

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
Ph.D. AND MA DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Revised: {10/31/2013; 4/11/2017; 2/12/2018; 4/19/2023}
Graduate Council Approval: 4/19/2023

Table of Contents

A. Introduction

- 1) Aims and Scope
- 2) Admissions Requirements
 - a) Prerequisites
 - b) Deficiencies
- 3) General Committees
 - a) Executive Committee
 - b) Admission Committee
 - c) Education Policy Committee

B. Master's Degree Requirements

- 1) Degree Plan I- Thesis
 - a) Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
 - b) Course Requirements - Core and Electives
 - i) Core Courses
 - ii) Elective Courses
 - iii) Summary
 - c) Special Requirements
 - d) Advancement to Candidacy
 - e) Thesis Requirements
- 2) Degree Plan- Professional Masters- *Pending development of policies and procedures for Professional masters programs at the campus level.*
- 3) Advising Structure and Mentoring
- 4) Committees
 - a) Thesis Committee
- 5) Normative Time to Degree
- 6) Typical Timeline and Sequence of Events
- 7) Sources of funding

C. Doctoral Degree Requirements

- 1) Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)
- 2) Course Requirements - Core and Electives
 - a) Core Courses
 - b) Elective Courses
 - c) Summary

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

- 3) **Special Requirements 2**
- 4) **Dissertation Plan**
- 5) **Advising Structure and Mentoring**
- 6) **Committees**
 - a) **Qualifying Exam Committee**
 - b) **Candidacy Committee**
 - c) **Doctoral Committee**
 - d) **Other**
- 7) **Advancement to Candidacy**
- 8) **Qualifying Examination Requirements**
- 9) **Dissertation Requirements**
- 10) **Normative Time to Degree**
- 11) **Typical Timeline and Sequence of Events**
- 12) **Sources of Funding**
- 13) **Leaving the Program Prior to Completion of the PhD Requirements.**

D. General Information

- 1) **PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee Status**

A. Introduction

1) Aims and Scope:

Sociology is the scientific study of society, social institutions, social relationships, and human organization. The Sociology faculty at UC Merced make up a vibrant and collegial intellectual community, marked by outstanding scholarship and participation in interdisciplinary communities of inquiry. Our program fosters scholarly excellence in Sociology, with a specific focus on social inequality, organizations and institutions, and politics. Our program is nationally and internationally recognized for its high quality scholarship, graduate training, and contributions to the university and community. Students are taught state-of-the-art research design methods and conceptual models for carrying out independent research. The full-time program leads to the degree of *Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology*. Ph.D. students have the option to obtain a *Master of Arts in Sociology* degree, either en route to a Ph.D. degree (non-terminal), or in lieu of a Ph.D. degree (terminal) if a student exits the graduate program prior to fulfilling the Ph.D. requirements. The program's overarching goal is to convert students from consumers of sociological knowledge to independent, expert producers of social research.

The UC Merced graduate program in Sociology is distinctive in several ways. First, it provides intensive mentoring to graduate students, with personalized attention given to small cohorts of accepted students. Students are matched with a faculty mentor immediately upon entrance into the program, and the program curriculum includes small seminars as well as an intensive writing course to facilitate independent research and the preparation of journal articles. Second, our program offers a unique set of substantive foci within an interdisciplinary environment. Sociology faculty study a combination of topics, such as race, health care and education that are especially relevant to California's Central Valley, the state and the nation.

Our program includes opportunities to participate in interdisciplinary research projects, as well as informal and formal seminars from across the university. Finally, the program is designed to train students in research careers in both higher education and public and private agencies outside of academia. The American Sociological Association (ASA) faults graduate programs in sociology for failing to prepare students for careers outside of academia. Our program provides training on a range of substantive topics and research methodologies that will provide an excellent foundation for careers in academia and as researchers.

2) Admissions Requirements:

Consideration for graduate group admission requires a bachelor's degree, three letters of recommendation, official transcripts, an academic writing sample, TOEFL or IELTS score (if applicable), and submission of the graduate online application (which includes a statement of purpose as well as a personal history of contributions) with fee by the stated admission deadline. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required. Admission decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Meeting some or all of these criteria does not guarantee admission, but merely eligibility. The decision to recommend admission to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education will be made by the Graduate Group Admissions Committee on the basis of available space and the competitiveness of applicants compared to the eligible pool.

b) Deficiencies:

Coursework deficiencies should be made up by the end of the first academic year following initial enrollment by earning a letter grade of “B” or better.

