

**Department of Sociology  
Graduate Student Handbook  
Effective August 2011**

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## **1. Introduction**

This handbook is a guide for students pursuing graduate degrees in Sociology at Brandeis University. It contains essential information on the PhD (including the joint doctorate with the Heller School and the joint doctorate with the Near Eastern and Judaic Studies Department) and MA programs (in Sociology and in Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies).

The handbook first describes graduate student advising and the Sociology Graduate Committee where graduate policies are made, monitored, and implemented. The handbook next presents rules and courses of study for completing degree work in Sociology. It then reviews Departmental and Graduate School policies on evaluating students, transferring credit, incomplete courses, and leaves of absence. Finally, it presents resources and facilities available to graduate students, University policies regarding financial aid and funding opportunities, and Brandeis policies and resources pertaining to students with disabilities. For additional resources and information you can go to the graduate sections of the [Brandeis Department of Sociology Web page](#) and the shared Sociology Graduate Student Latte site to which all graduate students and faculty in the department are subscribed.

We hope that you will use the handbook well. The Chair and Members of the Graduate Committee and the Departmental staff are available to answer questions.

## **2. People and Committees**

### ***Advising***

At the beginning of a student's first semester in residence, he or she will be assigned a faculty advisor, who will be responsible for guiding the student. At the end of the student's first year, he or she must formally select an advisor. The student should submit a petition (see Appendix 4 for the form) to notify the Graduate Committee and Graduate Administrator of her or his choice. At the time when the student chooses a chair for his or her QPD, that faculty member becomes the student's advisor. The same applies at the point of choosing a Dissertation Committee chair.

### ***Director of Graduate Studies***

The Sociology Department Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) is Wendy Cadge. The DGS is the faculty member responsible for chairing the Graduate Committee and supervising the implementation of graduate policies. The DGS represents the department to the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences.

### ***Graduate Administrator***

The Administrator for the Graduate Program in Sociology is Cheryl Hansen. The Graduate Administrator is the department staff person who oversees administrative matters and maintains department records on graduate students.

### ***The Graduate Committee***

The Graduate Committee is comprised of appointed members of the Sociology department faculty, plus one graduate student representative elected from the graduate student body in residence. The process for selecting a student representative to the Graduate Committee involves PhD students in the first five cohorts, including joint PhDs, voting to select a representative to the Graduate Committee for the academic year. The Committee deals with policy issues affecting graduate students, and reviews the programs of individual students.

All matters of departmental graduate student policy come before the Graduate Committee prior to any final decision by the department faculty as a whole. Any faculty member or graduate student may bring a problem or suggestion concerning policy to the Graduate Committee. When a proposal or recommendation is submitted to the faculty by the Graduate Committee, it will be discussed by the faculty as soon as possible. Student members of the committee may request to attend, or may be invited to attend, discussion by the faculty at large of issues or proposals brought to the faculty by the Graduate Committee.

The department itself or its subcommittees retain the following powers:

- Admission to the department
- Approval of transfer credit
- Approval of the faculty composition of QPD committees
- Approval of dissertation prospectuses

Approval of dissertation review committees  
Conduct of oral examinations on dissertations  
Individual student programs

The Graduate Committee also rules on petitions from individual students. The Graduate Committee's approval is necessary in the following matters. Students should submit a copy of the "Form for Making Petitions" (Appendix 4) with all petition requests.

Student petition to change advisors (after the first year and beyond)  
Student petition to transfer academic credit from another university  
Student petition to establish or change the QPD Committee  
Student petition to establish or change the Dissertation Prospectus Committee and Dissertation Review Committee (including adding the outside reader)  
Student petition to take a leave of absence

Petitions must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Students and the Graduate Administrator at least 48 hours before a scheduled Graduate Committee meeting. Petitions and all supporting materials should be submitted electronically to the Director of Graduate Students and Graduate Administrator with one paper copy to the Graduate Administrator.

### ***Other Departmental Bodies***

Each of the following standing Sociology department bodies has a graduate student representative: the department faculty meetings; and the Colloquium Committee. Other temporary committees may also be established with graduate student representation. These representatives are elected by the Sociology graduate students, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies, to serve for one year.

### **3. The PhD in Sociology**

The PhD in Sociology is a program normally lasting five or six years, consisting of three years of course work and another semester for accreditation (qualifying portfolio and defense) prior to the dissertation. The minimum residence for the PhD is three years. Apprenticeship in teaching is an integral part of the program and funded doctoral students normally serve as Teaching Fellows (TFs). There is no foreign language requirement for the PhD.

#### ***Courses***

Students entering the PhD program in sociology are expected to complete six semesters of the program's Approaches to Social Research pro-seminar (SOC 240a) (a two-credit course designed to help students transition from being consumers to producers of sociological knowledge with the support of peers and faculty), as well as fifteen additional full-credit courses. At least six of these fifteen courses must be formal graduate seminars (courses numbered 200 or higher) taken in the Brandeis Sociology Department. Four additional courses must be completed within the Brandeis Sociology department, either as graduate seminars, independent readings (Soc. 230a/b), advanced joint undergraduate/graduate seminars, or upper-division (numbered 100-199) courses. The five remaining courses can be taken as the student chooses, including graduate courses at other Boston-area universities, in consultation with her or his advisor.

Of the six required formal graduate seminars (courses numbered 200 or higher) that must be taken in the Brandeis Sociology Department, a minimum of four must be graduate seminars offered as formal seminars by the Sociology Department at Brandeis. Two of the six may be transferred in, with the approval of the Graduate Committee, based on Master's level coursework completed before matriculating at Brandeis. One of the six may be completed as a joint seminar at Brandeis *if, and only if*, a student has not completed Master's level courses prior to matriculating at Brandeis that she or he wishes to transfer for credit at Brandeis. In no cases may a student complete fewer than four graduate seminars (courses numbered 200 or higher) offered by the Sociology Department at Brandeis and receive a Brandeis PhD.

