Research Professor of Sociology at University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Bertice Berry, award-winning entertainer, lecturer and comedienne; Neal Krause, Professor Emeritus and Marshall H. Becker Collegiate Professor of Public Health, University of Michigan; Annette Schwabe, Professor, Florida State University, and Kathleen Piker-King, Professor, University of Mount Union.

The daily operations of the program are handled by the Graduate Coordinator (GC) and by the Graduate Administrative Assistant, Lisa Douvikas. When you have questions, start with this document, which you should read carefully. If you still have questions, contact the GC.

As a sociology and criminology graduate student, you are part of a dynamic and intellectually engaged group of students. You are also part of a much larger community of graduate students here at Kent State University. The [Graduate College](#) offers useful information for graduate students, including professional development opportunities, policies, and links to student organizations. Please take advantage of these resources: <https://www.kent.edu/graduatecollege/graduate-college-events>

What We Expect from Graduate Students

Upon entering the program, many students wonder about how to address the faculty. Unless a faculty member tells you to use her or his first name, you should use the titles of “Dr.” or “Professor.” In our department, as in any professional setting, it is very important to behave respectfully and courteously. Some behaviors that will not be tolerated include, but are not limited to, making racial, sexual orientation, or gender slurs, making jokes at the expense of others, yelling at or losing your temper with faculty, staff, or students, or otherwise showing disrespect. Graduate students who violate these expectations may be referred to student conduct court: <https://www.kent.edu/studentconduct/code-student-conduct>.

The purpose of this section of the handbook is to outline the general expectations we have of department graduate students. **To be successful in our program, it is important that you read what follows thoroughly and carefully. It is your responsibility to understand and be aware of the various policies and procedures involved in the graduate program.** You should also review the American Sociological Association Code of Ethics: <http://www.asanet.org/about/ethics.cfm>. The principles upon which the ASA Code of Ethics is based are included as an appendix to this document.

In addition to the handbook, you should also familiarize yourself with two web pages in the 'Graduate Program' section of the Sociology and Criminology Department's website described below, as well as the policies that apply to KSU graduate students as found in the [Graduate Catalog](#) and the [University Policy Register](#).

Two important pages are the 'Forms and Resources' page and the 'FAQ' page. The 'Forms and Resources' webpage provides you with easy access to annotated documents and forms (or links to them). It is very important for you to know the rules, regulations, and deadlines. We have developed the "Forms and Resources" page to ensure that you have all the information you need. The current URL for the "Forms and Resources" page is: <https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>. The FAQ page for current students provides you with answers to the most commonly asked questions by graduate students—including those concerning coursework, procedures for theses and dissertations.

Guidelines for Email Communication

- Keep emails short, courteous, and to-the-point.
- 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" or other such closing.
- Check your grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- Write back promptly (i.e., acknowledge the faculty member's email response). The university requirement is that students should respond to e-mails within 24-hrs during the regular semester.
- Email is not private. A good rule of thumb is that you should never put anything in an e-mail that you would not be willing to post on your office door.

Professional and Ethical Responsibilities

It is expected that graduate students will; a) Communicate regularly with faculty advisors and committee members, especially on matters related to research, academic progress, concerns, and problems within their graduate program, b) Request clear guidelines of expectations from the supervising faculty members on research activities, including timetables for deliverables, c) Recognize that faculty advisors and committee members are responsible for guiding graduate student research, but students are responsible for conducting the independent research required for graduate degrees, d) Recognize the time constraints and other demands imposed on faculty members and program staff.

Exercise honest and ethical behavior in all academic pursuits, whether these pertain to study, course work, research, engagement, or teaching. Refer to Kent State University's Academic Misconduct Policy <https://www.kent.edu/studentconduct/academic-misconduct> Acknowledge the contributions of faculty and other members of the research team in all publications and conference presentations. Work with faculty to agree as early as possible upon authorship or acknowledgements commensurate with levels of contributions to the work. Recognize that research results, with appropriate acknowledgement, may be incorporated into progress reports, summary documents, applications for continuation of funding, and similar documents authored by faculty advisors, to the extent that the students' research is related to the faculty advisors' research programs.

Work with faculty to understand and follow Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects (IRB).

<https://www.kent.edu/research/office-research-compliance>

Know and follow the Kent State University policies on intellectual property.

<https://www.kent.edu/facultyhandbook/policy-register-intellectual-property>

You must complete the CITI training before you participate in any research with human subjects at KSU. Do not leave this until the last minute as it takes several hours to complete, although it doesn't all have to be done at once (i.e., you can save your progress and finish later). <https://about.citiprogram.org/>

Meeting with Your Advisor

You should establish regular meetings with your advisor, especially when you are working on your thesis or dissertation. Regular meetings are a good way to keep yourself accountable and engaged in maintaining a brisk pace of work. If you want to make an appointment with a faculty member, you should email and ask to drop by during their office hours, or if that is not possible, then indicate the days/times when you are available to meet. Office hours are posted next to each faculty member's door at the start of every semester.

Residency Requirement and Outside Employment

Graduate students are expected to complete assistantship and teaching duties (including online teaching) and all requirements for the sociology PhD in residence (i.e., the program is not available on-

line). With the exception of the Professional Seminar, which is generally offered on Friday mornings, all Graduate courses are offered Monday through Thursday, starting at 3:00 PM.

Graduate training (coursework) and a graduate assistantship are considered a full-time workload (see below). Graduate students who are receiving a stipend and are considering additional work on campus are required to obtain permission to take on additional employment. While outside (off-campus) employment is permitted and does not require the permission of the GC, adding additional work to your schedule may impede your progress through the program. Graduate students who have taken on additional work risk losing their stipend because of poor grades or because they are not meeting the benchmarks laid out in the program timeline (e.g., defending the MA thesis by the end of the second year, completing the comprehensive exam by the end of the third year).