3) General Committees: a.

Executive Committee:

The Executive Committee shall, in consultation with the faculty, determine and implement policy for the Group. The Executive Committee shall consist of three members (the Graduate Group Chair plus two members, appointed by the Grad Group Chair in consultation with the faculty). The Executive Committee makes appointments to the Admissions Committee and Education Policy Committee for the Grad Group.

b. Admission Committee:

The Admissions Committee is made up of three faculty members, at least one of whom is a member of the Executive Committee (Chair), and who appoints two additional members, in consultation with the Executive Committee. The Admissions Committee determines criteria for assessing student applicants, including developing a rubric for scoring (excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, based on information provided to us on the online admissions tool, which includes but is not limited to undergrad college and gpa, grad college (MA) and gpa, interests, fit, and faculty mentioned). The Admissions Committee meets at least once to rank students and makes recommendations to faculty; final selection is made by Admissions Committee in consultation with faculty. The Admissions Committee is responsible for sending the final list of recommended admits to the Dean of Graduate Studies and is also charged with the recommendations/allocation of intramural financial assistance, fellowships, and awards for new and continuing students.

c. Education Policy Committee:

The Education Policy Committee consists of several ad-hoc committee members charged with establishing and maintaining documentation on the Sociology Graduate Group curriculum. The committee prepares and executes all reviews of the Sociology Graduate Group program, including the seven-year review, WASC substantive changes, and other evaluations specified in this proposal. In consultation with the program faculty, the Education Policy Committee coordinates and documents proposed changes in programmatic requirements of the Sociology Graduate Group program, and presenting proposed changes to the voting body, Graduate and Council and WASC as needed. All changes to the programmatic requirements of the Sociology Graduate Group curriculum and associated requirements must be approved by vote of the eligible Graduate Group Faculty.

B. Master’s Degree Requirements

The master’s degree is attained by: Plan I, the Thesis option, described in the [UC Merced Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#).

1) Degree Plan I-Thesis:

This plan requires a minimum of 4 semesters of residence, 48 units of graduate coursework, at least 20 of which must be earned in 200-series graduate-level courses exclusive of credit given for thesis research and preparation. A cumulative GPA not lower than 3.2 is required. A “pass” outcome by the M.A. Committee is required.

a) Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs): Provide the Program Learning Outcomes

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

for Degree Plan I.

PLO #1 Core Theoretical Knowledge	PLO #2 Research Methods	PLO #3 Communicate
--	-------------------------------	-----------------------

b) Course Requirements - Core and Electives (total # units)

Discuss the course requirements. Include a tabular list with the following information:

i) Core Courses (total 28 units)

Course Number	Course Name	Units
Soc 200.	Sociological Theory	4
Soc 201.	Professionalization Seminar	4
Soc 205.	Graduate Writing and Publishing Seminar*	4
Psych 209.	Pre-Statistics (equivalent)	4
Soc 210.	Grad Stats 1	4
Soc 211.	Grad Stats 2	4
Soc 215.	Graduate research methods	4

ii) Elective Courses (total 20 units)

Course Number	Course Name	Units
Soc 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Soc 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Soc 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Related Field 2XX	Related Field Elective	4
Related Field 2XX	Related Field Elective	4

iii) Summary:

24 units of core coursework and 20 units of participatory seminars are required for a total of 48 units. Full-time students must enroll for 12 units per semester including research, academic and seminar units. Courses that fulfill any of the graduate group course requirements may not be taken S/U. Once course requirements are completed, students can take additional classes as needed, although the 12 units per semester are generally fulfilled with a research class (provide course number) and perhaps seminars.

c) Special Requirements: N/A

d) Advancement to Candidacy:

Before advancing to candidacy for the Master's degree, a student must have satisfied all plan requirements set by the graduate program and must have maintained a minimum GPA of 3.2 in all course work undertaken. Normally, students advance by the end of the fourth semester. The student must file the appropriate paperwork (Application for Advancement to Candidacy for the Master's Degree and Conflict of Interest Form).

e) Thesis Requirements:

Thesis committee meetings: The candidate and advisor should meet at least once a year with the other members of the thesis committee to discuss progress and any changes in research objectives.