A student's initial program of study is arranged in consultation with the graduate student's advisor. Students are urged to take at least one course in sociological theory and one in methods (in addition to the pro-seminar). Consideration will be given to graduate work done elsewhere, but formal transfer credit is assigned only after the successful completion of the first year of study. More information about requesting transfer credit is below.

#### ***Qualifying Portfolio and Defense (QPD)***

The Qualifying Portfolio and Defense (QPD) is the Brandeis Sociology department's equivalent of qualifying/comprehensive examinations. The system encourages doctoral students to design their own programs of study, supervised by three different Brandeis Sociology department faculty members. The purposes of the QPD system are:

- To guide students toward demonstrated competence in three different areas in sociology, as defined by the American Sociological Association (ASA) (see Appendix 3). These areas should not have substantial overlap with one another.
- To certify (accredit) student competence, as determined during a defense meeting of the student and all three committee members. Successful completion of the QPD process precedes the drafting and defense of a dissertation proposal.

### *Step 1: Formation of the QPD Committee*

Forming a QPD Committee is the student's responsibility. Students broach QPD Committee membership with Sociology department faculty members whom they feel can best advance their work in three areas matching established ASA sections. The student and potential QPD Committee members negotiate plans, or contracts, which typically include an agreed upon set of reading and writing assignments. Examples of agreed upon reading lists for QPDs in various areas are available on the Shared Graduate Student Latte site. QPD work often builds upon courses students have taken in the department, so students might consider potential QPD areas as they make decisions about courses.

A student may form a QPD Committee at any time before April 1 of the second year of his or her residency. By then, two areas must be defined, and two corresponding faculty members must have agreed to serve. The student designates one as chair, who then becomes the student's principal advisor. The third area and corresponding faculty member must be designated by December 1 of the student's third year of residency. At this point, the student submits a petition to the Graduate Committee that lists the names of designated faculty members and areas of study for approval. With this petition, the chair of the QPD Committee becomes the student's formal advisor. Thereafter, both students and faculty members may request justifiable changes in the composition of the QPD Committee by written petition to the Graduate Committee. That petition must be approved by the Graduate Committee before a QPD meeting can be scheduled.

### *Step 2: The Qualifying Portfolio*

Based on the work students complete in each of their three QPD areas they assemble a Qualifying Portfolio. This portfolio combines the student's personal interests, background, current work, and prospective research, with faculty oversight to address general areas in sociology. Each student assembles a dossier in each area of specialization, with contents jointly determined by the student and QPD committee members. Dossiers may include papers, annotated bibliographies, course syllabi, research proposals, and any other materials the QPD Committee deems significant. The QPD should also encourage the student to begin focusing on ideas for the dissertation. The QPD Chair should keep current a full Qualifying Portfolio, including dossiers, for consultation with the Graduate Committee.

### *Step 3: The Defense Meeting*

The Qualifying Portfolio Defense meeting should be completed by Dec. 1 of the student's fourth year, at the latest, by which point all course requirements must have been fulfilled. When QPD committee members have determined that the student has satisfactorily completed the pre-approved program, the Chair convenes a defense meeting. The student must provide all three committee members with a complete portfolio at least two weeks before official notice is given of this meeting. The defense meeting is an oral qualifying examination with primary emphasis on the student's three areas of specialization. Meetings typically begin with the student giving a short (10 minute) presentation on his or her work before answering questions from the faculty. Committee members meet first with the student and then convene privately to determine the outcome. The student shall receive one of three grades - No Pass, Conditional Pass (meaning that specified further work is needed), or Pass. This grade will be noted on the QPD Completion Form, available on the Shared Latte site, which must be signed by all committee members and deposited with the department Graduate Administrator. The final accreditation recommendation of the QPD should be made known to the student, who has the right to appeal directly to the Graduate Committee should this recommendation be unfavorable.

Please note: Students in the joint PhD in Social Policy and Sociology program and the joint PhD in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and Sociology are subject to slightly different rules, as reviewed elsewhere in the handbook.

## *From QPD to Dissertation*

After accreditation by a student's Qualifying Portfolio and Defense Committee (QPD), three formal steps remain: (1) approval of the dissertation prospectus, (2) approval of the dissertation, and (3) successful defense of the dissertation.

### *Step 1: Approval of the Dissertation Prospectus and Advancement to Candidacy*

Following the QPD meeting and by May 1 in the student's fourth year, a dissertation prospectus committee must be approved by the Graduate Committee and the dissertation prospectus must be completed and approved. The Dissertation Prospectus Committee guides the student in preparing the prospectus. The committee should include three currently active members of the sociology department faculty, one designated by the student as chair, who becomes the student's official advisor. Each student is responsible for forming a Dissertation Prospectus Committee--that is, securing agreement from each member and then petitioning the Graduate Committee for approval (see Appendix 4 for the petition form). The committee then determines when the prospectus is ready to be defended.

The dissertation prospectus elaborates a student's dissertation topic and explains the research the student plans to undertake. It should clearly state the research question, situate this question in a review of relevant literature, and describe the methods that will be used to answer the question. The prospectus should also provide a tentative timeline for completing the project. It should be no longer than 15 to 20 pages, including references. If the proposed research involves data collection with human subjects, the student must also seek approval from the Brandeis Committee for Protection of Human Subjects (BCPHS) by the date of the scheduled defense. Examples of dissertation proposals are available on the shared Graduate Student Latte site.

When the Committee determines that the proposal is ready, a dissertation prospectus defense is scheduled. The defense is open to the public and must be announced at least two weeks in advance within the Sociology department, by which point the student must deposit two copies of the prospectus in the Department office. The proposal defense meeting typically begins with the student giving a short (10 minute) presentation on his or her work before answering questions from the faculty. After the defense, the Dissertation Prospectus Committee meets in private to decide on one of three grades - No Pass, Conditional Pass (meaning that specified further work is needed), or Pass. This grade will be noted on the Dissertation Prospectus form (available on the shared Latte site), which must be signed by all Committee members and deposited with the department Graduate Administrator. At this point, the student has advanced to candidacy.

