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1. INTRODUCTION

The procedures and requirements in this document supplement those published in the official bulletin of the Office of Graduate Studies at Mississippi State University. It presents specific Departmental requirements for graduate degree programs in Sociology. All graduate students should retain both documents and consult them frequently. It is the student's responsibility to meet all applicable requirements. The faculty welcomes the opportunity to work with students and stands ready to help them meet their degree and career objectives.

2. ADMISSIONS

A. Criteria

University requirements for admission to graduate study include a minimum under-graduate grade-point average on the last two years of undergraduate academic work of 2.75 on a 4.00 scale and a 3.00 on all graduate work. A student applying for graduate admission to the Sociology program will be evaluated on the basis of evidence which might indicate success in graduate study, including all transcripts of previous post-secondary academic work, the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), the quality and strength of letters of recommendation, and the student's statement of purpose for seeking entry into graduate study.

B. Procedures for Application

Inquiries concerning admission to the graduate program in Sociology may be directed to either the Office of Graduate Studies or the Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and Social Work. The packet of information and forms sent in response to a request will contain the specific instructions for completing the forms and making an application for admission.

C. Types of Admission

The application will be evaluated by both the Office of Graduate Studies and the Department. The applicant will be notified of the outcome of the screening process by the Office of Graduate Studies. If accepted, students may receive one of three types of admission. Students meeting all requirements are normally granted *full* admission.

Students can be admitted on a *provisional* basis, if recommended for admission by the degree program, even though they do not meet the minimum grade point average. Provisional students must receive a 3.00 grade-point average on the first nine hours of courses taken at Mississippi State University (transfer hours will not apply) in order to achieve regular status. In addition, provisional students may be required to complete prerequisites specified by the department (such as courses in sociological theory, research methods, or social statistics). If a 3.00 grade-point average is not attained, the provisional student will be terminated from the program. Students may also be admitted *conditionally* when an application is incomplete due to circumstances beyond the student's control.

3. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

A. Availability.

Financial assistance for graduate study is available on a competitive basis from several sources, each requiring a separate application. Prospective students are encouraged to apply for funding early in the application process. Continuing students are reminded that application for financial assistance must be made annually.

B. Criteria

Although the criteria for each source may differ somewhat, basic expectations are similar. New students should meet the established university and departmental requirements for admission. Graduate assistantships are professional internships with explicit obligations. Assistantships are thus considered to be half-time jobs. Therefore students on assistantships are expected to take a course load of nine hours per semester and not to engage in additional outside employment.

C. Continued Appointment

Continued appointment is based on satisfactory performance of assistantship duties as determined by standing departmental procedures as well as adequate progress toward the degree. In addition, students must maintain at least a 3.00 GPA to retain an assistantship. Financial support awarded by or through the Department, regardless of the source, is limited to two years for students who are pursuing a master's degree and to three years for students who have earned a master's degree and are pursuing the doctoral degree. Petitions for waivers may be considered.

D. Sources

1. Departmental Research or Teaching Assistantships

Application forms for Departmental Assistantships may be obtained from the Departmental Office, (207 Bowen Hall, Hardy Road, P.O. Box C, Mississippi State, MS 39762, 662-325-2495, fax: 662-325-4564 as well as on the Departmental Graduate Program web site: <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/sociology/>. Applications will be considered by the Departmental Graduate Support Committee with recommendations submitted to the Department Head. Teaching assistantships are normally limited to students with a Master's degree in sociology, or a Master's degree in another field and 18 hours of graduate level course work in sociology. The minimum requirement for a research assistantship is a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university.

2. Social Science Research Center

Application forms for Research Assistantships may be obtained from the Social Science Research Center office (105 Mississippi Research and Technology Park Building; P. O. Box 5287, Mississippi State, MS 39762; 662-325-7127) or on the departmental web site at the following: <http://www.msstate.edu/dept/sociology/>. Both master's degree students and doctoral students may apply for SSRC research assistantships.