A general rule of thumb in graduate school is that for every one hour of class, students should be spending three hours studying/reading/doing homework outside of class. Since all graduate classes are three or four hours, this means that you should be spending, on average, about 9-12 hours per week reading and writing. So in combination with the 20 hours/week required as a graduate assistant, hours spent on the MA thesis, comprehensive exams, and writing the MA and the dissertation, graduate training constitutes a (very) full-time workload.

Graduate Assistantship Assignments, Duties, and Responsibilities

In early August, graduate students will receive a preliminary workload statement for the upcoming AY that indicates the tentative plan for their teaching assignment. The GC will solicit requests from faculty for research assignments. Faculty must show how the assistantship they are requesting will be funded or how work completed by the student will contribute to future external funding.

Graduate assistants will be assigned to one of the following:

1. Research duties related to external grant projects
2. Teaching Assistantships
3. Course instructors: College Teaching and completion of the MA are required.

Graduate assistants will not be assigned to teach lecture sections without the approval of the Chair and the GC. Teaching assistantships will not be assigned for grading only. As a Teaching Assistant, the graduate student will help create examinations, proctor and grade examinations, and be available to meet with students. Non-teaching and non-research assistantships are limited to special projects with the Undergraduate Coordinator and/or the department internship program. Requests for a non-teaching assignment should be submitted to the GC by the faculty member, in writing, specifying the duties and responsibilities of the students and describing any products and/or outcomes. Exceptions to the above will be the result of consultation with the GC and the Chair and will be dependent on the availability of other sources of funding (e.g., a NEOMED placement). As a Research Assistant, the graduate student will work on an active qualitative research project. Responsibilities may include

recruiting research participants, coding interview data, conducting literature reviews, and contributing to the writing of a peer-reviewed manuscript.

Short-term and Long-term Leave of Absence

If you have an illness or life problem that interferes with your ability to complete your assistantship for two weeks or less, contact your assigned professor and the GC and request a short-term absence. A funded graduate student may request a short-term absence to recover from a personal illness or to bereave the death of an immediate family member.

For absences longer than two weeks, you should discuss taking an official leave of absence. In either case, it is important that you keep the GC informed regarding circumstances that prevent you from completing your assigned duties. For information on applying for a leave of absence, please see the policy FAQ's: <https://provostdata.kent.edu/roadmapweb/03/leave-absence-FAQ.pdf>

Class Attendance and Punctuality

Class attendance is mandatory. Please be on time for class. If you must miss class occasionally (e.g., because you are sick), contact the professor by email as soon as possible to inform them of your absence, preferably before the class. Please read all 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. Graduate students should also be familiar with the [KSU policy on student attendance and absence](https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-class-attendance-and-class-absence): <https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-class-attendance-and-class-absence>.

Writing and Other Fundamental Skills

Becoming a good writer is a life-long learning experience. Writing well is critical to your success in graduate school and beyond. Your professors and thesis/dissertation advisors should not be put in the position of having to do a painstaking line-edit of your work. If you receive feedback indicating that your writing is deficient it is important for you to make use of the university's Writing Commons: (<http://www.kent.edu/writingcommons>). A faculty member or your advisor 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: <http://libguides.library.kent.edu/content.php?pid=303862&sid=2490751>

Participation in the Department and the University Community

The Department of Sociology and Criminology is a community and graduate students are a vital part of

our community. Every semester there will be a number of department events such as lunches with visiting job candidates, job talks, campus visits for prospective graduate students, brownbags, and AKD activities, including the end-of-year department banquet. On average, there will be two department brownbags every semester on topics of interest to graduate students. As these often involve the participation of current and former graduate students, it is particularly important that you make every effort to attend these, and lunch is also often provided. 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.

In terms of department governance, graduate student representatives sit on the three major department committees; the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC), the Curriculum and Undergraduate Studies Committee (CUSC), and the Graduate Education Committee (GEC). Each committee has an MA representative and a PhD representative whose role is to attend meetings and provide the graduate student perspective on various issues that arise. In addition to attending meetings and sitting on the committee as a non-voting member, it is also expected that the representative will share any important information with fellow graduate students. At the beginning of the fall semester (before the third Friday of the semester), the Chair of AKD will send out an e-mail to all graduate students asking for an MA and a PhD representative for each of the three committees. If there are multiple applicants for a position it is up to the discretion of the AKD executive whether to call for a vote or decide in consultation with volunteers how to distribute the representation on the three committees. Graduate students interested in holding one of these positions should consult with the Chair of AKD or ask a faculty member.

Other Ways to Get Involved

Participation in the governance structure of the department is a good way to learn about how a university runs. The department has one MA and one PhD graduate student representative on the three major committees in the department: the Faculty Advisory Committee (FAC), the Graduate Education Committee (GEC), and the Curriculum and Undergraduate Studies Committee (CUSC). Although graduate students are non-voting members of these committees, faculty rely on and value highly the input we receive from graduate students. Other active committees run by graduate students include the Alpha Kappa Delta Society (AKD) which organizes social events, including the end-of-year banquet. The Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) which is co-run by faculty and graduate students and is very active in the department and the wider community. You can learn more about SWS at: <https://socwomen.org/>

There are also many other opportunities to contribute to university life. The Graduate Student Senate (GSS) and the Graduate College hold events throughout the academic year where you can socialize with graduate students from across the university. Participation in the governance and advocacy work of the GSS is also important because of the opportunity to learn more about higher education and to work on issues important to the national community of graduate students, such as compensation and college debt. The department has one representative on the Graduate Student Senate, which meets monthly. For details about how to get involved see: <https://www.kent.edu/graduatecollege/graduate-student->

[senate](#). Information about other graduate student groups and discipline-specific groups may be found at: <https://www.kent.edu/graduatecollege/graduate-student-organizations>

For New Students

New entering students should be aware that they need to block off the Thursday before the first week of class for the Graduate Student Senate (GSS) orientation and block off the Friday afternoon for the department orientation. Attendance at the GSS orientation is mandatory for all new funded students and the department orientation is mandatory for all new students.