### *Step 2: Approval of the Dissertation*

After approval of the prospectus, the Dissertation Prospectus Committee automatically becomes the student's Dissertation Committee with the chair as the student's official advisor. Thereafter, the student may petition the Graduate Committee to change the membership of the Dissertation Committee, although approval is not usually granted when the dissertation is close to completion. Between approval of the prospectus and submission of a completed dissertation, the official link between the department and student will be the chair of the Dissertation Committee, who serves as the student's dissertation advisor and provides periodic reports of progress to the Graduate Committee in addition to student's annual end of year self-evaluation.

Final composition of the Dissertation Committee must include three members of the Sociology department faculty and an outside reader, chosen with the advice of the Dissertation Committee members and approved by the Graduate Committee and the Dean of the Graduate School. Approval must be secured before a defense can be scheduled. To obtain approval for an outsider reader, the student submits a petition (see Appendix 4) to the Graduate Committee at least one month before the dissertation defense. This petition must include a copy of

the University's DEC form (available on the shared Latte site). The outside reader should hold a PhD and have an academic affiliation outside Brandeis.

The Dissertation Committee, including the outside reader, has sole responsibility for requiring revisions, deciding that a defense is in order, and approving the dissertation. When the committee has decided to proceed to a defense, the candidate will give a complete copy of the dissertation to each committee member. Committee members will have one month to read the draft, comment on it, and require revisions. Once all committee members have read the revised draft and agreed that the dissertation is ready to defend, the candidate should schedule the dissertation defense, with at least two weeks' notice, and assure that all committee members can attend.

### *Step 3: Defense of the Dissertation*

At least two weeks before the defense, a copy of the dissertation must be made available in the Sociology department office, for review by members of the University faculty. A brief abstract of the dissertation must also be distributed to the faculty of the Sociology department.

The dissertation defense is open to the public but must include all members of the Dissertation Committee, together with the outside reader. If the outside reader is not able to be physically present, university rules allow her or him to be included by videoconference (note that conference calls by telephone are not acceptable). The chair of the Committee chairs the defense, which normally involves a presentation by the candidate outlining the research process and summarizing findings followed by questions posed first by Committee members and then by others present. After the defense, the Committee meets in private to decide whether the dissertation is or is not acceptable and what revisions, if any, will be required for final acceptance.

Before the defense, the student must pay the dissertation filing fee and prepare forms for submission to the Graduate School, in its prescribed format. The student then has the forms signed by members of the Committee and submits them to the Graduate School. All of these forms are available on the Latte page and/or at the web addresses listed below. When the dissertation is complete, with all revisions approved, the candidate must submit the final copy to the Graduate School, in accordance with deadlines posted in the academic calendar. Students in the final stages of preparation should also obtain an application for the PhD degree from the Graduate School and inform themselves of the final dates by which all requirements must be completed. Students should also obtain detailed instructions for the final format of the dissertation from the Graduate School.

### ***Information on Filing the Dissertation (from the GSAS and Registrar's web pages)***

#### *1. Apply to Graduate with the [Application for Graduate Degree Form](#)*

##### *Student Instructions:*

- Student completes Student Section
- Student submits application to the Graduate Administrator in the Sociology Department for completion of Department Section
- Student makes one copy for personal records and one copy for department records.
- Student must bring the completed application and fee of \$235 to the Office of the University Registrar. Do not fax the application.

Applications will NOT be accepted after the deadlines listed here. Once a deadline has passed the student will need to make an application for the next application period.



## Application Deadlines

November 1 to graduate in February

March 1 to graduate in May

June 15 to graduate in August

2. Submit [Dissertation Examining Committee \(DEC\) Form](#) Two Weeks before your Defense.

### *Student Instructions:*

- Student completes the DEC form which states the proposed title of dissertation, defense date, time and location, and the names of your defense committee members.
- Form must be signed by the Graduate Program Chair.
- Student makes one copy for personal records and one copy for department records.
- Student delivers signed form to the GSAS Office (Kutz Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor), at least two weeks before defense date.
- Form will then be approved and signed by Dean of GSAS. GSAS will fax a signed copy to program office for file.

### *Dissertation Defense Deadlines*

December 16, 2011 for February 2012 completion

April 18, 2012 for May 2012 completion

August 1, 2012 for August 2012 completion

### 3. Forms for your Dissertation Defense

Bring Your [Dissertation Defense Form](#) and [Signature Page](#) to Your Defense

### *Student Instructions:*

- The Dissertation Defense form should be signed by your committee at the defense and returned to the Registrar's Office.
- The student makes one copy for personal records and one copy for department records.
- Once you have provided the necessary information this form should also be signed by your Committee. The Signature page form is a blank template which needs personalization by your committee at the end of your defense. GSAS (NOT the student) will secure the signature of the Dean of Arts and Sciences.
- The signed, completed Signature page form needs to be personally delivered to GSAS. This signed form will be held at GSAS.
- An unsigned Signature Page should be included in the prefatory pages of your publication-ready dissertation.

If revisions are requested, complete the [Report on PhD Revisions form](#)

Please note: minor revisions require only the signature of the committee chair; substantive revisions require the signature of each committee member.

Submit the Revisions form after your committee has accepted the revised dissertation.

Deliver the Revisions form to the Registrar's Office

Make a copy for the Sociology Department

Keep a copy for your record

#### *4. Submit your dissertation electronically*

Submit your dissertation to [ProQuest/UMI](#)

Doctoral Dissertation Agreement Form, Title Page, and Abstract are all part of the online submission process.

Publishing Options: 'TR' (Traditional Publishing) restrictions and/or embargo on dissertation access is available through TR option; 'OA' (Open Access Publishing) no restrictions available to researcher (author must pay additional \$95 fee for Open Access).

See [TR or OA publishing](#) for additional information.