Thesis: Research for the Master's thesis is to be carried out under the supervision of a faculty member of the program and must represent an original contribution to knowledge in the field. The thesis research must be conducted while the student is enrolled in the program. The thesis is submitted to the thesis committee at least one month before the scheduled defense. All committee members must approve the thesis in its entirety and sign the title page before the thesis is submitted electronically to the Graduate Division for final approval. Should the committee determine that the thesis is unacceptable, even with substantial revisions; the program may recommend the student for disqualification from the program to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, in keeping with the [UC Merced Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#).

The thesis must be submitted by the deadline in the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. Those students who complete requirements and submit thesis after the end of the semester and prior to the start of the subsequent semester will earn a degree for the following semester, but will not be required to pay fees for that semester. Instructions on preparation of the thesis are available in the UCM Thesis and Dissertational Manual and a schedule of dates for filing the thesis in final form are published on the Graduate Division website in the calendar and deadlines section.

2) Degree Plan- Professional Masters

Policies and Procedures for Professional Masters programs are in development at the campus level.

3) Advising Structure and Mentoring:

The graduate advisor is the faculty member who supervises the student's research and thesis. The Graduate Advisor, who is appointed by Graduate Group Chair, is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures, and registration information until the Thesis Committee is formed. The Graduate Group Staff assists students with identifying appointments and general university policies. The Mentoring Guidelines can be found at the following link [UCM Mentoring Guidelines](#).

4) Master's Degree Committees:

a. Thesis Committee:

The Thesis Committee is comprised of three faculty members. The student, in consultation with his/her graduate advisor and graduate group chair, nominate two additional faculty (in addition to the advisor who serves as Chair) to serve on the Thesis Committee.

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

These nominations are submitted to the Graduate Division for formal appointment in accordance with Graduate Council policy. A committee of three faculty members shall approve the subject and pass on the content of thesis.

5) Normative Time to Degree/Typical Timeline and Sequence of Events:

Fall Semester	Spring Semester
1st Year	
SOC 200 Sociological Theory	SOC 210 Statistics 1
Psych 209 Pre-Statistics (or equivalent)	SOC 215 Graduate Research Methods
SOC 201 Professionalization Seminar (2 units)	SOC 201 Professionalization Seminar (2 units)
SOC 2XX Elective	SOC 2XX Elective
Summer: Research for MA Thesis/2nd year paper	First Year Review
2nd Year	
SOC 205 Writing and Publishing Seminar	SOC 216 Advanced Qualitative Methods
SOC 211 Statistics 2	SOC 2XX Elective (or Elective in Related Field)
SOC 2XX Elective	SOC 295: Graduate Research (Letter Grade)
Terminal MA student departs at end of 2nd year	Turn in MA Thesis

- 6) **Sources of Funding:** Graduate students who received a funding offer with their admissions offer will have their financial support according to the terms of the funding offer. Funding will come through a combination of Teaching Assistantships, graduate Research Assistantships, and/or Fellowships. Master's students are typically not expected to be funded by such means; but they may receive a funding offer with their admissions offer. More information on financial support can be found in the [Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#).

C. Doctoral Degree Requirements

1) Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

- PLO 1. Synthesize, critique, apply, and extend major sociological theories.
- PLO 2. Critique and evaluate qualitative and quantitative sociological research methods.
- PLO 3. Design and conduct independent research that makes an original contribution to sociological knowledge.
- PLO 4. Synthesize, critique, and identify extensions to previous empirical and theoretical work in at least two substantive areas of the discipline.
- PLO 5. Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, about sociological theories, arguments, methods, and concepts.
- PLO 6. Demonstrate proficiency in the professional skills needed to participate in the intellectual and organizational aspects of sociological careers.

