

**SOCIOLOGY**  
**RICE UNIVERSITY**  
**GRADUATE HANDBOOK**

**Fall 2016**

**<http://sociology.rice.edu>**



### HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

This handbook will serve to orient new students and provide information and assistance to sociology graduate students. In addition to being in agreement with the regulations stated in this departmental handbook, students must also be in agreement with the General Announcements and the Code of Conduct of the University. There are many policies and procedures that we do not address here in detail. University policies are subject to frequent changes. For information on current university policies, graduate students should be familiar with the "Information for Graduate Students" section of the university's General Announcements, available at: <http://ga.rice.edu>. If there is any discrepancy between this guide and university policies, the university policies prevail.

If in doubt about the interpretation of policies, students should seek help first at the department level (graduate coordinator, director of graduate studies, advisor and/or department chair) and then at the central administration level (office of graduate and postdoctoral studies). If you have additional questions, please contact us at the following numbers:

### HELPFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

#### Director of Graduate Studies

Jenifer L. Bratter  
713 348-4254  
Email: [jbratter@rice.edu](mailto:jbratter@rice.edu)

#### Department Chair

Bridget Gorman  
713 348-4137  
Email: [bkgorman@rice.edu](mailto:bkgorman@rice.edu)

#### Sociology Graduate Coordinator

Shirley Tapscott  
713 348-4225  
Email: [shtl@rice.edu](mailto:shtl@rice.edu)

#### Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies

URL: <http://graduate.rice.edu>  
Email: [graduate@rice.edu](mailto:graduate@rice.edu)  
Phone: 713-348-4002  
Fax: 713-348-4806

#### Graduate Student Association

2nd Floor, Ley Student Center  
E-mail: [gsa@rice.edu](mailto:gsa@rice.edu)  
Fax: 713-348-5931

[General Announcements](#) or GA (the Rice University Official Academic Information and Policies)

### PART 1 WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU'RE GETTING STARTED

#### Orientation

The Rice University Orientation is generally held in the middle of August. Visit the [Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies](#) website to find the new student checklist, information about housing, and your summer to-do list before you arrive at Rice. The mandatory departmental orientation is generally held preceding the university's orientation.

### KEY PEOPLE

There are several key people in the department whom graduate students will get to know well during the next year and throughout their career as graduate students at Rice.

#### THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE

The Committee, in conjunction with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), is responsible for overseeing the graduate program. Normally, students with academic problems or concerns will discuss them with their advisor or the DGS. The current graduate committee is composed of: Jenifer L. Bratter (DGS), Ruth Turley, [Tony Brown](#), Jim Elliott, and Bridget Gorman (Department Chair).

#### The Director of Graduate Studies

The Graduate Advisor (currently Jenifer Bratter) is responsible for reviewing and approving the program of study for every graduate student each semester, acting on all petitions and making recommendations for the composition of examination and thesis committees. Each first year student will be assigned a provisional advisor for the first year. The student will work with the advisor on research or teaching tasks for approximately twenty hours per week (a minimum of 15 hours a week). At the conclusion of the first semester, the student, advisor, and graduate committee will decide together whether the first-year advisor should remain the student's primary advisor throughout his or her graduate career.

#### The Graduate Staff

The graduate staff provides information, assists in processing applications, and maintains the students' files while they are enrolled. The staff will keep up with which form has to be filed with which office, in order to ensure that students remain in good standing. They will also assist with finding the right resources and solutions to whatever problems may arise.

#### THE FACULTY

The following provides a brief overview of the research interests and experience of each full time faculty member in the department.

[JENIFER L BRATTER](#), Associate Professor, Associate Chair, Director of Graduate Studies. Bratter received her PhD in Sociology and Demography from the University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Bratter's research areas are in race and ethnic relations, quantitative methods, family, and demography. Her research explores the implications of race and racial mixing (i.e. interracial families, multiracial identity) for family, identity, and social inequality. Current projects focus on indicators of social well-being such as

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poverty, residential segregation, and health and the new ways that race is linked to these phenomena. Dr. Bratter has recently published works appearing in *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *Demography*, *Social Forces*, *Family Relations*, *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, and several upcoming book chapters.

**TONY BROWN**, Professor. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Michigan. As a scholar of race and racism, he confirms that social scientists struggle to specify the meaning and significance of racism for U.S. blacks and blacks of the global south. He is interested in how racism works, from the womb to the tomb, to disadvantage blacks and privilege whites. Its workings include interactions across interpersonal, institutional, and cultural levels, implicating the mundane and extraordinary in the maintenance of white supremacy.