3. Minority Fellowships

Information and applications can be obtained from the Office of Graduate Studies (116 Allen Hall, P.O. Box G, Mississippi State, MS 39762, 662-325-7400).

4. Student Loans

Guaranteed Student Loans are available through the Department of Financial Aid and Scholarships (Garner Hall, P.O. Box 6035, Mississippi State, MS 39762; 662-325-2450). Students should request an MSU Financial Aid Package and follow the instructions for Graduate Students. (Note: Graduate Students are *not* eligible for Pell Grants).

5. Other Sources of Funding

There are many potential funding sources. Information on fellowships and scholarships, especially for dissertations, can be obtained from Research Services in the Office of Research, *by appointment only* (662-325-3570).

4. ENTERING THE PROGRAM

A. Orientation of New Students

All new graduate students should report to the Department Head who will assign graduate assistants their duties and introduce them to the Graduate Coordinator. The student should then report to the Graduate Coordinator who will assist the student in planning the first semester of course work. Within the first two weeks of the semester, the Department Head will hold a meeting to introduce faculty and graduate students to each another.

B. Selection of Major Professor and Graduate Advisory Committee

By midterm of the second regular semester of course work, the student, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator, must select a Graduate Advisory Committee, including a Major Professor who will serve as Chair of the Graduate Advisory Committee.

The purpose of the Graduate Advisory Committee is to advise the student throughout his/her graduate program, especially in terms of professional development. This Committee must be established through the "*Graduate Advisory Committee Request Form*". If changes in the composition of the committee are contemplated, all parties must be informed beforehand. To change the composition of the Graduate Advisory Committee, a "*Committee Request Change Form*" must be completed and approved.

The Major Professor, in conjunction with other members of the Graduate Committee, will assist the student in planning the program of study. The composition of the Committee will be reviewed for renewal by the student and Graduate Committee after the completion of course work and prior to the approval of the thesis or dissertation prospectus (see Section G-1 below). The outcome of this review will be recorded on the "*Prospectus Approval Form*".

C. Program of Study

Each student is required to submit to the Department of Sociology for approval a formal program of study. This program must be made with the advice and concurrence of the student's Graduate Advisory Committee and the Graduate Coordinator. For students pursuing a Master of Sociology degree, this program of study is formally submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies during the semester in which the student intends to graduate.

For doctoral students, the program of study is to be submitted on the completion of twelve hours and by the close of the second regular semester of full enrollment. A "*Program of Graduate Study*" form may be secured from the Graduate Secretary. Only courses appearing on the approved program will be counted toward fulfilling degree requirements. Changes in the program may be made, using standard change forms available from the Graduate Secretary, with the approval of the student's current Graduate Advisory Committee and Graduate Coordinator.

5. MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM

A. Master of Science Options

The Department offers the Master of Science Degree. Required prerequisite course work will not be included for credit toward the Master's degree. Students must maintain a grade-point average of "B" or above (GPA ≥ 3.00) on all course work completed. The graduate degree will not be granted if this requirement is not met. The Master of Science program has both a thesis and a non-thesis option.

1. Thesis Option

The thesis option requires 24 hours of course work and 6 hours of thesis.

2. Non Thesis Option

The non-thesis option requires 36 hours of course work, 24 hours of sociology and no more than 12 hours in two other related disciplines.

B. Course Work

Required core courses in the M.S. degree are: SO 8103, Graduate Theory I; SO 8213, Research Design; SO 8274, Graduate Social Statistics I and SO 8900, Data Management (Computer Applications). The remaining courses may be selected by the student in consultation with the Major Professor.

At least one-half of the course work in the degree program, exclusive of thesis credits, must be at the 8000 level. Approved 7000 Special Problems count toward 8000-9000 level requirements. Not more than six semester hours of graduate credit may be earned in special problem courses. Students may transfer up to six (6) semester hours of courses from other accredited degree programs.

C. Examinations

1. Thesis Option

For the Master of Science thesis option degree program, the successful defense of the thesis constitutes the final comprehensive examination.