Ph.D. Curricular Map						
Course number and title	PLO #1 Core Theoretical Knowledge	PLO #2 Research Methods	PLO #3 Indep. Research	PLO #4 Core Substantive Knowledge	PLO #5 Communicate	PLO #6 Professionalism
Soc 200. Sociological Theory*	I/D/M		I	I	I/D	

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

Soc 201. Professionalization			I		I/D	M
Soc 205. Graduate Writing and Publishing Seminar*	D/M	D	M	D/M	D/M	
Soc 206. Grant Writing	D/M	D/	M	D/M	D/M	M
Soc 210. Statistics 1: Linear Regression Analysis*		I/D/M	I/D/M		I/D	
Soc 211. Statistics 2: Categorical Regression Analysis*		D/ M	D/M		I/D/M	
Soc 212. Adv. Topics in Quantitative Analysis		M	M	D/M	D/M	
Soc 215. Research Methods*		D/	M		I/D/M	
Soc 216. Qualitative Research		M	M		I/D/M	
Soc 217. Adv. Topics in Research Methods		M	M		I/D/M	
Soc 220. Political Sociology	I/D/M	I/D	I/D/M	D/M	D/M	
Soc 221. Social Movements	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 230. Stratification	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 232. Seminar on Education	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 240. Organizational Behavior	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 245. Sociology of Health	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 260. Gender	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 261. Sexuality	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 280. Seminar on Race and	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Soc 282. Immigration	I/D/M	I/D	D	D/M	D/M	
Other Graduate Requirements						
MA Thesis	D/M	D	D/	D/M	M	D
Qualifying exam	M	M	D	M	M	
Dissertation Proposal	D	D	D	D	D	D
Dissertation	M	M	M	M	M	M
Teaching Assistantships				I/D/M	I/D/M	I/D/M

2) Course Requirements - Core and Electives (total 60 units)

The Sociology Graduate Group faculty has established a minimum requirement of 15 courses of graduate coursework for the Ph.D. (4 units each for a total of 60 units). All of these courses must be taken for a letter grade. In accordance with University of California policy, a minimum of four semesters in academic residence is required prior to awarding the Ph.D.

a) Core Courses (total 32 units)

Indicate course number, course name, and number of units

Course Number	Course Name	Units
Soc 200.	Sociological Theory	4
Soc 201.	Professionalization Seminar	4
Soc 205.	Graduate Writing and Publishing Seminar*	4
Psych 209.	Pre-Statistics (equivalent)	4

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

Soc 210.	Stats 1	4
Soc 211.	Stats 2 2 Analysis	4
Soc 215.	Graduate research methods	4
Soc 212, 216 or 217	Advanced Research Methods	4

b) Elective Courses (total 28 units)*

Indicate course number, course name, and number of units

Course Number	Course Name	Units
Soc 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Soc 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Soc 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Soc 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Related Field 2XX	Sociology Elective	4
Related Field 2XX	Related Field Elective	4
Related Field 2XX	Related Field Elective	4

c) Summary:

32 units of required courses and 28 units of electives are required for a total of 60 units. Full-time students must enroll for 12 units per semester including research, academic and seminar units. Courses that fulfill any of the program course requirements may not be graded S/U. Research hours (for a letter grade) may be included towards the seven substantive courses (e.g. in preparation for Qualifying Exams, research with advisor for MA, etc.), but should be limited to 12 units of the 60 unit total (additional reading/research hours towards the seven elective courses require faculty advisor and graduate chair approval).

Once course requirements are completed, students can take additional classes as needed, although the 12 units per semester are generally fulfilled with research classes and seminars. Per UC regulations students cannot enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses per semester.

*Note: All of the above courses are 4 units, with the exception of Soc 201, which is a 2 unit course required during each of the student's first two semesters on campus.

3) Special Requirements: N/A

a) Teaching Requirement: Sociology Graduate Group requires all graduate students pursuing the Ph.D. to acquire teaching experience at the post-secondary level under faculty supervision. This requirement is satisfied by appointment as a Teaching Assistant or Teaching Fellow in undergraduate courses. Refer to Academic Appointment and Graduate Student Employment in the Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook for definitions, responsibilities, and requirements related to teaching titles.

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

- 4) **Dissertation Plan:** In accordance with University of California policy, a minimum of four semesters in academic residence is required prior to awarding the Ph.D. Typically, a longer period of study, four to six years, is required for completion of all degree requirements. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Group to inform the student upon admission to the program of the expected degree time. All graduate students are considered resident graduates not candidates for a degree, unless admitted to candidacy after completion of all candidacy requirements and approval by the Graduate Division after formal application. A student advances to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon successfully demonstrating a high level of scholarship at the Ph.D. level, and upon completing all preparatory work and demonstrating readiness to proceed to the dissertation phase, which includes an oral defense of the dissertation proposal.