**SERGIO CHAVEZ**, Assistant Professor. Professor Chavez received his PhD from Cornell University. Dr. Chavez has conducted field research in Tijuana and Guanajuato, Mexico, on issues related to internal and international migration, including labor markets, social networks, and border studies. One of his current projects focuses on the gendered consequences of international migration on women who remain in origin communities. A second examines how unauthorized migrant roofers attach meanings to their work in an occupation where occupational hazards and injuries are the norm.

**JUSTIN DENNEY**, (Ph.D., 2010, University of Colorado) (Ph.D., 2010, University of Colorado). Associate Professor. Professor Denney is an Associate Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Kinder Institute Urban Health Program at Rice University. Justin is principally interested in how families and the places that individuals spend time shape health and mortality disparities across the life course. To that end, his published works have focused on outcomes ranging from child food insecurity and obesity to adult suicide mortality. Justin's current projects are attempting to better understand how characteristics of the places children and adults live, work, and play impact their individual prospects; how family formations and resources matter for individual well-being; and how intimate relationships, socioeconomic status, gender, and race / ethnicity, contribute to sexual minority health disparities. His work has been supported by the Health Disparities Scholar Program at the National Institutes of Health, the University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research, the Foundation for Child Development, the Houston Endowment, and the Faculty Initiatives Fund at Rice.

**JAMES ELLIOTT**, Professor. Elliott received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and trained as a postdoctoral fellow at the University of North Carolina's Population Center. His scholarship focuses on urban development, inequality and the environment. The latter is conceptualized in both social and biophysical terms, with published work ranging from neighborhood and workplace effects on minority workers to social dynamics of natural disaster recovery, hazardous waste accumulation, and carbon emissions. He is a former Advisory Panelist to NSF's Sociology Program and current Co-editor of the journal, *Sociological Perspectives*.

**ELAINE HOWARD ECKLUND**, Herbert S. Autrey Chair Professor in Social Sciences and Founding Director, Religion and Public Life Program. Ecklund examines how individuals develop cognitive schema—ways of interpreting the world—that are at odds with institutions that constrain them. Her research addresses this theoretical topic in the areas of religion, immigration, science, and gender. Recently Ecklund's research has examined how scientists in eight different nations understand religion,

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ethics and gender. Ecklund's forthcoming book is *Failing Families, Failing Science*, NYU Press, 2016. She received a PhD in 2004 from Cornell University, where she was the recipient of the Class of 2004 Graduate Student Baccalaureate Award for Academic Excellence and Community Service. Ecklund received the Rice University Charles O. Duncan Award for outstanding research and teaching achievement in 2013. She teaches classes at the graduate and undergraduate level on immigration, sociology of science, classical sociological theory, and sociology of religion.

[BRIDGET GORMAN](#), Professor and Department Chair. Dr. Gorman received her PhD in Sociology and Demography from Pennsylvania State University. Her research addresses how social conditions and experiences shape group differences in health and well-being among children and adults. During her career she has organized her research efforts to examine disparities in morbidity, physical functioning, and medical care use across major U.S. demographic groups – particularly racial/ethnic, nativity, gender, and sexuality groups. She is interested not only in how men vs. women, minorities vs. whites, and the foreign vs. native born differ in health outcomes, but also how these social categories intersect to shape health outcomes (e.g., black women vs. white men, heterosexual men vs. gay men). A guiding framework for her work is that health disparities are driven by fundamental social causes (e.g., socioeconomic status, social integration and support) that underlie and shape group differences in health outcomes.

[RACHEL TOLBERT KIMBRO](#), Professor. Kimbro received her PhD in sociology with a focus in demography from Princeton University. After completing her doctoral studies, Dr. Kimbro was a Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health & Society Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Her teaching and research interests include poverty, race/ethnicity, migration, child obesity, maternal health behaviors, and the influence of family dynamics on children's health and wellbeing.

[STEPHEN L KLINEBERG](#), Professor and Founding Director of the Kinder Institute for Urban Research, received his PhD from Harvard and taught at Princeton before coming to Rice. In 1982, he and his students initiated the annual "Kinder Houston Area Survey," now in its 35th year of tracking changes in the demographic patterns, economic outlooks, experiences, and beliefs of area residents. Co-author of *The Present of Things Future: Explorations of Time in Human Experience*, Dr. Klineberg has written numerous articles on public attitudes, contemporary social change, and environmental concerns. The recipient of twelve major teaching awards, he has completed a series of published reports on this ongoing research, and is at work this year on a book exploring the national implications of the Houston findings.