#### Dissertation Deposit Deadlines

January 17, 2012 for February 2012 degree

May 2, 2012 for May 2012 degree

August 15, 2012 for August 2012 degree

#### *5. Final Paperwork. Please complete the GSAS Exit Survey and Survey of Earned Doctorates (SED) by Your Dissertation Submission Deadline*

Exit Survey: Once your DEC form is submitted, GSAS will send you the link to its Exit Survey.

The Survey of Earned Doctorate (SED): [SED Instructions and Forms](#) is conducted by NORC, University of Chicago and collected for NSF, NIH, USED, NEH, USDA, and NASA.

#### ***Information on Teaching***

The Sociology department supports a culture where teaching is highly valued, and it aims to make the teaching experience of graduate students significant to their overall professional development. Because teaching is a collaborative activity, professors and their assigned TFs should meet as soon as assignments are firmly made to agree upon TF responsibilities over the course of the semester. These responsibilities may include attending lectures, facilitating discussion sections, grading papers and exams, holding office hours, mentoring and advising Peer Teaching Assistants (undergraduates), and, more generally, meeting with the professor to discuss course content, organization, and pedagogy.

Doctoral students in Sociology receiving stipends from the Department are required to serve regularly as Teaching Fellows (TFs) during their first four years.

For all PhD students who enter the PhD program in the fall of 2010 or later:

- Students will not TF in the first semester in the program
- Students will TF during 6 of their next 7 semesters in the program
- During the semester in which they are not TF'ing (i.e. sometime in semesters 2-8, as described above), students will work as a research assistant for a Sociology Department faculty member. If students prefer and faculty are available, they can fulfill this research assistantship in the summer. The research assistantship involves a 10 hour/week commitment to collaborative work that exposes students to the research process. It is intended to provide a semester-long focused assignment on a project designed to result in the creation of new sociological knowledge.
- To determine which semester students will RA instead of TF, students will be in conversation with their advisor and the faculty member they wish to RA with, and will write a petition to the Graduate

Committee by the start of pre-registration during the semester previous (e.g. a hypothetical request for an RA assignment during the fall semester must be made to the Graduate Committee prior to the start of pre-registration in the preceding spring semester). The Graduate Committee will attempt to meet student requests but cannot guarantee particular RA semesters.

- All TF and RA requirements must be completed by the end of a student's 8th semester in the program. The 9th and 10th semesters are intended to be free from teaching and research assistantships to enable students to work full time on their dissertations.

For all PhD students funded through the Sociology Department who entered the PhD program in the fall of 2007, 2008, or 2009:

- Students who entered the program agreed to 10 semesters of TF or other service to the department/university in exchange for their tuition waiver and living stipend.
- As of the fall 2010, those 10 semesters have been reduced to 7.
- During the first 8 semesters in the program, students will now be required to TF for 7 semesters.
- To determine which semester a student will not TF, he or she should be in conversation with her or his advisor and then submit a petition to the Graduate Committee by the start of pre-registration during the semester previous (e.g. a hypothetical request for an RA assignment during the fall semester must be made to the Graduate Committee prior to the start of pre-registration in the preceding spring semester). The Graduate Committee will attempt to meet student requests but cannot guarantee that they will be met. The Committee asks that students be flexible as it attempts to reduce student obligations and implement this new policy.
- All TF requirements must be completed by the end of a student's 8th semester in the program. The 9th and 10th semesters are intended to be free from teaching and research assistantships to enable students to work full time on their dissertations.

PhD students funded through the Sociology Department who entered the PhD program in the fall of 2006 will have their 9th and 10th semesters free from teaching and research assistantships to enable them to work full time on their dissertations.

\*Note also that, in all cases, no more than one semester of UWS instruction can count toward the required 6 or 7 (depending on when the student entered the program) semesters of departmental TF work. Any student who intends to teach in the UWS program in lieu of a departmental TF assignment should submit a petition prior to the end of classes during the previous semester. The Graduate Committee will attempt to meet these requests but cannot guarantee that they will be met.

#### **4. The Joint PhD in Sociology and Social Policy**

The PhD in Social Policy and Sociology is a joint degree of the Department of Sociology and the Heller School for Social Policy and Management. It is available to students only after completion of at least one year of graduate study in either the Heller School or the Department of Sociology's PhD program. To apply, students should submit their application by April 1. Applications require a letter of support from the Director of the home department. If the student is accepted by the complementary department (admission is not guaranteed) the following procedures apply. There is a three-year residency for the joint degree.

Students pursuing this joint degree are required to take a total of 18 courses, 9 in Sociology and 9 in Heller with requirements as follows:

##### ***Heller courses***

###### *Category A – Social Policy*

1. Social policy core selective
2. HS372b, Economic Theory and Social Policy

###### *Category B -- Methods*

1. HS401b, Research Methods
2. HS 404b, Stats/Regression Analysis (including applications lab)
3. HS405a, Econometrics or HS403b, Qualitative Research
4. HS 410a, Applied Quantitative Research or HS 411b, Applied Qualitative Research

###### *Category C -- Electives*

1. Other Heller concentration, core selective or methods courses
2. Other Heller concentration or methods courses
3. Other Heller concentration or methods courses

##### ***Sociology Courses***

A minimum of nine completed Sociology courses, comprising at least four Brandeis Sociology graduate seminars plus the Approaches to Social Research pro-seminar, which is required during each semester of coursework following matriculation into the Joint Degree program. At least one of these Sociology courses must be in theory.

##### ***Accreditation***

Each student must complete a “comprehensive paper” as required in The Heller School PhD curriculum. In Sociology, students must show competence in two substantive areas following the Sociology Qualifying Portfolio and Defense (QPD) requirements described earlier: QPD Committee membership and chair must be approved by the Sociology Graduate Committee (by petition) by December 1 of the student's third year; The QPD Committee meeting must be completed by December 1 of the student's fourth year.