5) Advising Structure and Mentoring:

The Graduate Advisor is the faculty member who supervises the student's research and dissertation. The Graduate Chair, who is appointed by the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education, is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures, and registration information until the Doctoral Committee is formed. The Graduate Group Coordinator assists students with identifying appointments and general university policies. The Mentoring Guidelines can be found at the following link, [UCM Mentoring Guidelines](#).

6) Doctoral Degree Committees:

a. Qualifying Examination Committee:

The Qualifying Exam Committee is comprised of two faculty members. The graduate group chair in consultation with faculty nominate faculty to serve on the Qualifying Examination Committee based on area expertise. These nominations are submitted to the Graduate Division for formal appointment in accordance with Graduate Council policy. The Committee shall approve the subject and pass on the content of examination. Usually one of the committee members directs the examination.

b) Candidacy Committee:

The Candidacy Committee is comprised of three faculty members. The student, in consultation with his/her graduate advisor, nominates two faculty to serve on the Candidacy Committee (in addition to the advisor who serves as Chair). These nominations are submitted to the Graduate Group Chair for formal appointment in accordance with Graduate Council policy. The Candidacy Committee, in consultation with the graduate student and the faculty advisor, selects faculty to serve on the three-member Doctoral Committee. The Committee ordinarily will review an outline of the proposed dissertation project, and will determine by oral examination (the Dissertation Proposal Defense) the student's competence in that area. When, by unanimous vote, the Committee decides the student is qualified for the dissertation phase, it shall recommend advancement to candidacy to the Graduate Council via the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education.

c) Doctoral Committee:

The Doctoral Committee is comprised of a minimum of three faculty members selected by the Candidacy Committee, and in consultation with the graduate student and the graduate advisor (usually the Chair of the Candidacy Committee and the presumed Chair of the Doctoral Committee). The majority of the committee should be affiliated with the program; however, external faculty in a related field within UC Merced, or the same or related field housed at another college or university campus, may serve on the Doctoral Committee with prior approval from the Candidacy Committee. The Doctoral Committee is formally

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

identified on the Advancement to Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy Form. The role of the Dissertation Committee is to advise the doctoral student on the research topic and methods, and then to review the final completed dissertation for acceptance. The Doctoral Committee Chair should determine the desires of the individual members regarding assistance with the research and dissertation review at the time the doctoral committee is constituted. Students are expected to meet with the Chair of their doctoral committee regularly. Doctoral committee members are expected to read and comment on a dissertation within (indicate time lapse) from its submission. The student and faculty will coordinate a timeline for the student to present the thesis to the doctoral committee. This timeline must allow all doctoral committee members enough time to fulfill their responsibilities within the indicated deadline.

7) Advancement to Candidacy:

Before advancing to candidacy for a doctoral degree, a student must have satisfied all requirements set by the graduate program, must have maintained a minimum GPA of 3.2 in all course work undertaken, and must have passed unanimously the Qualifying Examination before the Qualifying Exam Committee appointed to administer that examination. The Application for Qualifying Examination available on the Graduate Division website must be submitted one month prior to the proposed examination date. Students must be in good academic standing and registered for the semester in which the examination is held. The Qualifying Examination Committee conducts the exam and submits results to the Graduate Division using the Qualifying Examination Report Form.

Normally, students advance by the end of the seventh semester. The student must file the appropriate paperwork (Advance to Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor Philosophy Form and Conflict of Interest Form) with the Graduate Division and pay the candidacy fee in order to be officially promoted to Ph.D. Candidacy.

8) Qualifying Examination Requirements:

a) Qualifying Examination

i. General Information

All students will complete all course requirements before taking their Qualifying Examination. Passing this exam, in addition to passing the **Dissertation Proposal Defense**, makes the student eligible for advancement to candidacy. The qualifying exam should be taken by the 6th semester and no later than the beginning of the 7th semester after admission to the Ph.D. program.

The Qualifying Examination should evaluate both general preparedness in the discipline, and specific competence to pursue the proposed dissertation topic. In its deliberation, the Committee ordinarily will review the student's academic record, preliminary examinations and evaluations by other faculty. The Committee may conduct any other examination it deems appropriate. Following its formal appointment, the Committee is free to adopt whatever procedures it deems appropriate to conduct the Qualifying Examination for candidacy, subject to the rules of the program and those specified below:

- Administration of the Candidacy Examination must conform to the policies established by the Graduate Council.
- The student must be given adequate notice of the content, form and time of the examination.
- The Committee must meet to decide upon the procedures to be followed, and the student given an opportunity to comment upon the

selected procedures.