2. Non-Thesis Option

In the last semester of the required course work, the candidate will take a single written examination covering two areas: (1) Methods and Statistics, and (2) Theory. Students may take up to five hours to complete the examination. An examining committee composed of three faculty members will be appointed annually by the Department Head with the concurrence of the Graduate Coordinator. This examining committee will be responsible for writing and reviewing the entire examination. The Committee will solicit questions from all faculty teaching the required core courses for the M.S. degree. This examination will be the comprehensive final examination.

Examinations may be taken twice per year in the second week of Fall and Spring semesters. The student must notify the Graduate Coordinator in writing of his/her intention to take the exam one month prior to the scheduled examination date. The Graduate Coordinator will administer the examination. The exam will be graded on a pass-fail basis based on a majority vote by the examining committees. The Major Advisor is responsible for reporting the results of the comprehensive final examination (M.S. non-thesis option) to the Office of Graduate Studies. The appropriate reporting form is available from the Graduate Secretary. If unsuccessful, a student will be allowed one repeat examination, taken no earlier than the next regularly scheduled examination date.

D. Master of Science Thesis

1. Thesis Committee

The students in the thesis program should begin discussing thesis problem alternatives with the Major Professor and Graduate Advisory Committee early in the graduate program. Once a decision has been made on the thesis problem, the composition of the Graduate Advisory Committee (including Major Professor) is reviewed for renewal or change (see Section IV-B above). The Graduate Advisory Committee then becomes the Thesis Committee. The student's Major Professor will be the Thesis Director who will direct the thesis in conjunction with other members of the graduate committee. The Graduate Advisory Committee then constitutes the Thesis Committee. New members of the Thesis Committee may be added at this time, with the approval of the Graduate Advisory Committee and signature of the Department Head. Other necessary changes to the Committee can be executed via a "Change of Committee" form.

The thesis committee consists of the Major Professor as chair and at least two other members. A "Committee Form" is to be filled out containing the signatures of the student's committee along with the signature of the Graduate Coordinator and Department Head prior to the end of the second regular semester of registration.

2. Thesis Proposal

The development of a Thesis Proposal is the initial step in the writing of the thesis. The student should present a Thesis Proposal to the Thesis Director no later than the beginning of the last semester of course work. The Thesis Director will distribute the Thesis Proposal to the Thesis Committee which will decide if it is ready to be defended orally. When the Thesis Committee has reached such a decision, the Major Professor will then schedule an oral defense of the Thesis Proposal.

The Thesis Proposal must be *formally and unanimously approved* by the student's thesis committee. This should occur *no later than the end of the last semester of course work*. A "Proposal Approval Form" may be obtained from the Graduate Secretary and must be signed by the thesis committee members, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Head. The Thesis Proposal must include the elements listed in Appendix A.

3. Thesis Defense

Upon completion of the writing of the thesis, the student will submit an intended final draft to the Major Professor and the other members of the student's committee.

Closed Committee Meeting

After receiving the intended final thesis draft, the Major Professor will call a closed meeting of the committee (without the student) to decide whether the thesis is ready to be presented for an oral defense. The thesis must be *unanimously approved* by the committee before it can be defended. Such approval signifies only that the thesis is ready to be defended, not that the student will automatically pass the defense. Additionally, the approval to defend will not preclude further required changes in the thesis.

If the committee decides that the thesis is *not* ready for the oral defense, then the student will make the changes in the thesis required by the committee and resubmit another intended final copy to the Major Professor and the other members of the committee. The committee will meet again to determine if the thesis is ready for an oral defense. This process will be repeated until the committee agrees that the thesis is in a form acceptable for an oral defense.

An intended final copy of the thesis will be placed on file in the departmental office for review by interested faculty *at least one week prior* to the scheduled defense.