## *Dissertation and Defense*

A dissertation prospectus should be submitted soon after the Comprehensive examination and QPD processes are completed. The Dissertation Committee should consist of five members—two Brandeis faculty members each from the Sociology Department and the Heller School (one designated as chair) and one outside reader. Students must submit paperwork for committee, proposal hearing and defense approvals to both departments. The joint PhD dissertation may be accepted by the Sociology Department and the Heller School upon the recommendation of the Dissertation Committee. To be granted the joint PhD degree in Social Policy and Sociology, the student is required to defend the dissertation in a public final oral examination. After the dissertation and defense are approved, a report signed by the Dissertation Examining Committee (available on the Shared Latte Site) certifying the candidate's successful performance on the oral exam is submitted to the University Registrar and to The Heller School Office of Student Records. Please see the instructions under PhD in Sociology above regarding the process of filing the dissertation. The forms required from Heller can be obtained from Kay Bennett, Assistant Director of the Heller PhD program.

## **5. The Joint PhD Program in Near Eastern and Judaic Studies and Sociology**

(Note: This information was copied directly from the 2011-12 *University Bulletin*. Please direct any questions to the NEJS Department)

### **Residence Requirement and Program of Study**

Three years of full-time residence are required at the normal rate of at least seven term courses each academic year. Students who enter with graduate credit from other recognized institutions may apply to the NEJS Department for transfer credit. By rule of the Graduate School, a maximum of one year of credit (seven term courses) may be accepted toward the residence requirement on the recommendation of the departmental advisor in consultation with the student's advisor.

Students must complete a total of 21 courses. Nine of these courses should be offered by the Sociology Department (comprising five graduate seminars and four other sociology courses). Among the Sociology courses at least one must be a theory course and at least one must be in quantitative methods. At least nine courses must be taken within the NEJS department. The remaining three courses are open to student choice with the approval of the student's advisors. In addition, students in their first year are required to participate in a year-long, noncredit proseminar that introduces program faculty and their research interests.

### ***Teaching Requirement***

As part of the graduate training program in NEJS, all PhD students are required to fulfill five, semester-length teaching fellow or research assignments during the first four years of their programs, serving as apprentices to faculty mentors. All incoming NEJS doctoral students are to take the university writing pedagogy seminar in their first year (preferably in their first semester). Students will serve as teaching fellows in at least one university writing course. In addition, the department holds an orientation program for all new students. Their faculty mentors evaluate students' teaching fellow work each semester. Students' teaching portfolios are in part drawn from these evaluations.

### ***Consortium***

Students should also discuss with their advisors the desirability of taking courses at member institutions of the Boston Consortium.

### ***Advising***

Students are assigned advisors from the Sociology Department and from the NEJS department. Both advisers will work with the student to ensure appropriate course coherency. An interdepartmental meeting involving both advisers and the student should take place at least once a year.

### ***Language Requirements***

Candidates are required to establish competence in Hebrew and one modern language (normally French or German, but depending on the area of research, another language may be substituted). Language examinations will be administered by the student's advisors.

### ***Research Methods Requirement***

Candidates are required to establish competence in statistics by successful completion of an appropriate Brandeis course in statistics.

### ***Comprehensive Examinations and Graduate Accreditation***

Before proposing and writing a doctoral dissertation, students must show competence in two areas of sociology through the Qualifying Portfolio and Defense (QPD) process; pass a two-part written comprehensive examination in Jewish cultural literacy in the NEJS department; and pass an oral major field examination.

Candidates demonstrate Jewish cultural literacy in a two-part written examination, which has English and Hebrew components, and a follow-up oral examination. The Hebrew examination in primary sources is part of the cultural literacy examination. This examination gives students the opportunity to demonstrate their broad general knowledge of Jewish literature and cultures of the biblical, rabbinic, medieval, and early modern periods. The oral examination provides opportunity for further exploration following the written examination. Following the successful completion of the Jewish cultural literacy examinations, candidates demonstrate their particular field of expertise in contemporary Jewish societies through the oral major field examination.

The Qualifying Portfolio and Defense (QPD) is the Sociology Department equivalent of comprehensive examinations. Students elect two sociological areas of interest and, with the appropriate faculty member, create a contract of requirements for the completion of a portfolio in the specific area. The portfolio can include such items as completed courses, papers, independent readings, or bibliographies. Faculty advisors suggest readings, written work, or independent studies. When the QPD requirement is completed, there will be a comprehensive meeting to discuss the candidate's interests and direction in the field and the upcoming dissertation.

### ***Dissertation and Final Oral Examination***

A dissertation proposal should be submitted to the Dissertation Committee soon after the comprehensive examinations and QPDs are completed. The Dissertation Committee should consist of five members: two each from the Sociology and the NEJS departments and a fifth member from outside those departments. After approval of the proposal by the Dissertation Committee, it is submitted to the department faculties for approval. Two copies of the dissertation are to be deposited in the offices of the program chairs no later than March 1 of the year in which the candidate expects to earn the degree. The Dissertation Committee must approve the dissertation and the student must successfully defend the dissertation at a final oral examination.

## 6. MA Programs

### *Master of Arts in Sociology*

A Master's degree in Sociology can be earned either as a "stand-alone" degree or as part of on-going work for the sociology PhD (at any point beyond the first year).

The "stand-alone" MA degree in Sociology is designed for completion in one calendar year, with the degree awarded at the next official University degree conferral after completion of residence and requirements. Each MA degree candidate will devise a specialized program with a faculty advisor. In both the Fall and Spring semesters, "stand alone" MA students should submit a proposed course schedule for approval to his or her advisor no later than the end of the first full week of classes.

To fulfill program requirements for either the "stand-alone" or "en route" MA, students must complete six graduate-level semester courses, including one course in sociological theory and one full-semester course in methods. At least three of the six courses must be formal graduate seminars (courses numbered 200 or higher) offered by the Brandeis Sociology department. The remaining three courses may be any combination of graduate seminars, independent readings (Soc. 230a/b), advanced joint undergraduate/graduate seminars, or enhanced upper-division (numbered 100-199) courses. For upper-division courses to be given graduate level credit, they should be supplemented by additional meetings, readings, and/or written work; the form that this enhancement will take should be worked out with the course instructor in the first two weeks of the course.