A mentorship program organized and run independently by graduate students in the department is available to all new students. Senior-level graduate student volunteers are matched with all incoming students in the new cohort. Initial matches are made based on similar academic interests. The goal of the program is to have mentors guide mentees in their first year and beyond, both personally and professionally. Since its implementation, the mentor program has been a great success. Department graduate students have developed a resource library where you will find suggested readings and YouTube materials from brownbag talks, and a variety of other helpful resources. The resource library can be accessed at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1d1BYOSXmPgOQXBLNTayUUzOW21qulFB?usp=drive_link

Health Insurance

Graduate assistants receive a partial health insurance credit toward the health insurance plan for graduate students offered through Kent State University. The health insurance credit is designed principally to assist students who do not have family or other health insurance and wish to avail themselves of the health insurance plan. Information on enrolling is available at:

<https://www.kent.edu/deweese/ship>

The Wellness Center

KSU has a beautiful gym/work-out center where you can take exercise classes, play basketball, racquetball, and squash and/or go for a swim. Membership is included until a graduate student is in Dissertation II hours. If you are regular user of the gym and reaching the semester when you will be on Dissertation II hours, you can arrange to have the charge waived by filling out an Interdepartmental Charge Form. You can ask the GC or the Graduate Administrative Assistant for a copy.

Saving for Retirement (it's never too early to start)

Graduate assistants have the option to contribute to an Ohio retirement account or receive an exemption from retirement withholding. Retirement for graduate assistants is governed by the Ohio Public Employees Retirement System (OPERS), unless the student is a graduate teaching assistant and has a current membership with the State Teachers Retirement System of Ohio (STRS). Graduate students who do not want to contribute to an Ohio retirement account must complete a request for exemption form. Graduate assistants are exempted by federal law from Medicare taxation.

Research Requirements

All incoming students must take the CITI training which is required for all researchers who are conducting research with human subjects. This is discussed in more detail in the Professional Seminar. You are required to complete the training (which takes a couple of mornings) by the end of the first semester. The training and certification is available at: <https://www.kent.edu/research/office-research-compliance/compliance-training>. All Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications must include the CITI certification and the training has to be updated periodically.

Registering for Courses: All graduate students should consult with their advisor and the GC before registering for coursework every semester. This is particularly important in terms of courses outside the department, which cannot be taken without the permission of the GC. Please see below for more information on taking courses outside the department. New students should be aware that they cannot register for courses on their own but must register every semester through the Graduate Administrative Assistant, Lisa Douvikas (ldouvik1@kent.edu).

Professional Organizations and Conference Attendance

An important part of your professional development is the experience of attending conferences and participating in national and regional meetings and giving presentations/papers at conferences. The American Sociological Association annual conference is held in August with the deadline for papers usually in mid-January (see the website for the specific date as this has varied quite a bit in recent years). See: <https://www.asanet.org/> for annual conference themes and specifics concerning section calls for papers. The American Society of Criminology meeting is generally held in November with a deadline for paper abstracts in March. See <https://asc41.org/events/asc-annual-meeting/> for further details. There are also a number of regional sociology conferences such as the North Central Sociological Association <https://www.ncsanet.org/> and the Midwest Sociological Society, <https://www.themss.org/>. Participation in regional meetings can be a good place to begin to develop your conference presentation skills. Regional meetings are often held within driving distance and so are also less expensive to attend than national meetings. They also tend to be smaller, so less intimidating than the national meetings. There are also a number of more specialized conferences that align with department interests and are often attended by our faculty. These include the Group Processes Conference, <https://www.groupprocesses.com/> and the International Conference on Social Stress Research, <https://cola.unh.edu/sociology/conferences>. For further information on other specialty-specific conferences, please consult with advisor or the GC.

Funds to provide partial coverage of the cost of conference attendance are available through the department, which provides \$200 for conference attendance and \$400 for presenting at a conference, although availability of these funds may vary from year-to-year. Please see the graduate administrative assistant for details. Funding for conference presentations is also available through the Graduate Student Senate. See <https://www.kent.edu/graduatecollege/graduate-student-senate-awards>

PROGRAM DESIGN AND TIMELINE

The Ph.D. 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 of required courses, which includes a course to prepare students for professional careers in sociology, courses in research methods and data analysis, and courses in classical and contemporary theory, is supplemented by faculty advising and supervision of research projects, departmental colloquia, teacher training, and a supportive peer environment. Development of expertise in a specialty area is fostered through elective courses in our four areas of specialization; criminology, inequality, medical sociology, and social psychology.

Coursework

The schedule below reflects the ideal progress in the program for full-time students. More specific information about completing each facet of the program is located in later sections of the handbook. Students should develop their course plan in consultation with their advisor and the GC. **Graduate students are responsible for ensuring that required forms and paperwork are submitted on time and as required.** Please see the [Forms & Resources page](#) for a complete list of the paperwork required for each step of the program.

Summary of Coursework Requirements

	MA Program	PhD Program ¹
Requirements	Professional & Ethical Issues Early Sociological Theory Quantitative Research Methods Multivariate Techniques	Professional & Ethical Issues ² Contemporary Sociological Thought Advanced Data Analysis Qualitative Methods in Sociology College Teaching
Electives	10 hours	16 hours ³
Thesis/Diss Hours	Thesis I (30 hours)	Diss I (30 hours) ⁴
Total Hours to Degree	30 hours	60 hours

1 Entering student has an MA from an accredited college or university, which includes an MA thesis.

2 Professional and Ethical Issues cannot be waived.

3 Before advancing to candidacy, the student must have nine hours of electives in their specialty area and nine additional hours of electives. Note that while sixteen hours is the degree requirement, effectively the majority of doctoral students will take eighteen hours of electives because of the

candidacy requirement.

4 Answers to formatting questions concerning thesis/dissertation prospectus and final documents can be found by consulting the college style guide: <https://www.kent.edu/artscollege/college-arts-thesis-and-dissertation-style-guide>

Required courses cannot count as electives. A student may take up to six credits of individual investigation or research hours toward elective hours. Six credits of individual investigation may be applied toward the degree as elective credits. To determine whether to take research hours or an individual investigation, please review the course descriptions below.