Oral Defense

After the committee *unanimously* decides that the thesis is ready for the oral defense, the Major Professor and the Graduate Coordinator will schedule the oral defense of the thesis. The student will present the approved copy of the intended final draft of the thesis to the Graduate Coordinator who will then schedule the oral defense.

All Departmental Faculty must be invited to the thesis defense by a written memorandum *at least one week prior* to the occasion. The thesis defense is open to all parties desiring attendance.

Committee Decision

The Major Professor presides over the oral defense, and the decision to accept or reject the defense of the thesis is solely that of the Graduate Advisory Committee. A majority vote is sufficient for a decision. Questions from other faculty during the oral defense may be invited by the Major Professor if time permits. If a student is unsuccessful in defending a thesis, a new defense may be scheduled *no earlier than one month from the date of the original defense*. The Major Professor is responsible for reporting the results of the thesis defense/final examination to the Office of Graduate Studies. The appropriate reporting form is available from the Graduate Secretary.

Revision and Signing of Thesis

Although a student may pass the thesis defense, he or she will normally be instructed to revise the thesis before submitting it to the committee members for a signature or before submitting it to the Office of Graduate Studies.

6. DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM

A. Admission

1. Criteria

In addition to the criteria set forth by the Office of Graduate Studies (see section II-A), the Department encourages applicants for graduate study at the doctoral level to submit evidence of past academic success and written communication ability.

2. Procedures

Admission to the Master of Science program does not automatically mean that a student will enter the doctoral program; a student completing the M.S. degree must reapply to the Office of Graduate Studies for admission to the doctoral program. The student wishing to pursue doctoral work will be screened by the Graduate Faculty (Admissions Committee) prior to official acceptance into the doctoral program. A screening form which records the decision of the Graduate Faculty will be completed. It is the student's responsibility to initiate the screening (see section II).

Prior to this screening and subsequent to the completion of the master of science course work and/or thesis, the student may take *not more than six hours* of course credit to apply toward a doctoral program. Even though a student may begin doctoral course work, the student is still not officially considered a doctoral student until the student has been screened and approved by the departmental Admissions Committee.

B. Transfer Credit

The acceptance of transfer credit will be a decision made by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee within the parameters of University regulations.

C. Course Levels

One-half or more of the doctoral program of study, exclusive of dissertation credits, must be in 8000-9000 level courses. Approved 7000 Special Problems count toward 8000-9000 level requirements. *No more than six semester hours* of graduate credit may be earned in special problems courses.

D. Curriculum

Each doctoral student will have a program of Graduate Study, prepared with the advice and consent of his/her Graduate Committee, during the second regular semester of enrollment in the program. An outline of the doctoral curriculum is as follows.

Outline of Ph.D. Curriculum

1. **Core I: *Sociological Tools*** [8 courses; 24 hours]

THEORY:	Graduate Theory I; II
RESEARCH METHODS:	Research Design; Techniques of Survey Research; Data Management (Computer Applications)
STATISTICS:	Graduate Statistics I; II

A choice of *one* of the following two courses:

Advanced Quantitative Analysis (Structural Equation Models or Categorical Data Analysis)
Qualitative Analysis

2. **Core II: *General Sociology*** [choose 3 of 4 courses, 9 hours]

Social Stratification
Symbolic Interaction and Social Structure
Population Problems & Processes
Social Organization & Change
[Qualifying Examination covers Core I and Core II: Governed by existing Department Committee]

3. **Specialization: *Substantive Focus*** [15 hours]. Hours must be selected jointly with Graduate Advisory Committee. The Graduate Advisory Committee may, in addition, require the Technical Research & Report Writing course if it is deemed necessary. [Written Preliminary Examination governed by Graduate Committee]

4. **Optional Minor or Free Electives:** [9 hours of graduate courses (inside or outside the Department)] chosen in consultation with the student's Major Professor and the Graduate Advisory Committee. (No examination required by Sociology Department).

5. **Specialization: *Dissertation*** [20 hours] examination governed by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee.

7. DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY EXAMINATIONS

A. Qualifying Examination

Ph.D. students must pass a single closed book written qualifying examination covering research methods/statistics and sociological theory. This examination will assess the student's mastery of a minimal acceptable level of competence to be shown by the student in each area of the examination. Students must complete the following core course requirements, or their equivalent, prior to taking the qualifying examination.

THEORY: Graduate Sociological Theory I
Graduate Sociological Theory II

RESEARCH METHODS: Computer Applications
Graduate Research Design

STATISTICS: Graduate Statistics I
Graduate Statistics II

The qualifying examination will be offered twice each year on or about the eighth week of Fall and Spring semesters. The qualifying examination will be prepared by a departmental examination committee. It will be taken over an eight-hour period during a single day, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Students planning to take the qualifying examination must notify the Graduate Coordinator no later than the end of the second week of classes in the semester during which they will take the qualifying examination. The Graduate Coordinator will publicize the official date of the examination during the first full week of Spring and Fall semester classes.

The five members of the examination committee will be appointed annually during the first week of Fall semester classes. The committee will be appointed by the Head of the Department with the concurrence of the Graduate Coordinator. The examining committee will solicit questions from all faculty teaching the required courses. It will use these questions to prepare the qualifying examination questions. Questions will not be limited to course specific contents. Also, the examining committee will compose or update a document containing a list of study questions and related literature in order to assist the student in preparation for the examination. This document will be placed on file with the Graduate Secretary at least six weeks before the examination.

Students should take the qualifying examination at their first opportunity following the semester in which they complete the required courses. For full-time students, this will typically be during their third semester of study. Students making normal progress will complete the qualifying

examination no later than the end of their second year of full-time study. Failure to take the qualifying examination at the second opportunity following completion of the required courses will result in a failing grade on the qualifying examination. Students failing the examination will be required to register for the next regularly scheduled examination. Students will have two opportunities to pass the qualifying examination. Two failures on the qualifying examination will result in termination from the doctoral program.

The qualifying examinations will be graded on a pass-fail basis. After the members of the examining committee have read and critically evaluated the examination, the committee will meet to make final decisions on each student's performance. The committee will provide the results of the examination, along with a written summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the student's performance to the Graduate Coordinator who will notify the student of the final decision and summary comments. The committee chair will be responsible for explaining the committee's evaluation orally to students. Students should be notified of the results of the examination by the Graduate Coordinator no later than fifteen (15) working days after the examination has been administered.

B. Ph.D. Preliminary Examination

Upon completion of (1) all necessary course work and (2) the qualifying examination, the doctoral student is eligible to take the preliminary examination. The program offers preliminary examinations in five separate concentrations: demography; sociology of family and gender; criminology/deviance and social control; rural sociology and community; and social stratification and inequality. A comprehensive but non-exhaustive reading list will be provided for each of the program's formal concentrations. A student may, however, petition the Graduate Coordinator through their Major Professor to take a preliminary examination in another concentration. The Graduate Coordinator will consult with the Graduate Curriculum and Policies Committee to consider the merit of the petition and will make a decision accordingly.

Preliminary examinations consist of two four hour components taken within a single day. Preliminary examinations will be offered on or about the third week of the Fall and Spring semesters. No preliminary examinations are offered during the Summer. Students must notify the Graduate Coordinator in writing of their intention of sitting for a preliminary examination no later than one month prior to the beginning of the semester they plan to take the exam.

Preliminary examination committees will be comprised of three graduate, sociology faculty members who have scholarly expertise within the concentration. The Department Head, in consultation with the Graduate Coordinator, will select appropriate faculty members to the examination committees on an annual basis. The examination committees will write and evaluate the exams, as well as review and revise the concentration reading lists.

The preliminary examination will be graded on a pass-fail basis. After the members of the examining committee have read and critically evaluated the examination, the committee will meet and make a final decision on the student's exam. The committee will provide the results of their evaluation along with a written summary of the strengths and weaknesses of the student's performance to the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate Coordinator will notify the student in

writing as to whether they passed or failed the examination; the examination committee's summary comments will also be included in this letter. Students will be notified of the results of the examination by the Graduate Coordinator no later than 15 working days after the examination has been administered. Two failures on this examination will result in the dismissal of the student from the Ph.D. program.

