

# Overview of Graduate Student Annual Review

Department of Sociology  
Texas A&M University

# Annual Evaluations

- Measure progress, guides your conversation with your mentor
- Collect information
- Distribution of assistantships
  - Students with letters of guaranteed funding need adequate progress
- Nominations for fellowships

# Graduate Program Handbook

- Description about annual review is in the Handbook (p. 15–23)

[https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2019/11/Graduate\\_Handbook.pdf](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2019/11/Graduate_Handbook.pdf)

- Evaluation criteria

1. Progress in the program (p.15–16, 20)
2. Grade point ratio (p.17, 20)
3. Teaching assistant/research assistant evaluation (p.17, 20–21)
4. Professional activity (p.17–19, 21)

# 1. Progress in the Program: 96-credit hour program, 5 years

1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4 <sup>th</sup> year	5 <sup>th</sup> year
<p><b>Fall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 611 Classical Sociological Theory</li> <li>– SOCI 623 Measurement of Sociological Parameters</li> <li>– SOCI 681 Professional Seminar in Sociology (zero-hour course)</li> <li>– One elective class</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 615 Contemporary Sociological Theory</li> <li>– SOCI 631 Seminar in Sociological Research (Quantitative)</li> <li>– SOCI 691 Master's Paper Class</li> </ul> <p><b>End of the year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Select advisor and major</li> <li>– Start thinking about Master's paper</li> </ul>	<p><b>Courses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 624 Qualitative Methodology</li> <li>or</li> <li>– SOCI 604 Comparative Historical Methods</li> <li>– SOCI 680 Teaching Undergraduate Sociology</li> <li>– One elective class</li> <li>– SOCI 691 Research Hours (at least 5 hours in addition to Master's Paper Class)</li> </ul> <p><b>End of the year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Master's paper</li> <li>– Start submitting to conferences</li> <li>– Complete coursework listed on page 24 of Graduate Program Handbook (Appendix 1)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Courses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 683 Professional Writing and Publication</li> <li>– Major courses</li> <li>– Minor courses</li> </ul> <p><b>Others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Preparation for preliminary exam</li> <li>– Conferences</li> <li>– Papers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Preliminary exam</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Dissertation proposal</li> </ul> <p><b>Others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Continue working on publications</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Enter job market</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Dissertation defense</li> </ul>

# 1. Progress in the Program: 64-credit hour program, 4 years

1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year	3 <sup>rd</sup> year	4 <sup>th</sup> year
<p><b>Fall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 611 Classical Sociological Theory</li> <li>– SOCI 623 Measurement of Sociological Parameters</li> <li>– SOCI 681 Professional Seminar in Sociology (zero-hour course)</li> <li>– One elective class</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 615 Contemporary Sociological Theory</li> <li>– SOCI 631 Seminar in Sociological Research (Quantitative)</li> </ul> <p><b>End of the year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Select advisor and major</li> </ul>	<p><b>Courses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 624 Qualitative Methodology or</li> <li>– SOCI 604 Comparative Historical Methods</li> <li>– SOCI 680 Teaching Undergraduate Sociology</li> <li>– Major courses</li> <li>– Minor courses</li> </ul> <p><b>Others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Preparation for preliminary exam</li> <li>– Conferences</li> <li>– Papers</li> </ul>	<p><b>Courses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– SOCI 683 Professional Writing and Publication</li> <li>– Major courses</li> <li>– Minor courses</li> </ul> <p><b>Fall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Preliminary exam</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Dissertation proposal</li> </ul> <p><b>Others</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Continue working on publications</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Enter job market</li> </ul> <p><b>Spring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Dissertation defense</li> </ul>

# Scores for Progress in the Program

- Applicants will be scored on their progress in the program based on the following
  5. Well beyond the guidelines
  4. Beyond the guidelines
  3. On track with guidelines
  2. Lagging behind guidelines
  1. Substantially behind guidelines

## 2. Grade Point Ratio

- Graduate Handbook provides a formula to convert grade point ratio
- $\text{GPR Score} = \text{GPR} * 1.25$

### 3. TA/RA Evaluation

- Teaching assistants and research assistants are evaluated by their assigned professors using the form available in Appendix 2 of the Graduate Handbook (p.26–27)
- The previous form usually generated high scores for TAs and RAs, which was not informative for the evaluation process
- The 2019–2020 Graduate Retention Committee added short-answer questions to better capture student’s performance as TAs or RAs