SOC 72896 INDIVIDUAL INVESTIGATION 1-3 Credit Hours

(Repeatable for credit)(Slashed with [SOC 62896](#)) Intensive pursuit of a subject matter beyond normal course coverage with the possibility of associated research. Students may apply a maximum 6 credit hours combined in individual investigation ([SOC 72896](#)) and research ([SOC 72898](#)) toward the doctoral degree.

Prerequisite: Sociology major; and doctoral standing; and special approval.

Schedule Type: Individual Investigation

Contact Hours: 1-3 other

Grade Mode: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

SOC 72898 RESEARCH 1-3 Credit Hours

(Repeatable for credit)(Slashed with [SOC 62898](#)) Pursuit of research interests that can include the student's project and/or a faculty member's project. Student may apply a maximum of 6 credits combined of research ([SOC 72898](#)) and individual investigation ([SOC 72896](#)) toward the doctoral degree.

Prerequisite: Sociology major; and doctoral standing; and special approval.

Schedule Type: Research

Contact Hours: 1-3 other

Grade Mode: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory

Three (3) credits of 5000-level may count toward elective credits. Six credits of graduate-level courses taken outside the department may count as electives. A student wishing to take a graduate-level electives outside the department must obtain approval from the GC, who may also consult with the Graduate Education Committee. The written request should include; (1) the course name/number and department, (2) a current or recent copy of the course syllabus, (3) a brief explanation of how the course contributes and/or enriches the student's training. Students should also contact the instructor to make sure that they are willing to accept a student from another department into their class.

Summary of Graduate Program Timeline

Goals to Meet

Year 1	Select Advisor Develop identity as a sociologist (i.e., select a specialty area)
Year 2	Complete and successfully defend MA thesis
Year 3	Complete candidacy exam
Year 4	Write and defend dissertation prospectus
Year 5	Defend dissertation

Overall expectations: maintain good academic standing, which means maintaining a GPA above 3.0, meeting the above goals, and meeting expectations for work completed as a part of your assistantship assignment. Funded students who fail to meet these expectations may risk losing their annual stipend.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Year 1: Fall (8 hours)

Professional and Ethical Issues in Sociology (1 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)
Thesis Hours (3 credit hours)

Year 2: Spring (9-10 hours)

Contemporary Sociological Theory (3 credit hours)
College Teaching of Sociology (3 credit hours)
Thesis Hours (3 credit hours)idual
Investigation/Research Hours (1 credit hour)

For those entering program without a thesis-based MA degree in Sociology, adequate progress requires that the MA thesis be defended by the end of this semester.

Year 3: Fall (9-10 hours)

Elective Course in primary area (3 credit hours)
Elective Course in (3 credit hours)
Elective Course - Individual Investigation/Research Hours or other elective (3 credit hours)
Individual Investigation/Research Hours (1 credit hour; work on publishing thesis)

Year 3: Spring (9-10 hours)

Qualitative Research Methods (4 credit hours)
Elective course (3 credit hours)
Research - SOC 72898 (2-3 credit hours; preparation for comprehensive exam)

For adequate progress, the student should advance to candidacy by the end of this semester.

Year 4: Fall (15 hours)

Dissertation I (15 credit hours)

Year 4: Spring (15 hours)

Dissertation I (15 credit hours)

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

Year 5: Fall (15 hours)

Dissertation II (15 credit hours)

Year 5: Spring (15 hours)

Dissertation II (15 credit hours)

(Defend dissertation by end of Spring Year 5)

Grade Requirements and Maintaining Good Standing

To remain in good standing in the program a graduate student is expected to be making good progress through the program, which means meeting the benchmarks described above in the Program Timeline. Graduate students are also expected to maintain a minimum 3.00 grade point average (GPA). A graduate student who receives more than 8 credit hours of grades lower than B (3.00) is subject to dismissal. A graduate student who receives more than 4 credit hours of grades lower than C (2.00) is also subject to dismissal. When a graduate student receives a grade of B- or lower the instructor shall inform the GC no later than the Friday of the week after finals week.

Warning Letters

Students who receive a second B-/C+/C or one grade lower than "C" will receive an official "warning" in writing. This warning may be communicated to the Dean's office by the GC, but it will not be communicated to the Registrar. If a student receives a third grade of B- or lower or a second grade lower than a C, they will receive a recommendation of dismissal.

If a student's *term GPA* falls below 3.00, the student will receive a 'warning' letter reminding them of the above policies. This warning, if desired, may be communicated to the Dean's Office by the GC but will not be communicated to the Registrar.

Academic Probation

Students who have a *cumulative GPA* that falls below 3.00 will be recommended for probation. The dean will be notified, and if the dean concurs, the registrar will be notified, and the student will be placed on immediate probation. A student on probation has one semester to bring their cumulative GPA up to 3.00 while meeting ongoing program requirements. If this occurs, the dean will be notified, and if the dean agrees, the student will return to good academic standing. If the student is unable to bring their cumulative GPA to 3.0 or above after one semester, the student will receive a "dismissal" recommendation from the department to the college dean. **A student may not be appointed or reappointed as a graduate assistant while on probation.** A student on a leave of absence cannot be recommended for probation or dismissal. For further details, please see:

<https://catalog.kent.edu/academic-policies/academic-standing-graduate-student/>

Course Work: Breadth Requirement

The 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 one of the department's four program specialization areas and take nine (9) hours of coursework in the area. In order to determine which courses count toward specific areas, please see the table below. In addition, students are required to complete at least 17 hours of other electives. As indicated above, no more than 6 credits of individual investigation or research hours count toward other electives. No more than 3 credits of 50000-level coursework count toward other electives and no more than 6 credits of graduate-level classes taken outside the program count toward other electives.