All MA students will also either complete a Master's research paper of professional quality and length or will complete a final take-home examination at the end of the spring semester. Students completing a Master's research paper will choose two faculty members of the Sociology department, one of whom is designated as chair, to guide and read the paper. Both faculty members must communicate their approval of the paper to the department Graduate Administrator before the University deadline for certifying degree requirements.

Students who complete the take-home exam option will notify the administrator of the Graduate Program in Sociology by March 15th of the spring semester of their intent to take the exam. Two Sociology Department faculty members either from the Graduate Committee or selected by the Graduate Committee will draft the exam. These same faculty members will read the exam, which will be graded on a pass/fail basis. The exam will include two questions that draw on the coursework students have taken in theory and research methods as well as on their substantive interests. The exam will be given to the students at noon on the last day of class and will be due 72 hours later by email to the faculty who are administering it. The completed exam can be no longer than 15 pages double spaced, Times New Roman 12 point type, 1 inch margins. Students will be notified of their grade on the exam within two weeks of handing in the paper. Any student who fails the exam will be given the option to retake it once – the following spring.

### *Master of Arts in Sociology and Women's and Gender Studies*

The Department of Sociology cooperates with Women's and Gender Studies in a joint one-year (12 month) MA.

Requirements: Completion of seven courses to be distributed as follows:

- The foundational course in Women's and Gender Studies (WMGS 205a);
- One course in feminist research methodologies (the Feminist Inquiry course offered through the Graduate Consortium in Women's Studies or an alternative);
- One graduate course outside Sociology listed as an elective in Women's and Gender Studies;
- One graduate Sociology course listed as an elective in Women's and Gender Studies;



- Three other regular graduate Sociology courses: one in theory, one outside the area of gender, and one elective that could be a directed reading course.
- Also required are participation in a noncredit Women's and Gender Studies graduate proseminar, and submission of a research paper of professional quality and length (normally 25-40 pages) on a topic related to the joint degree. The paper will be read by two faculty members, at least one of whom is a member of the Department of Sociology and at least one of whom is a member of the Women's and Gender Studies core or affiliate faculty.

***Information on Filing the Research Paper (from the GSAS and Registrar's webpages)***

1. Complete the [Application for Graduate Degree Form \(MA\)](#)
2. Returned to the Office of the Registrar, Kutz Hall, 1st floor. Deadlines are strictly enforced.

Application for Degree Deadlines

November 1 to graduate in February

March 1 to graduate in May

June to graduate in August

## **7. General Sociology Department and Graduate School Policies**

### ***Student Evaluation and Progress to the Degree***

Admission to graduate programs is granted for one academic year at a time. Every student pursuing work for a degree, whether or not currently in residence, must register at the beginning of each term. All Sociology graduate students will be evaluated by the Graduate Committee, with input from the sociology faculty at large, each spring. Before this evaluation, each student must complete a self-assessment, which will be included as part of the evaluation discussion. At this evaluation the records of all graduate students will be carefully reviewed with reference to timely completion of course work and requirements, quality of work, and teaching

For students whose records are deemed insufficient, the department can act up to and including requiring leaves of absence or withdrawal from the program.

Note: Any grade below B-, or a grade of “NC” (no credit), is an unsatisfactory grade in the Graduate School. A course in which the student receives an unsatisfactory grade will not be counted toward graduate credit.

### ***Graduate School Deadlines***

Students should be aware of the deadlines for completion of the various degree requirements. These may be found in the “Academic Calendar,” which is published each year by the University Registrar.

### ***Transfer Credit***

After completing at least one year of residence at a full-time rate or the equivalent at a part-time rate, PhD students may apply for credit for graduate-level courses completed elsewhere. A maximum of one year of residence credit may be granted.

Students entering the PhD program with an MA in sociology or an equivalent social science may petition the departmental Graduate Committee for a reduction of the required course load by as many as six courses (reducing the required load from 18 to as few as 12 courses). Pending approval from the Committee, up to two of these courses can be applied to the graduate-level Sociology department seminar requirements. These petitions should be submitted during the fall of a student’s second year in the program. Courses being transferred must carry a grade of B or better, and must have been earned at an appropriately accredited institution.

Transfer credit is not allowed for the MA degree in Sociology or the joint MA in Women’s and Gender Studies and Sociology.

### ***Incomplete Courses***

A course grade of “Incomplete,” unless given by reason of a student’s failure to attend a final examination, must be made up prior to the end of the term following the term in which it was received (the deadline for incompletes from the fall term is the following April 1st; the deadline from the spring term is the following September 15th). Failure to complete a course on time can jeopardize a student’s academic standing.

### ***Leaves of Absence***

Leaves of absence are granted for one year, renewable on petition. To obtain a leave of absence a student must petition the departmental Graduate Committee in writing, with a copy to the dean of the Graduate School.

Before applying, the student should discuss the matter with his/her advisor or committee chair. After Graduate Committee approval, the leave request is sent to the Graduate School, which will make the final decision and notify the student. Conditions for reinstatement are ordinarily set when the leave is granted, and include completion of outstanding work. Petitions for reinstatement will be considered by the Graduate Committee and the Graduate School.

## **8. Resources and Facilities**

### ***The Berkowitz Award***

The Sociology Department annually awards one \$500 prize for assistance in dissertation research in the name of the late Steven Berkowitz, PhD.

### ***Libraries***

The social science collections of the University are housed in Goldfarb Library and Farber Library. These materials are also accessible through an online catalog system called LOUIS. The libraries have facilities for computerized searches of bibliographic databases such as the Social Science Index, the MLA Index, and other periodical indices. The Interlibrary Loan Office provides books or photocopies of materials not owned by the University. Brandeis is a member of the Boston Library Consortium, composed of 12 academic and research institutions in the area. A consortium card, allowing use of these libraries, is available from the circulation desk of the Brandeis Library.