- ii. Conduct of the Exam Although the formal Qualifying Examination for candidacy ordinarily is conducted over 72 hours, the Committee may meet intermittently over a longer period, and may decide to reexamine the student on one or more topics after a specified interval. The Committee must report to the Graduate Council via the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education within 45 days. Upon completion of the qualifying examination and all other Graduate Group requirements for Advancement to Candidacy, the results should be submitted to the Graduate Division on the Qualifying Examination Report Form. The Qualifying Examination Report Form must be signed by all committee members at the time the candidacy examination is concluded and submitted even if the student failed the examination. Prior to convening a student committee for advancement to candidacy exam, the Faculty Advisor, the Graduate Group Chair, and the graduate student must sign the Statement on Conflict of Interest form that is included in the Advancement to Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy form. If the unanimous recommendation of the Committee is favorable, and the student passes the Dissertation Proposal Defense, the student must pay the current advancement to candidacy fee to the campus Cashier's Office that will validate the advancement to candidacy form. The student must then submit the advancement to candidacy form to the Graduate Division. The candidate and graduate program will be notified of formal advancement and the appointment of a Doctoral Committee. Advancement to Candidacy begins with the first academic term following completion of all requirements (including submission of all forms).

iii. Outcome of the Exam

Before voting upon its recommendation for or against passing the Qualifying Exam, the Committee, as a whole, may elect to meet with the student, and any member of the Committee will have the right to pose appropriate questions to the student. The committee, having reached a unanimous decision, shall inform the student of its decision to:

- Pass- A student has passed when the Qualifying Examination Committee unanimously votes that the student passed the entire examination with scholarship that is at least acceptable. The committee must report to the Graduate Council via the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education within 45 days. If agreed unanimously by the committee the student may be allowed to make minor modifications prior to submitting the results of the examination.
- Fail- A student has failed when the Qualifying Examination Committee votes unanimously that the student failed the entire examination. The second examination may have a format different from the first, but the substance should remain the same under most circumstances. A student whose performance on the second attempt is also unsatisfactory, or who does not undertake a second examination within a reasonable period of time, is subject to academic disqualification, in keeping with [UC Merced Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#).
- A third examination may be given only with the approval of the

Graduate Group committee and the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education. **A student whose performance on the third attempt is also unsatisfactory, or who does not undertake a third examination within a reasonable period of time, is subject to academic disqualification.**

- Partial Pass- A student has partially passed when the Qualifying Examination Committee votes unanimously that the student passed some components but failed others. In this instance, the following apply:
 - The student has the option of taking a second examination as detailed in above on the components failed; and
 - The chair of the committee must write a letter to the student, with a copy to the Graduate Division, conveying the information about the student's performance (pass, fail, or partial pass) on each of the components covered during the examination.

If a unanimous decision takes the form of "Partial Pass" or "Fail", the Chair of the Qualifying Exam Committee must include in its report a specific statement, agreed to by all members of the committee, explaining its decision and must inform the student of its decision.

8) Dissertation Requirements: a.

Final Examination

A final examination, or oral defense, is required by the graduate program, the Doctoral Committee supervises that examination, the focus of which is the content of the doctoral dissertation. Ordinarily, the final examination will be given just prior to the completion of the dissertation and while the student is in residence during a regular academic session. Administration of the final examination is subject to the policies of the Graduate Council governing critical examinations. Upon completion of the final examination and approval of the dissertation, the Doctoral Committee recommends, by submission of the Report on Final Examination of the Ph.D. Degree Form, the conferral of the Ph.D. subject to final submission of the approved dissertation for deposit in the University Archives. The Committee recommendation must be unanimous.

b. General Requirements

The submission of the dissertation is the last step in the program leading to the award of an advanced degree. All dissertations submitted in fulfillment of requirements for advanced degrees at UCM must conform to certain University regulations and specifications with regard to format and method of preparation. The UCM Thesis and Dissertation Manual are available at the Graduate Division website. The Doctoral Committee certifies that the completed dissertation is satisfactory through the signatures of all Committee members on the signature page of the completed dissertation. The doctoral committee chair is responsible for the content and final presentation of the manuscript.