Coursework by Concentration

Criminology	Inequality	Medical Sociology	Social Psychology
Criminological Theory (6/71003)	Social Inequality (6/72546)	Soc of Health and Illness (6/72323)	Social Psychology (6/72430)
Juvenile Delinquency (6/71005)	Soc of Gender (6/72566)	Soc of Mental Health (6/72326)	Self and Identity (6/72439)
Sociology of Corrections (6/71004)	Soc of Race and Ethnicity (6/72870)	Soc of Aging and the Life Course (6/72279)	Social Structure and Personality (6/72433)
Deviance (6/72760)	Social Psychology and Inequality (6/72872)	Social Control of Mental Illness (6/72332)	Structural Social Psychology (6/72433)
	Stratification and Health (6/72219)	Stratification and Health (6/72219)	Social Psychology and Inequality (6/72872)
	Structural Social Psychology (6/72433)		

The **Coursework Approval Form** and the **Candidacy Committee Form** must be submitted to the GC during the first week of the semester the student intends to complete the candidacy exam (<https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>). Ideally, this paperwork should be completed in

the semester prior to taking the comprehensive exam in order to ensure that the student has completed the course requirements and is ready to take the comprehensive exam. The GC determines whether the course requirements will be fulfilled. Where ambiguities arise, the GC should consult with area faculty members and the GEC.

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

GRADUATE STUDENTS AS INSTRUCTORS

Like writing well, teaching well is a lifetime endeavor. Graduate students should work closely with the GC and faculty members in the course subject area as they [prepare for](#) and begin teaching undergraduates. Course content should follow the official student learning outcomes for the class. All learning outcomes for sociology and criminology undergraduate courses may be found in the folder titled, 'Learning Outcomes for all Undergraduate' in the graduate student resource center at:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1d1BYOSXmPgOQXBLNTayUUzOW21qulfB?usp=drive_link

Matters to be discussed as you prepare for teaching include pedagogy, syllabus creation, lecture writing/session preparation, classroom strategies, and grading standards. There are many resources available to help with the development of these skills. The Graduate College offers a number of resources: <https://www.kent.edu/graduatecollege/teaching-support> as does the Center for Teaching and Learning <https://www.kent.edu/ctl>.

In addition to graduate college support, the Center for Teaching and Learning offers training opportunities and individual consultation: <https://www.kent.edu/ctl/our-services>. For useful external support and training see, for example; <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/solveproblem/index.html> and <https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/solveproblem/step1-problem/index.html>

As a course instructor, you are expected to abide by all KSU policies related to teaching, such as those shared annually in the College of Arts and Sciences syllabus template. There are [university approved syllabus statements](#). All instructors are required to participate in the KSU course evaluation process ("Flash Surveys"). More detail on teaching policies can be found in [Chapter 3 of the University Policy Register](#). Please reach out to the GC at any point in the teaching process for guidance and support.

Evaluation of Graduate Student Teaching

As part of the evaluation of student progress, all graduate student instructors will be evaluated by a faculty member appointed by the GC. At the beginning of each semester, the GC will request copies of the syllabi of all students teaching in the upcoming semester in order to review their compliance with syllabi requirements. No later than the tenth week of the semester, the GC will appoint a faculty member to complete an evaluation of a graduate students' course. The faculty member will meet with the graduate student prior to scheduling a 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. Evaluation forms are available in the "Additional Forms" section (<https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>). Alternatively, the faculty evaluator may use their own preferred format. After the classroom visit, the faculty member and graduate student will hold a post-evaluation meeting. The faculty member will complete the evaluation form and submit to the GC 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 (e.g., approximately 35 pages), which can be revised and sent out for review soon after completion of the final defense. 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. The selection of a thesis advisor should occur no later than the end of the spring semester of the first year.

When a faculty member agrees to serve as advisor, the student should complete the "Declaration or Change of Advisor Form" (<https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>) and submit it to the GC.

Thesis Committee

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

Thesis Proposal

A written thesis proposal is to be developed by the student in consultation with their advisor. The proposal shall include a statement of the problem, theory and hypotheses, intended methodology, data source and data analytic techniques (see Appendix A at the end of this handbook for a suggested outline). 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 their assessment of the written proposal.

Approval of the proposal will be indicated by the signature of each member of the committee on the Approval of Thesis Topic form (<https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>), a copy of which will be kept on file in the department office. The proposal meeting should occur no later than the semester prior to the thesis defense. *The Approval of Thesis Topic form must be signed and IRB approval must be obtained before the student begins data collection.*

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 by email committee members as to the likelihood of a successful oral defense of the document. If a pre-defense meeting is held, at least 10 days prior to the date of the meeting or poll, a copy of the thesis must be distributed to each committee member. If the decision as a result of the meeting or poll is to not proceed with the defense, 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 should be submitted to the administrative assistant so that the announcement can be circulated to faculty and students. **The announcement should be submitted to the administrative assistant and the GC at least 10 days prior to the defense.** An "M.A. thesis defense announcement template" is available on the <https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources> page. Any interested departmental members (i.e., faculty and students) may attend the defense.

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. **The Report of Thesis Final Examination form and signature pages should be brought to the defense for the signatures of all committee members.**

Final Requirements and Submission of Thesis to the Graduate School

Students should consult the 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.** The deadline to apply for graduation is early in the semester you plan to graduate (see <http://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-deadlines>). Missing this deadline can result in a fee or denied application. Be sure that your thesis advisor receives a final electronic copy of the completed document that is accepted by the Graduate College.

ADVANCEMENT TO CANDIDACY

Advancement to candidacy is accomplished when the student has completed all coursework (except for dissertation hours) and has written and successfully passed a 9,000-word Candidacy Paper. All students should aim to complete this process in the second semester of their third year.