[https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/03/TA RA Evaluation Form.docx](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2021/03/TA_RA_Evaluation_Form.docx)

# Short-Answer Questions

- a) Describe the task or tasks which the assistant to asked to perform
- b) Provide a statement of the assistant's strengths and weaknesses in performing each task
- c) Please add any additional comments you believe are relevant to a fair evaluation of the applicant. This might include more specific information about accomplishments or extenuating circumstances relevant to less than expected performance

# Quantitative Questions (5-Point Likert Scale)

1. Did the student carry out the duties assigned to them?
2. Did the student finish assignments in a timely manner?
3. Did the quality of the student's work live up to your expectations?
4. Was the student asked to make original contributions of their own?
  - Yes/No
5. Did the student make original contributions of their own?
  - Answer only if yes on question 4
6. Did the student meet with you on a regular basis as expected and keep appointments with others (e.g., students or project members)?

# 4. Professional Activity: Research

Semester	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Entering with BA/BS (5 years)						<b>Present</b> paper at a conference or at a department brown bag		<b>Submitted</b> one single authored article or two coauthored articles to peer-reviewed sociology journals		<b>Published</b> one single authored article or two coauthored articles in peer-reviewed sociology journals
Entering with MA/MS (4 years)				<b>Present</b> paper at a conference or at a department brown bag		<b>Submitted</b> one single authored article or two coauthored articles to peer-reviewed sociology journals		<b>Published</b> one single authored article or two coauthored articles in peer-reviewed sociology journals		

# Professional Activity: Teaching

Semester	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Entering with BA/BS (5 years)						Complete a teaching workshop or similar teaching activity		Attend teaching activities at a professional conference or guest lecture in a faculty class		Competently teach a sociology course at a college/university
Entering with MA/MS (4 years)				Complete a teaching workshop or similar teaching activity		Attend teaching activities at a professional conference or guest lecture in a faculty class		Competently teach a sociology course at a college/university		

# Scores for Professional Activity

- Applicants will be scored on professional activity based on the following
  5. Very high activity
  4. High activity
  3. Average activity
  2. Low activity
  1. Little or no activity

# Weighted Sum of Scores

- After scores on individual items are obtained for each student, a weighted sum of the item scores are computed

<b>Evaluation criteria</b>	<b>Students who are holding a departmental assistantship</b>	<b>Students who are not holding a departmental assistantship</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> year students with departmental assistantship</b>	<b>1<sup>st</sup> year students without departmental assistantship</b>
Progress in the program	50%	60%	60%	70%
Grade point average	20%	25%	20%	30%
Assistantship evaluations	20%		20%	
Professional activity	10%	15%		

# Other Important Topics

- Extending the expected progress in the program clock
- Code of Ethics

## **Extending the Expected Progress in the Program Clock** (Graduate Handbook, p.16–17)

- **Extensions to the expected progress in the program period may be granted upon petition by the graduate student to the Head of the department or the Director of Graduate Studies.** The purpose of these petitions is to maintain student privacy about circumstances affecting progress in the program and evaluating students fairly.
- **Extensions are usually for six months or one year,** but a longer period may be requested in compelling circumstances. A graduate student may petition for an extension in the following cases:
  - The graduate student has encountered circumstances that may seriously impede progress in the program. Such circumstances might include (but are not limited to):
  - Serious illness or injury;
  - Having responsibility for the primary care of an infant or small child;
  - Having responsibility for the primary care of a close relative who is disabled, elderly or seriously ill;
  - Any serious disruption of the academic period for unexpected reasons beyond the graduate student's control.
- **Petitions need to provide a written description and documentation for the circumstance.** Extensions to the clock are finalized by approval from the **Department Head** or the **Director of Graduate Admission**. The Graduate Program and Evaluation Committee is informed of the decision. This extension applies solely to annual evaluations of graduate students and does not apply to requirements by the College of Liberal Arts or Texas A&M University.

# Code of Ethics

- Code of Ethics document on Sociology website

[https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2019/12/Sociology\\_Code\\_of\\_Ethics.pdf](https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/9/2019/12/Sociology_Code_of_Ethics.pdf)

“If a member of the departmental community—faculty, staff, or students—has a concern, she or he should contact the head of the department, or a member of the executive committee, or the diversity committee.”

- Graduate students could also contact Graduate Directors

<https://liberalarts.tamu.edu/sociology/people/leadership/>