Filing instructions are found in the UCM Thesis and Dissertation Manual. The advanced degree manuscript is expected to be submitted by the deadline in the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. The end of the semester is the

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

deadline for submitting dissertations during each semester. Those students who complete requirements and submit dissertations after the end of the semester and prior to the start of the subsequent semester will earn a degree for the following semester, but will not be required to pay fees for that semester. In accordance with UC and UCM policy, all approved thesis/dissertation manuscripts automatically become available for public access and circulation as part of the UC Libraries collections.

c. Dissertation

The research conducted by the student must be of such character as to show ability to pursue independent research. The dissertation reports a scholarly piece of work of publishable quality that solves a significant scientific problem in the field and is carried out under the supervision of a member of the program while the student is enrolled in the program. The chair of the doctoral committee must be a member of the program and must be immediately involved with the planning and execution of the experimental work done to formulate the dissertation.

Students should meet regularly with their dissertation committee. The dissertation must be submitted to each member of the dissertation committee at least one month before the student expects to make the defense. Informing committee members of progress as writing proceeds helps the members to plan to read the dissertation and provide feedback. The dissertation must be approved and signed by the dissertation committee before it is submitted to Graduate Division for final approval.

9) Normative Time to Degree/Typical Timeline and Sequence of Events

Sample Plan of Study for a Sociology Graduate Student	
Fall Semester	Spring Semester
1st Year	
SOC 200 Sociological Theory	SOC 210 Statistics 1
Psych 209 Pre-Statistics (or equivalent)	SOC 215 Graduate Research Methods
SOC 201 Professionalization Seminar (2 units)	SOC 201 Professionalization Seminar (2 units)
SOC 2XX Elective	SOC 2XX Elective
Summer: Research for MA Thesis/2nd year paper	First Year Review
2nd Year	
SOC 205 Writing and Publishing Seminar	SOC 216 Advanced Qualitative Methods
SOC 211 Statistics 2: Categorical Regression	SOC 2XX Elective (or Elective in Related Field)
SOC 2XX Elective	SOC 295: Graduate Research (Letter Grade)
<i>Terminal MA student departs at end of 2nd year</i>	<i>Turn in MA Thesis</i>
3rd Year	
SOC 2XX Elective	SOC 2XX Elective
SOC 2XX Elective	SOC 2XX Elective or Elective in Related Field
SOC 299 Reading Hours (Pass/Fail)	SOC 299 Reading Hours (Pass/Fail)
<i>Qualifying Exam 1</i>	<i>Qualifying Exam 2 & Form Candidacy Committee</i>
4th Year	

Sociology – Policies and Procedures

SOC 297 Dissertation Research (Letter Grade)	SOC 297 Dissertation Research (Letter Grade)
SOC 297 Dissertation Research (Letter Grade)	
<i>Defend dissertation proposal</i>	<i>Advance to Candidacy</i>
5th Year	
SOC 297 Dissertation Research (Letter Grade)	
Oral Defense of Dissertation Spring or Summer of 5 th Year	

10) Sources of Funding:

Graduate students who received a funding offer with their admissions offer will have their financial support according to the terms of the funding offer. Funding will come through a combination of Teaching Assistantships, graduate Research Assistantships, and/or Fellowships. Master's students are typically not expected to be funded by such means; but they may receive a funding offer with their admissions offer. More information on financial support can be found in the [Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook](#).

11) Leaving the Program Prior to Completion of the PhD Requirements:

A student admitted for the Ph.D. degree, which, in the judgment of the unit's graduate affairs committee should not continue past the master's degree, must be notified in writing by the Graduate Group Chair of the Graduate Group offering the degree. A copy of the letter must be sent to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education. In some cases a doctoral student may choose to leave the program with a master's degree only. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Group unit to notify the Graduate Division via the Change of Degree form so that the student's record may be updated to reflect the student's degree status. This notice must include the student's written permission to have his/her degree objective changed officially from doctorate to master's.

D. General Information

1) PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee status.

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave Program), In Absentia (reduced fees when researching out of state), and Filing Fee status can be found in the Graduate Group Policies and Procedures Handbook available on Graduate Division.