Any deviations from the preliminary examination structured outlined above must be approved by the Graduate Coordinator in consultation with Graduate Curriculum and Policies Committee.

8. CANDIDACY

A student will be admitted to candidacy under the following conditions: (a) the final graduate program must have been officially approved and accepted in the Office of Graduate Studies; (b) the preliminary examination must have been passed; and (c) the dissertation topic must have been selected and formally approved. It is the responsibility of the student and Major Professor to file for admission to candidacy with the Office of Graduate Studies after the student has passed the preliminary examination. The application for "Admission to Candidacy" may be obtained from the departmental Graduate Secretary.

9. THE DISSERTATION

A. The Graduate Advisory Committee

Upon successful completion of the qualifying examination, the existing Graduate Advisory Committee will be dissolved. The student will then select a new Graduate Advisory Committee for his/her dissertation. There is a "Change of Committee Form" for use in the event a student wishes to change the composition of the committee (see Section IV-B). The new Graduate Advisory Committee will be composed of the Major Professor who must be a full member of the graduate faculty as chair and at least three other members of the sociology faculty (two if there is an outside faculty member). A "Graduate Advisory Committee Form" is to be filled out containing the signatures of the student's committee, the Graduate Coordinator and Department Head.

B. The Dissertation Prospectus

A Dissertation Prospectus prepared by the student describing the proposed research and dissertation must be *formally and unanimously approved* by the student's Graduate Advisory Committee, and approved by the Graduate Coordinator and Department Head. The fact that a student may have previously begun research does not justify the approval of an inadequate prospectus. A "Prospectus Approval Form" may be obtained from the Graduate Secretary.

The Dissertation Prospectus must include the elements listed in Appendix A. The student will present the dissertation prospectus at a Dissertation Prospectus Oral Defense meeting. When the student and the Major Professor feel the prospectus is ready for presentation, it will be distributed to the Graduate Advisory Committee which will decide if it is ready to be defended orally. When the committee has reached such a decision, then the Major Professor will schedule an oral defense of the Dissertation Prospectus in consultation with the other committee members *at least one week in*

advance. At this meeting of the Graduate Advisory Committee, the prospectus is carefully evaluated and recommendations are made to the student regarding changes in the proposed research which are necessary for the completion of an acceptable dissertation.

C. The Dissertation Defense

Upon completion of the dissertation the student will submit an intended final copy to the Major Professor and the other members of the student's Graduate Advisory Committee.

1. Closed Committee Meeting

The Major Professor will subsequently call a meeting of the committee to decide whether the dissertation is ready to be presented for an oral defense. The dissertation must be approved *unanimously* by the committee before it can be defended by the student. Such approval signifies only that the dissertation is ready to be defended, and not that the student will automatically pass the defense. Additionally, the approval to defend will not preclude further required changes in the dissertation.

If the committee decides that the dissertation is not ready for the oral defense, the student will then make the changes in the dissertation required by the Graduate Advisory Committee and resubmit it, as another intended final copy, to the Major Professor and the other members of the committee. The committee will meet again to determine if the dissertation is ready for an oral defense. This process will be repeated until the committee agrees that the dissertation is in acceptable final form and that the student is ready for the oral defense.

2. Examination

After the committee *unanimously* decides that the dissertation is ready for the oral defense, the Major Professor is responsible for scheduling the final examination, or oral defense, of the dissertation.

An intended final copy (as stipulated above) of the dissertation will be placed on file in the departmental office for review by interested faculty members, *at least one week prior* to the scheduled defense.

All members of the Graduate Faculty will be invited to attend the dissertation defense by a written memorandum *at least one week prior* to the examination.