[STEVE H. MURDOCK](#), is the Allyn R. and Gladys M. Cline Professor of Sociology at Rice University. He previously served as Director of the U.S. Bureau of the Census having been nominated for the position by President Bush and unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate in 2007 and serving until the change in administration in January of 2009. Prior to his appointment at Rice, he was the Lutcher Brown Distinguished Chair in Demography and Organization Studies at the University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA) and the Director of the Institute for Demographic and Socioeconomic Research. Before UTSA, Murdock was a Regents Professor and Head of the Department of Rural Sociology at Texas A&M University. He was also the official State Demographer of Texas. He was appointed to this position by Governor Rick Perry and was the first person to occupy this position. Dr. Murdock earned his Ph.D. in demography and sociology from the University of Kentucky and is the author or editor of 15 books and more than 150 articles and technical reports on the implications of current and future demographic and

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socioeconomic change. He is the recipient of numerous honors and awards. These include the Faculty Distinguished Achievement Award in Research from Texas A&M University, the Excellence in Research Award and the Outstanding Rural Sociologist Award from the Rural Sociological Society, The Distinguished Alumni Award from North Dakota State University and the Distinguished Alumni Award from the Department of Sociology at the University of Kentucky. He is a member of the Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, and Phi Eta Epsilon national honor societies.

[RUTH LOPEZ TURLEY](#), Professor Turley founded the Houston Education Research Consortium (HERC), a partnership between Rice and the Houston Independent School District (HISD) that aims to improve the connection between education researchers and decision makers for the purpose of closing achievement gaps and improving outcomes for students. She also helped to launch the National Network of Education Research-Practice Partnerships (NNERPP), which supports and develops partnerships between research institutions and education agencies throughout the country. She has served in various elected and appointed positions in the American Sociological Association (ASA), the American Educational Research Association (AERA), the Society for Research on Educational Effectiveness (SREE), and the National Research Council of the National Academies, as well as the editorial boards of *Sociology of Education* and *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*. Professor Turley completed her undergraduate education at Stanford University and her graduate education at Harvard University.

### ADJUNCT MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT

[CRAIG CONSIDINE](#), is a Lecturer of Sociology at Rice University. He earned a Master's degree from Royal Holloway – University of London and a Bachelor's degree from American University. As a sociologist, Craig is interested in the sociology of religion, racial and ethnic relations, as well as the experiences of diasporic communities. Craig's early research focused primarily on American identity through the lens of Muslims with emphasis on religious pluralism and Islamophobia. More recent research explored the experiences of young Pakistani Muslim and non-Muslim men in Dublin, Ireland and Boston, Massachusetts. His Ph.D. project focused on the ethnic and civic nation dichotomy, the impact of crisis racism, intergenerational dynamics in diaspora, and the developments of hybrid and liquid identities. Craig is currently turning his doctoral dissertation into a book manuscript for publication in 2016. His current work examines topics including, but not limited to, Prophet Muhammad's covenants with Christian communities, Muslim communities in Houston, Texas, religious pluralism in the U.S., as well as Christian-Muslim relations.

[RICHARD JOHNSON](#), Professor in the Practice of Environmental Studies in Sociology. He earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering from Rice University and Masters in Urban and Environmental Planning from the University of Virginia. He is the Director of Sustainability at Rice University and Associate Director of the Center for the Study of Environment and Society. He was awarded the Cleanology 2006 Vision Award for notable achievements in the advancement of Cleanology, an educational concept for the cleaning industry.

[ROBIN PAIGE](#), is an Adjunct Associate Professor of Sociology and Assistant Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence at Rice University. She received her B.A. in Sociology with a concentration in Comparative Studies and World Development from the University of California at Davis and a M.S. and Ph.D. from Cornell University in Development Sociology. Dr. Paige has conducted field research in New York State,

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California, and central Mexico on issues related to value-labels and alternative agriculture as well as migration between the US and Mexico. Dr. Paige's research on value-labels and voluntary certification in the agro-food system examines the processes by which actors are disciplined to the prevailing logic of capital and industrial relations through production and processing standards. In addition, for the last six years Dr. Paige has been conducting fieldwork in Mexico researching the daily lives of women who remain behind when their husbands migrate to the US. This project focuses on the social and emotional consequences for women in sending communities during long periods of family separation. At Rice University she teaches courses on Environmental Sociology, Gender, Sociology of Food, and Globalization.