Overview

While the student is completing coursework (i.e., in the spring of Year 3), advancement to candidacy is completed contemporaneously in three steps. **First**, the student declares a substantive focus within their primary area and creates a candidacy exam committee. **Second**, the student writes a 2,500-word candidacy proposal and submits it to their committee. **Third**, based on comments/suggestions from the committee, the student writes a longer 9,000-word candidacy paper in the style of an [Annual Review of Sociology](#) article. A student who receives a fail on either the Step 2 stage of the exam or the Step 3 of the exam. To pass the candidacy exam, the student may not receive more than one 'fail' outcome on the candidacy paper. The student has up to two attempts to advance to candidacy.

Steps

Step 1: Declaration of Program Area/Substantive Focus and Committee Formation: Doctoral students should identify a substantive focus/topic within their primary area. Examples include the stress process (medical sociology/mental health), mass incarceration (deviance/criminology), identity processes (social psychology), and social mobility (inequality). Once the substantive topic within the student's primary area has been identified, the student should submit the Coursework Approval Form and the Candidacy Committee Form (<https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>) to the GC. Students must receive approval from the GC before moving forward on plans to take their comprehensive exam.

Step 2: Candidacy Proposal and Reading List: Following the Advancement to Candidacy Timeline (see below), the student will email their committee chair an attached candidacy proposal not to exceed 2,500 words, excluding references and any tables or figures. The document should be double-spaced with a 12-point font and one-inch margins.

The goal of the longer candidacy paper (see Step 3 below) is to provide an in-depth critical analysis of the literature on a substantive topic through summary, analysis, comparison, synthesis, etc. In other words, the longer, candidacy paper will organize a body of literature, evaluate it, synthesize it, identify patterns and trends, and, most importantly, reveal gaps and articulate future directions. The shorter, Step 2 candidacy proposal should describe, in general terms, *how* this will be accomplished. It should overview the student's general plans for how they aim to review the chosen substantive topic. As with an *Annual Review of Sociology* article, the proposal should **1)** list the main sections and sub-sections to be included in the longer candidacy paper, **2)** briefly describe/overview the literatures, central ideas, important themes, etc. that will be explored in each section/sub-section of the candidacy paper, and **3)** summarize what the student sees as the gaps and future directions that the candidacy paper will illuminate.

Along with the 2,500-word proposal, the student must at the same time submit a list of the references that they plan to draw on in developing the longer candidacy paper. This should include readings in addition to those cited in the candidacy proposal. The reading list should be organized by the main sections and sub-sections to be included in the longer paper (as identified in the candidacy proposal).

The formal exam process officially begins once the student emails the proposal and reading list to the committee. If the student subsequently withdraws or fails to complete any of the remaining steps, this is counted as a failure of the exam.

It is expected that the student will develop the candidacy proposal and reading list with limited feedback from the committee chair and other committee members. Neither the committee chair nor committee members shall read a draft of the proposal or reading list before they are handed in. However, it is appropriate for the student to consult with the committee chair about the scope of the proposal.

Within two weeks of receiving the candidacy proposal, each committee member will provide written comments/suggestions to help the student successfully develop the longer candidacy paper (e.g., suggestions for articles/literatures to include, ideas to develop, gaps and future directions to consider, etc.). Comments should be sent to the committee chair via email. Non-anonymized comments will be collated and emailed to the student by the committee chair within 24 hours. In cases where discrepant comments/suggestions are given, the committee chair will direct the student how to address them. The GC and all committee members should be copied on this message. With permission from their advisor, the student may consult with members of their committee concerning questions and clarifications of the written comments.

Step 3: Candidacy Paper: The required length of the final candidacy paper is 9,000 words maximum, *excluding references and any tables or figures*. The document should be double-spaced with a 12-point font and one-inch margins.

The purpose of the paper is to provide the student with the opportunity to develop expertise in their primary area. The topic should be narrower than an entire program area but broader than a specific research project. As mentioned above, the candidacy paper should provide an in-depth critical analysis of the literature on a substantive topic through summary, analysis, comparison, synthesis, etc. The student should strive to organize, evaluate, and synthesize a body of literature in a manner that identifies larger patterns and trends. The final section of the paper should, based on the literature covered, highlight what we do not know that we *should* know (i.e., what are the gaps) and what research needs to be done to advance our understanding of the topic (i.e., the student must identify some specific directions for future research).

It is expected that the student will work independently to incorporate the comments/suggestions that committee members provided in response to the earlier Step 2 candidacy proposal/reading list, but the student may meet with individual committee members to seek clarification on specific points.

The candidacy paper must not depart substantially from the candidacy proposal. If the committee determines that the paper is substantially different than the proposal, this counts as a failed attempt, and the student will need to redo the paper to make it consistent with the original proposal and

comments/suggestions received.

Within two weeks of receiving the candidacy paper, each committee member will evaluate the paper by providing a pass/fail judgement along with supporting comments. Evaluations should be sent to the committee chair via email. A vote of 2/3 is required for a pass.

The committee chair should notify the student of the overall outcome by email within 24 hours and append the non-anonymized pass/fail judgements and supporting comments from each committee member. The GC and all committee members should be copied on this message.

If the student passes Step 3, the committee chair should then complete the **Report of Candidacy Examination form** (available here: [Policies & Forms | College of Sciences and Humanities](#)), indicating the “pass” result, and route it as instructed on the form. Additionally, *if the student unanimously passes the first attempt, the committee chair should poll the committee via email to pass the student “with distinction.”* In order to pass with distinction, all three committee members must vote “Yes.” If the vote passes, the student, committee, and GC should be notified via email.

If the student does *not* pass Step 3 (i.e., more than one “fail” vote), the student should proceed by making fundamental revisions/changes suggested by the committee and resubmit the candidacy paper within nine weeks.

After receiving the revision, committee members should provide a re-evaluation (including pass/fail judgement and supporting comments) to the committee chair within two weeks of receiving the revised paper. Again, a vote of 2/3 is required for a pass.

The committee chair should notify the student of the overall outcome by email within 24 hours and append the non-anonymized pass/fail judgements and supporting comments from each committee member. The GC and all committee members should be copied on this message.