The Major Professor is responsible for notifying the Office of Graduate Studies of the date of the oral defense *at least one week prior* to the examination.

3. Committee Decision

Only the student's Graduate Advisory Committee will participate in decisions concerning the Final Examination. Majority vote is sufficient for a decision. A student who fails the Final Examination cannot apply for another until a period of *six (6) months* has passed from the date of the

original examination. Two failures on the Final Examination will result in the student being dropped from further consideration as a doctoral candidate. The student's Major Professor is responsible for submitting to the Office of Graduate Studies a report of the results of the Final Examination. The appropriate form may be secured from the Graduate Secretary.

4. Student's Responsibility

Although students may successfully pass the Final Examination, the student may be required to revise the dissertation before it is submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies.

10. SOCIOLOGY AS A MINOR FIELD OF STUDY

Students whose major is not sociology may select sociology as a minor field of study. To qualify, the students must take 12 graduate credit hours of sociology course work and pass a written examination prepared by the minor professor.

11. APPEALS COMMITTEE

A review committee will be established which will review all aspects of the graduate examination process and serve as an appeals committee in any dispute or disagreement concerning any aspect of the graduate program. The committee will consist of three members and one alternate elected at the beginning of each school year from faculty having graduate teaching responsibilities that is to say, full or associate members of the graduate faculty. If any party involved in the graduate process, student or faculty member, disagrees with a decision or feels that a practice is in some way unfair, unethical or violates established rules, that party has the right to present a written petition to the review committee stating the nature and the details of the grievance.

The review committee will inform all parties involved in the situation as to the nature of the grievance and solicit information deemed necessary to make a judgment. The review committee will replace any member of the committee having a conflict of interest in any particular case with the elected alternate during that particular appeal. If any party involved in the process disagrees with the decision rendered by the committee, that party has the right to appeal to the faculty as a whole. The faculty as a whole will hear the evidence and render a decision by secret ballot. If for some reason the matter is not resolved, the individual(s) involved in the dispute has the right to pursue the university grievance procedure.

12. IMPLEMENTATION AND MODIFICATION OF THESE PROCEDURES

A. Implementation

These policies and procedures will take effect in the semester following their approval and will be required of all students whose initial registration in the M.S. or Ph.D. program is in that semester or a subsequent semester. Students previously enrolled in the M.S. or Ph.D. program may write the Graduate Coordinator requesting that the new rules apply to them. In this event, all new rules will apply to the student's entire program. When M.S. students working for the degree under the old rules complete the degree, the new rules will apply to their Ph.D. programs.

B. Modification of This Document

This document may be changed by a majority vote of the departmental faculty present at a scheduled faculty meeting subsequent to the one in which changes are proposed. The faculty must be notified one week in advance of the changes to be placed on the agenda of the meeting. Changes may be made only at meetings held during the academic year.

APPENDIX A

ELEMENTS OF A THESIS PROPOSAL OR DISSERTATION PROSPECTUS

The following is intended to serve as a guide for the development of a thesis proposal or a dissertation prospectus. This outline contains many of the essential elements for designing a research project for a thesis or dissertation. Although it may be appropriate for the majority of students, it may be expected that the content and organization of proposals may vary according to the nature of the particular research problem proposed. The student should contact his or her committee if questions arise concerning the form, content, and organization of the proposal. The general outline of the elements to be included in a thesis proposal or dissertation prospectus is presented below.

A. Statement of The Problem

This section should present a theoretically concise statement of the sociological problem to be addressed by your research. It should state the significance of the research, i.e., how your work will contribute to and expand on previous research in this area. Since the sociological questions will be elaborated in more detail throughout the proposal, this section should provide sufficient information to set the stage for the remaining sections of the proposal.

B. Review of The Relevant Literature

This section of the proposal should include a brief review of the theoretical and empirical literatures relevant to your research problem. It should illustrate your familiarity and knowledge of the most important literature as well as your ability to interpret substantive research from a recognized theoretical framework. You should concentrate your attention on only the empirical and theoretical works that are directly relevant to your proposed research problem. In this section you should provide the theoretical rationale which will guide your entire research project.