[ROLAND B. SMITH, JR.](#), Associate Provost for Diversity and Inclusion, Adjunct Professor of Sociology. He received his B.A. in Anthropology/Sociology from Bowie State University, a M.P.A. in Public and Environmental Affairs from Indiana University, and an Ed.D. in Teaching, Curriculum, and Learning Environments from Harvard University. He teaches ethnographic research methods and mentor students while serving on the Graduate Council and Institutional Review Board. He chairs the Rice Council on Diversity and Inclusion and is the principal investigator/coordinator for the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship program at Rice, preparing undergraduates for Ph.D. studies. He came to Rice from the University of Notre Dame, where he served as executive assistant to the president, concurrent associate professor of sociology and founding director of the Center for Educational Opportunity. He also served as a research intern in the United States Senate.

[ROBERT WERTH](#), Lecturer. Dr. Werth obtained a B.A., specialized in Sociology, from the University of Iowa. For graduate school he attended the University of California, Irvine, where he obtained a M.A. in Social Ecology and a Ph.D. in the interdisciplinary Criminology, Law and Society program. Prior to coming to Rice, he was an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at Quinnipiac University. Dr. Werth's research focuses on parole, penal risk and rehabilitation, post-prison experiences, legal compliance and noncompliance, and issues of citizenship and subjectivity/identity. His current research project explores how formerly incarcerated individuals perceive and utilize programs and services (e.g., job training and placement, housing, substance abuse) available to them in the Houston area.

## REGISTRATION & ENROLLMENT

### Transfer Credit

If you are entering the Rice University sociology PhD Program already having completed a Master's Degree elsewhere, you may wonder how many credits will count toward your PhD at Rice. It is a university requirement that each graduate student spend at least four semesters in residence at Rice University. In addition, the Department of Sociology has stipulated several required courses (including Contemporary Social Theory, Classical Social Theory, Qualitative Research Methods, Statistics courses, and Research Methods). If you have taken similar courses elsewhere and wish for one or more of these requirements to be waived, you should submit to the graduate committee, preferably before the beginning of the first semester of study, a request that includes a copy of the syllabus from the similar course, all required written work for the course, and your final grade. If you have completed a master's thesis already, this may also count toward your PhD in sociology (although not toward thesis credit). If you wish to have your master's thesis considered in lieu of our program's required master's thesis, you may

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submit that for consideration as well. The graduate committee will review all course waiver requests and typically make its decisions prior to or during the first part of the fall semester. In addition to these formal guidelines, we will be happy to discuss your situation in detail once you arrive at Rice. We typically allow no more than nine transfer credits, although some exceptions may be made.

### Registration

In addition to these departmental requirements, the following registration rules apply to all graduate students at Rice University:

- Students must maintain continuous program involvement and enrollment unless granted an official leave of absence. Failure to register before the registration deadline will result in a de facto withdrawal. All full-time graduate students are required to register for nine credit hours each semester. Students are also required to register for six credits of Summer Research hours each summer.
- All students are required to register in the semester of their defense. An exception is automatically granted if the defense takes place during the first week of classes and the student was registered during the previous semester.
- Registration for all courses must be complete before the end of the second week of the semester. An exception may be granted only in extenuating circumstances.
- The last day to drop courses is the end of the seventh week of classes. Students must maintain their required course-load. All full-time students must be registered for nine credit hours. An exception may only be granted in extenuating circumstances.
- The last day to select to audit a course is the end of the second week of the semester. Graduate students may not take a course pass/fail within their own department.

Additional registration requirements may be found in the [General Announcements](#).

### How to Register

#### ESTHER

To register for classes, add or drop courses, check your grade reports and degree requirement completion, make payments, or perform any number of self-serve functions, visit the [ESTHER](#) external link system.

Please note: Depending on the week of the semester, ESTHER'S functions may be limited. If you have questions regarding ESTHER, first check the ESTHER FAQ page, and then call (713 348-4999) or email the Office of the Registrar ([registrar@rice.edu](mailto:registrar@rice.edu)) for assistance.

What is ESTHER? ESTHER (Employee and Student Tools, Help, and Electronic Resources) is the web application for students, faculty, and staff. Students will use this application to register for classes and retrieve certain data such as grades and account information.

What can I do on ESTHER?