If the student passes the **second attempt** at Step 3 (i.e., at least two out of three passing votes), the committee chair should then complete the **Report of Candidacy Examination form** (see link above), indicating the “pass” result, and route it as instructed on the form.

If the student *does not* pass the **second attempt** at Step 3 (i.e., more than one “fail” vote), the committee chair should then complete the **Report of Candidacy Examination form** (see link above), indicating the “fail” result, and route it as instructed on the form. Additionally, because the student has received more than one “fail” outcome, a dismissal recommendation to the Department Chair will be forthcoming from the Graduate Education Committee. The GC should make the student aware of this.

Timeline

Below is the semester-long timeline for the Advancement to Candidacy process once it is begun, which should be in the spring of Year 3:

Monday of the First Week: Complete the Coursework Approval Form and the Candidacy Committee form and submit to the GC. (<https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>)

Friday of the Third Week: Submit the Step 2 candidacy proposal to the committee chair, no later than 5:00 PM.

Friday of the Fifth Week: The committee chair will distribute committee comments/suggestions to the candidate.

Friday of the Twelfth Week: Submit the Step 3 candidacy paper to the committee chair, no later than 5:00 PM.

Friday of the Fifteenth Week: The student is notified of the outcome and receives the written evaluations.

Responsibilities and Expectations

As a student, you are expected to:

1. Identify your candidacy committee chair and additional members.
2. Ensure that all coursework requirements have been met.
3. Follow the proposed timeline. Any departure from the above timeline will be counted as a failure.
4. Work independently on all aspects of the process. While you may seek general advice from your candidacy committee chair and clarification from any committee member, you should not expect anyone on the committee to read and provide comments on drafts.

The committee chair is expected to:

1. Advise the candidate throughout the process. However, as this process is intended to be an exam the advisor will not read and comment on drafts of the paper.
2. Coordinate the candidacy process with the other members of the committee.
3. Communicate with the student, committee members, and GC in a timely fashion, as directed above.
4. Ensure that the Report of Candidacy Examination form is submitted to the Graduate Secretary when the student successfully or unsuccessfully completes the entire process.

Committee members are expected to:

1. Read and comment on the proposal and paper in a timely manner.
2. Provide the student with clarification of feedback, if requested. However, committee members are *not* expected to read and comment on drafts of the proposal or paper.
3. Adhere to the committee chair's decisions for resolving discrepant feedback.

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. For directions on formatting of the dissertation prospectus and dissertation, please consult the college style guide: <https://www.kent.edu/artscollege/college-arts-thesis-and-dissertation-style-guide>

Dissertation Director

The dissertation director does not have to be the same person who advised the student earlier in the program. If necessary, the **Declaration or Change of Advisor Form** should be completed and submitted to the GC. The form is available on the [Policies & Forms | College of Sciences and Humanities](#) page. Whether the advisor is new or not, the only restrictions are that the dissertation director must be a full-time faculty member in the Sociology Department and be approved for dissertation direction at Kent State University with an F-4 graduate faculty status.

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 four committee members, including a member from outside the sociology graduate program. A majority of the committee membership must have a status on the graduate faculty that allows them to direct doctoral dissertations (i.e., F-4 status). In addition, a majority of the committee members (including the director) must be from the graduate program in sociology.

One member of the committee must be from a department other than sociology – this member must also hold F-4 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. 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.

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.

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 prior to the initiation of data collection or analysis. For directions on formatting of the proposal, please consult the college style guide: <https://www.kent.edu/artscollege/college-arts-thesis-and-dissertation-style-guide>

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.
6. Expected contributions of the dissertation to the discipline.

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 Approval of Dissertation Topic form (see instructions on the [Forms & Resources](#) page), a copy of which will be kept on file in the department office. 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 student's advisor should submit a request for a Graduate Faculty Representative. Instructions for doing so are available here: <https://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-faculty-representative>. Once the appointment is made, a printed copy of the dissertation in final form must then be submitted to each committee member and the Graduate Faculty Representative for their evaluation. At their request, some committee members may request electronic copies rather than printed copies. The dissertation director should then 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 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 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 graduate 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. A template for the announcement is available at <https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources> under the common forms for MA and PhD. At the oral defense, the committee and outside Graduate Faculty Representative 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 (<https://www.kent.edu/sociology/forms-and-resources>). The completed form should be routed as instructed, 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 30 hours 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 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 the deadlines set by their Graduate School for graduation.** The deadline to apply for graduation is early in the semester you plan to graduate (see <http://www.kent.edu/cas/graduate-deadlines>).

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Plagiarism and Cheating

Plagiarism is a serious breach of professional ethics. To ensure that students understand plagiarism, in all its forms, every student is required to complete the following in their first semester of the graduate program.

1. Students will complete an online CITI training which includes a section on ethics and print the completion certificate.
2. Students will complete an online program on plagiarism, and print the documentation provided upon passing the program.

Both documents must be submitted to the graduate director. The CITI training and plagiarism tutorial will be completed as part of the requirements for Professional and Ethical Issues in Sociology course.

A single act of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the graduate program. The KSU policy on cheating and plagiarism can be found here:

<https://www.kent.edu/policyreg/administrative-policy-regarding-student-cheating-and-plagiarism>

Procedures Concerning Plagiarism

If a faculty member suspect a student has plagiarized an assignment, the faculty member will present the student's paper and a copy of the original source to the Graduate Executive Committee (GEC) by submitting the materials to either the Department Chair or Graduate Program Coordinator.

All cases of suspected plagiarism will be brought to the GEC. The GEC will assess the evidence and make the final decision as to the presence or absence of plagiarism. The GEC will recommend appropriate disciplinary action. If the disciplinary action is dismissal from the graduate program, the graduate committee will notify the Graduate School and ask that the student be formally dismissed.

For more on university policy concerning plagiarism, please see:

<http://libguides.library.kent.edu/c.php?g=278246&p=1854288>

Awards & Scholarships

Department Awards

Note that the Lewis-Benson award is a self-nomination, and all other department awards with the exception of the Fleming Award, may be self-nominated.