C. Statement of Hypotheses

A statement of the hypotheses derived from the review of the literature should be presented in this section. The hypotheses may be stated in more or less formal terms; for example, predictions of the expected effect of an independent variable(s) on a dependent variable; a resolution of competing theoretical issues. You should consult with your major advisor/professor regarding the nature and type of formulation appropriate for your particular research problem. The independent and dependent variables of your research should be clearly identified in this section.

D. Description of Methodological Procedures

A statement of the methodological procedures to be followed in the conduct of your research should be stated in this section. The description of the methods to be used will usually include the following:

1. A description of the sample and/or data gathering techniques, for survey research; the case(s) selected, for case studies; or participatory events, for participant observation studies. The description of the sample should indicate how the sample or case will be selected, whether you will be collecting your own data or using secondary data, the number of observations or cases will be selected, and the safeguards employed to guarantee the protection of human subjects (if applicable).

2. A description of the variables to be examined in your research and the proposed measurement procedures, or operationalization of concepts. Include here a discussion of how the variables will be coded or classified, whether you will use single or multiple indicators of your concepts, and how you will combine items to develop indices or scales (if applicable).

3. A description of the analytic strategy or statistical techniques used to examine your research problem. This should include a discussion of the statistical procedures (bivariate or multivariate) or participant observation procedures, etc. to be used. Provide a brief statement which indicates how the analytic strategy you have chosen will permit you to address the substantive and theoretical issues underlying your proposal. Speculate on how your results will “feed back” to your evaluation of the theoretical framework employed for your research.

E. Time Schedule

This section should include a general outline of how you will budget your time on various aspects of the research. Such a timetable will give you and your committee an idea about the manageability of your proposed project.

F. Bibliography

Present a complete listing of books and articles (with complete citations) which are the basis of your research problem.

G. Preparing Dissertations and Theses

Theses and Dissertations must conform to the style contained in the Office of Graduate Studies *Guidelines for Preparing Dissertations and Theses*, and in the most recent edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian. A copy may be purchased at the Book Store. This handbook conforms to the style prescribed in Turabian. It is acceptable to the Office of Graduate Studies.

APPENDIX B

ADDITIONAL REGULATIONS AND INFORMATION

A. Graduate Minors

Graduate minors should have completed either 12 hours of graduate courses in sociology or six hours of sociology and six hours in related fields.

B. Admission Requirements

Admission requirements include:

1. All Students

1. Eighteen hours of undergraduate sociology or 12 hours of sociology and 12 hours of related subjects. 2. Prerequisite undergraduate courses in statistics, sociological theory, and sociological methodology.

2. International Students

All international students (except those from Australia, Canada, U.K., and New Zealand) must submit a score of 500 or more on the Test of English as a Foreign Language, and upon arrival on campus must make a passing score on the test of English as a Foreign Language administered by the Department of English.

Students not passing the latter test must take English as a Second Language and pass the highest level English as a Second Language course, currently EN 1113 English as a Second Language Composition II, with a grade of "B" or better. English as a Second Language study must begin with the first semester on campus and continue until this requirement is completed.

Students not meeting all the prerequisite course work in sociology may be admitted on a provisional basis pending completion of these courses. But they may not undertake any graduate courses in these areas until these prerequisites are completed.

C. Documents

Graduate students should obtain copies of the following documents:

From the Office of the Registrar:

Bulletin of Mississippi State University

From the Office of Graduate Studies:

Graduate Studies Bulletin

Guidelines for Preparing Dissertations and Theses

Graduate Assistant Handbook, for students who have been awarded assistantships

From the Bookstore:

A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations by Kate L. Turabian, in the most recent edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

APPENDIX C

AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION CODE OF ETHICS

You can find the Code of Ethics by going to the following web site:

<http://www.asanet.org/ecoderev.htm>