### ***Sociology Graduate Program Intranet***

Sociology graduate students, faculty, and staff have access, via Latte, to a range of shared resources. Included are administrative material, reading lists, proposals, teaching resources, grant information, and much more. Students are encouraged to post additional resources on this site.

### ***Inter-University Cross-Registration Program***

Brandeis participates in a cross-registration program with Boston College, Boston University, and Tufts University. Students are eligible to take graduate-level courses at these institutions (no more than one course per term) with the prior approval of their advisors. Refer to the Brandeis University Bulletin for details.

### ***Graduate Women's Studies Consortium***

Students interested in gender and women's studies may enroll, with their advisor's approval, in interdisciplinary courses offered through the Graduate Women's Studies Consortium at Radcliffe College.

### ***Graduate Student Affairs***

The Office of Graduate Student Affairs supports and encourages life on campus for graduate students outside of the classroom and serves as a liaison between graduate students and University Administration. The office works to coordinate events and programming among the three graduate schools on campus. Graduate Student Affairs advises and assists the Graduate Student Association (GSA) and the Graduate Student Senate, offers programming throughout the year, and runs Graduate Student Orientation in the fall.

### ***Funding Opportunities for Graduate Students***

Information regarding internal and external funding opportunities available to students in the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences is given below. Additional information may be found in the "Financial Assistance" section of the current Brandeis University Bulletin.

### ***Space in Pearlman***

Graduate Students are invited to use the Graduate Student Lounge, Computer Room, and TF office in Pearlman Hall. They are also welcome to use the microwave in the kitchen on the first floor. Students may bring a lock and select a locker in the Graduate Student Lounge to store personal belongings. All students are also assigned a mailbox where mail and internal university correspondence are directed.

### ***Funding Opportunities***

Students may consult [the “Funding opportunities” page on the Brandeis Sociology website](#), as well as [the GSAS website](#) for lists of external and internal funding opportunities.

### ***University Prize Instructorship***

The purpose of this award is to allow a GSAS student to teach an advanced undergraduate course that is related to his or her research interests and dissertation work, so as to enhance the student’s capacity to assume teaching responsibilities following completion of the PhD. Candidates must have completed at least one semester as a teaching fellow and must be “ABD” (i.e., have completed all degree requirements except the dissertation) by early May of the year the prize is awarded.

Up to five instructorships will be awarded to candidates who propose courses that represent strong contributions to the undergraduate curriculum and who have demonstrated excellence in, and commitment to, teaching. Selection criteria include quality of the proposed course as demonstrated by the syllabus, its relevance to the curriculum, and its intellectual appeal to undergraduates.

### ***Travel Funding***

An amount of money is available to PhD students each fiscal year for reimbursement of travel expenses associated with their scholarly activities. To qualify, a student must be in the advanced stages of research and be attending a conference for the purpose of serving on a panel or presenting a paper. Additional information is on the Shared Latte site.

### ***Ethical Conduct***

The department adheres to [the American Sociological Code of Ethics](#)

### ***Dispute Resolution Procedures***

Academic life, especially in apprenticeship situations where so much is at stake, is a messy business, open to many kinds of misinterpretations and disappointments, as well as divergent views among faculty themselves, as well as between faculty and students, as to what counts as good work appropriate for a PhD, or good teaching and advising to enable such work.

Our collective ethic as a faculty is to protect students from any form of intimidation or retaliation. It is also to provide as much opportunity and encouragement as possible for students and faculty to repair relationships that may have been frayed by previous misunderstandings or regrettable behavior on anyone’s part. We do this not only because it is the ethically right thing to do, but because it is in everyone's interest for graduate students to leave the program with dense networks of support and trust, not only with the particular committee with which they may have worked, but with other faculty, who are often asked by faculty at other universities what they

may think of particular students. We are proud of this departmental ethic, which we have nurtured for decades and have seen serve scores of PhDs well over the course of their careers.

Thus, when misunderstandings or disputes arise or someone feels treated unfairly, we encourage students and faculty first to talk as constructively as possible with each other. Students and faculty may also seek the counsel of other professors and students. Should the situation remain unresolved, we encourage students to talk with the Department Chair and/or the Director of the Graduate Program to seek advice on how to proceed or to lodge a formal complaint. While we recognize the rights of students to bring concerns to the Dean of the Graduate School, we strongly encourage them first to seek resolution and, when possible, rapprochement, within the Department.

### *Disability Resources at Brandeis*

At Brandeis University, a diverse body of people come together to form a cohesive community. Brandeis welcomes all qualified individuals into the University community as students, faculty, or staff members. Brandeis is committed to providing “reasonable accommodation(s)” to individuals with appropriately documented physical, learning, or psychological disabilities.

A person is considered to have a disability if s/he fits within any one of these three categories:

- The person has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of the individual;
- The person has a record of such an impairment, or the person is regarded as having such an impairment.
- “Major life activities” include functions such as caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working.

A “reasonable accommodation” is defined as any change in the work or educational environment or the way things are customarily done that will allow an individual with a known documented disability to perform the essential functions of a position or let an otherwise qualified student receive a reasonable modification or adjustment for his/her known documented disability. All accommodations are made on a case-by-case basis. Students, faculty, and staff must follow well-established procedures to obtain accommodations.

For more information regarding reasonable accommodations, contact Katharine Linnehan ([klinneha@brandeis.edu](mailto:klinneha@brandeis.edu)) at GSAS.

## Appendix 1: Timeline for the Doctoral Program

The Graduate Committee will consider compliance with the following timelines in its annual student evaluation each spring. Students are encouraged to consult this timeline as they complete their annual self-evaluations.