Elaine Mai Schock Award: Awarded to an outstanding Master's student in Sociology. Requisites: GPA, faculty nomination, and GEC vote.

Amount of Award: \$100, non-renewable.

Outstanding Doctoral Student Award: Awarded to an outstanding Doctoral student in Sociology Requisites: GPA, faculty nomination, and final GEC vote.

Amount of Award: \$100, non-renewable

James E. Fleming Memorial Award: Awarded to author of the best paper in sociological theory. Requisites: GPA, faculty nomination, and final faculty vote.

Amount of Award: \$100, non-renewable Available to: undergraduate of any rank, graduate

James T. Laing Scholarship in Sociology : Awarded to a graduate student in good academic standing, who is not graduating, and who has taken an active and engaged role in the department or discipline. Amount of Award: \$1,000 to be awarded the following Fall semester. Number of awards may vary from year to year.

Lewis-Benson Outstanding Graduate Instructor Award: Awarded to a graduate student who has demonstrated teaching excellence in at least one course taught independently. A student may only win this award once.

Emergencies

KSU uses the "Flash Alerts" text notification system to alert campus members of emergencies (as well as weather-related closures). You may sign up for Flash Alerts here: <https://www.kent.edu/flashalerts> .

Each department has an emergency evacuation plan. The most common emergencies are tornados or a gas leak. Merrill Hall has two rally points in the event of an emergency. These are the stone library gardens (rally point 1) and Hilltop Drive in front of Cartwright Hall (rally point 2). For additional information on the university's response plan and dealing with difficult or troubled students, please see the website for further information: <http://www.kent.edu/stepupspeakout>. Please consult the information on the [Office of Student Conduct page](#) for detail on appropriate actions to take in the case of student disruptions, based on the level of emergency or threat.

APPENDIX A: MA THESIS PROPOSAL – SUGGESTED OUTLINE & 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).

APPENDIX B: ASA CODE OF ETHICS GENERAL PRINCIPLES¹

The Code of Ethics (the Code) of the American Sociological Association (ASA or the Association) sets forth the principles and ethical standards that underlie sociologists' scientific and professional responsibilities and conduct. These principles and standards should be used as guidelines when examining everyday scientific and professional activities. They constitute normative statements for sociologists and provide guidance on issues that sociologists may encounter in their work. The ASA Code of Ethics consists of this Preamble, six General Principles, and a number of specific Ethical Standards. The Preamble and General Principles of the Code are aspirational goals to guide sociologists toward the highest ideals of Sociology. Although the Preamble and General Principles are not enforceable rules, they should be considered by sociologists in arriving at an ethical course of action and may be considered by ethics bodies in interpreting the Ethical Standards. Drawing from personal values, culture, and experience, sociologists may supplement, but must not violate, the values and rules specified in the Code of Ethics. Sociologists should strive to adhere to the principles in the Code of Ethics. Membership in the ASA commits members to the Ethical Standards and the Policies and Procedures of the Committee on Professional Ethics (COPE). Members are advised of this obligation upon joining and renewing their membership in the Association, and also that violations of the Ethical Standards in the Code may lead to the imposition of sanctions, up to and including termination of membership.

The following General Principles are aspirational and serve as a guide for sociologists in determining the ethical course of action in a specific context. They exemplify the highest ideals of professional conduct.

Principle A: Professional Competence

Sociologists strive to maintain high levels of competence in their work; they recognize the limitations of their expertise; and they undertake only those tasks for which they are qualified by education, training, or experience. They recognize the need for ongoing education in order to remain professionally competent; and they utilize the appropriate scientific, professional, technical, and administrative resources needed to ensure competence in their professional activities. They consult with other professionals when necessary for the benefit of their colleagues, students, research participants, and clients.

Principle B: Integrity

Sociologists are honest, fair, and respectful of others in their professional activities—in research, teaching, practice, and service. Sociologists do not knowingly act in ways that jeopardize either their own or others' professional welfare. Sociologists conduct their affairs in ways that inspire trust and confidence; they do not knowingly make statements that are false, misleading, or deceptive.

Principle C: Professional and Scientific Responsibility

¹ Source: <http://www.asanet.org/about/ethics.cfm>

Sociologists adhere to the highest scientific and professional standards and accept responsibility for their work. Sociologists understand that they form a community and show respect for other sociologists even when they disagree on theoretical, methodological, or personal approaches to professional activities. This is the essence of collegiality. Sociologists also value the public trust in Sociology and are concerned about their ethical behavior and that of other sociologists that might compromise that trust. While endeavoring always to be collegial, sociologists must never let the desire to be collegial outweigh their shared responsibility for ethical behavior. When appropriate, they consult with colleagues to assess, prevent, and/or report unethical conduct.

Principle D: Respect for People's Rights, Dignity, and Diversity

Sociologists respect the rights, dignity, and worth of all people. They strive to eliminate bias in their professional activities, and they do not tolerate any forms of discrimination based on age, gender, race, socioeconomic status and socioeconomic origins, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, health conditions, political affiliation, marital status, domestic status, parental status, or any other applicable basis proscribed by law. They are sensitive to cultural, individual, and role differences in serving, teaching, and studying groups of people with distinctive characteristics. In all of their work-related activities, sociologists acknowledge the rights of others to hold values, attitudes, and opinions that differ from their own. 5

Principle E: Social Responsibility

Sociologists are aware of their professional and scientific responsibility to the communities and societies in which they live and work. They apply and make public their knowledge in order to contribute to the public good. When undertaking research, they strive to advance the science of Sociology and to serve the public good. At the same time, sociologists strive to be aware of situations that may result in harm to individuals, groups or communities.

Principle F: Human Rights

In the course of their research, teaching, practice, and service, sociologists are committed to professional behaviors consistent with promoting the human rights of all people, including other sociologists. In their professional lives, sociologists strive to use their knowledge and skills to advance the cause of human rights worldwide.