Year	Task Timeline
First	<p>Complete two semesters of SOC 240a, as well as five other courses.</p> <p>Teaching: No TF in the fall. TF in the spring (for students fully funded through the Sociology Department).</p> <p>Petitions: End of the year, petition to designate your adviser moving forward.</p> <p>First year: Upon the completion of six or more courses, students are eligible to submit a Master's research paper of professional quality and length in application for the MA degree (see description of MA in Sociology).</p>
Second	<p>Complete two semesters of SOC 240a, as well as five other courses.</p> <p>Teaching: One TF per semester (fully funded students). Between your second and fourth years, speak with faculty about RA opportunities and petition the Graduate Committee by the start of pre-registration prior to the semester you wish to RA.</p> <p>By April 1 initiate QPD process: two QPD Committee members and corresponding areas of study designated and approved.</p> <p>Petitions: Students requesting transfer credit from courses taken at other universities prior to matriculating at Brandeis should submit a petition to the Graduate Committee during the fall semester.</p>
Third	<p>Complete two semesters of SOC 240a, as well as five other courses. By end of second semester: seminar requirement should be fulfilled.</p> <p>Teaching: One TF per semester (fully funded students) or petition for RA semester.</p> <p>By December 1: third QPD Committee member and area designated. Petition the Graduate Committee with your QPD Committee.</p> <p>By April 1: Student reports to QPD Committee Chair on progress to date.</p>
Fourth	<p>Students may opt to participate in the Dissertation Writing Group taught as part of SOC 240a</p> <p>Teaching: One TF per semester (fully funded students) or petition for RA semester.</p> <p>By December 1: Final QPD Committee meeting</p> <p>By May 1: Write and defend dissertation prospectus. Petition Graduate Committee with Prospectus Committee before the prospectus defense.</p>

Fifth	<p>Students may opt to participate in the Dissertation Writing Group taught as part of SOC 240a</p> <p>Teaching: No TF (fully funded students). Students are encouraged to work full time on the research and writing of their dissertations.</p> <p>Students are also encouraged to apply for funding, through Brandeis and more broadly, to support dissertation writing in their sixth year.</p>
Sixth Year and Beyond	<p>Students may opt to participate in the Dissertation Writing Group taught as part of SOC 240a</p> <p>Write and defend dissertation. Students are reminded to petition the Graduate Committee with changes to their Dissertation Committee, including adding an outside reader to the committee.</p>



## Appendix 2: Calendar of PhD Evaluation Points

<b>Points</b>	<b>Times</b>	<b>Possible Sanctions</b>
Whenever work is submitted	Any time of the year.	Inform student of his/her progress. Warn of problems.
Annual general evaluation meeting	Each spring. Review of progress based on student self-assessment, examples of written work, and teaching evaluations. The advisor's feedback also required.	Warning, with or without funding contingencies.
MA submission	Voluntary, but for adequate consideration should be submitted in time to read before desired degree deadline.	Submissions are judged solely on whether or not they are worthy of an MA degree.
Final Qualifying Portfolio and Defense Committee Mtg	By December 1 of student's fourth year	Without accreditation, student cannot go on to qualify for PhD
PhD prospectus	By May 1 of student's fourth year	It may not be approved or accepted by committee.
PhD dissertation	Student's fifth year and beyond. Any time during the academic year.	It may not be approved or accepted by committee.
PhD defense	Student's fifth year or beyond. Any time during the academic year (official awarding of the degree in February, May, or August).	May not be approved or accepted by committee, or may require revisions.

### **Appendix 3: [American Sociological Association Current Sections](#)**

Aging and the Life Course  
Alcohol, Drugs, and Tobacco  
Altruism and Social Solidarity  
Animals and Society  
Asia and Asian America  
Body and Embodiment  
Children and Youth  
Collective Behavior & Social Movements  
Communication and Information Technologies  
Community and Urban Sociology  
Comparative and Historical Sociology  
Crime, Law, and Deviance  
Culture  
Economic Sociology  
Education  
Emotions  
Environment and Technology  
Ethnomethodology and Conversation Analysis  
Evolution, Biology and Society  
Family  
History of Sociology  
Human Rights  
International Migration  
Labor and Labor Movements  
Latino/a Sociology  
Law  
Marxist Sociology  
Mathematical Sociology  
Medical Sociology  
Mental Health  
Methodology  
Organizations, Occupations, and Work  
Peace, War, and Social Conflict  
Political Economy of the World-System  
Political Sociology  
Population  
Race, Gender, and Class  
Racial and Ethnic Minorities  
Rationality and Society  
Religion  
Science, Knowledge, and Technology  
Sex and Gender  
Sexualities  
Social Psychology  
Sociological Practice and Public Sociology  
Teaching and Learning  
Theory

**Appendix 4. Petition Form.**

(This and other required forms are also available through the Shared Latte site.)

**Petition to the Graduate Committee  
Brandeis University  
Department of Sociology**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Name:

Current Advisor's Name:

Year entered program:

**Petition to (please check one):**

\_\_\_\_\_ Change advisors

- Please note current and proposed new advisor below

\_\_\_\_\_ Transfer academic credit from another university

- Please note number of credits requested and for what courses below.
- Include syllabi, in English, for all courses

\_\_\_\_\_ Establish or change the QPD Committee

- Please note the QPD areas and faculty below.
- Indicate if this is your first QPD committee or you are making an amendment

\_\_\_\_\_ Establish or change the Dissertation Prospectus Committee or Dissertation Review Committee

- Please note your dissertation title, chair and committee members.
- Indicate if this is your first Dissertation Review/Prospectus Committee or you are making an amendment
- If you are petitioning to add an outside reader, please submit the University's DEC form with this form. This petition must be made at least one month before your dissertation defense.

\_\_\_\_\_ Request RA rather than TF semester

- Please indicate the semester requested and the faculty member
- Include the title and details of the project you will be working on.

\_\_\_\_\_ Take a leave of absence

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (Please explain)

**Please attach an additional sheet with the information requested.**