- Update your contact information
- Register, add, and drop courses



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- View your course schedule
- Access your final grades
- View your unofficial transcript
- Find if there are holds on your account
- Obtain enrollment verifications
- Print your degree application
- View financial aid information
- View your employment information, such as your past pay stubs (if applicable)
- Review charges and payments
- Pay your account online
- View Course & Instructor Evaluation comments for previous semesters

### How to Register for Classes:

Step 1: Select your courses.

Consult the Schedule of Courses to select courses. Use the Course Selection Worksheet PDF to organize your choices. For an explanation of the different kinds of courses, consult the Special Course Types page. Take note of the CRN (course reference number) for each course. Pay close attention to the prerequisites or Special Registration information for all your courses to ensure you have everything you need to register.

Step 2: Find out when to register.

Check the registration schedule to see when you can begin registering for classes.

Step 3: Reaffirm your commitment to the Honor Code.

Before you register each semester, you must reaffirm your commitment to Rice University's Code of Student Conduct, Honor System, and Alcohol Policy. To do this:

- Login to ESTHER. Go to Student Services & Account Information > Registration > Student Handbook Affirmation.
- Read over the policies and click I have read and accept.
- This will remove the "Honor Code" hold on your account, allowing you to register for classes.

Step 4: Make sure that there are no holds on your account.

- Login to Esther.
- Go to Student Services & Account Information > Student Records & Account Information > View Holds.
- If you have a hold on your account, please consult the Holds Page to see how to have the hold release

Step 5: Register for classes within the first week of registration.

- Login to ESTHER.
- Go to Student Services & Account Information > Registration > Register or Add/Drop Classes. Select the term for which you are registering.

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- Under Add Classes Worksheet, enter the CRN's of the courses for which you are registering. Click Submit Changes.
- If you receive an error message, consult the Common Registration Errors page to find out what to do about the error.
- Make sure you complete your registration within the first week of registration. If you fail to do so, you will incur a Late Registration Fee.

### Step 6: Special registration

Make sure that you fill out any Special Registration forms necessary and submit them in person to the Office of the Registrar.

## INFORMATION FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

### International Student Visa Classifications

Typically degree-seeking international students will come to study on an F-1 student visa and exchange students on a J-1 Exchange Visitor visa. To apply for an F-1 or J-1 visa, the student will need a 1-20 or DS-2019 immigration documents, respectively. Occasionally international students may study on other visa classifications, depending on their situation, so please check with an OISS advisor (Ben Colston, bcolston@rice.edu) if you plan to stay on your current visa classification.

### Obtaining a 1-20 or DS-2019 to apply for an F-1/J-1 visa

To issue a 1-20 or DS-2019, the student must first have been admitted to a program at Rice and have accepted the offer of admission. OISS will then receive documentation from the Admissions/Academic Departments regarding newly admitted international students. New international students need to provide the following:

- Copy of the passport identification page
- Completed International Financial Declaration Form along with supporting documentation
- DS-2019 Request Form (J-1 Students only)
- Foreign Student Transfer Release Form (if transferring from a US institution)

The Release Form is required for all students coming to Rice University directly from another U.S. institution. Please ask the International Student Advisor to assist you in completing the form and to set a Transfer Release Date in SEVIS for your record to be transferred to Rice. Please note OISS may only prepare a 1-20 after the SEVIS Release Date has passed.

## LEAVES

### Leave of Absence

A leave of absence is granted only by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies on the recommendation of the department chair and only to graduate students in good standing with the university. Students must obtain approval for a leave before the academic semester in question. These

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requests, approved by the department, must be received in the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies prior to the first day of classes.

Leaves are not granted after the first day of class in a given semester. Normally, students may take a leave of absence for no more than two consecutive semesters. The semesters that a student is on leave do not count against the time to candidacy or the time to defense. They do, however, count against the time to degree. Students must pay a reinstatement fee of \$100 on their return from an official leave.

### **Short-Term Medical and Parental Leave**

If a graduate student cannot fulfill the duties of his or her appointment due to a medical emergency or the adoption or birth of a child, enrollment and stipend support may be continued for up to six weeks or until the appointment expires (whichever occurs first).

### **Withdrawals**

Students who drop out of graduate school either before the term begins or during the term should inform their department in writing. The department should complete the Withdrawal Form (available at <http://graduate.rice.edu/forms>) and forward it, with the student's letter, to GPS.

If the student does not withdraw in writing, the student will be marked as "Did Not Return" after the second week classes in the semester. Students who later wish to resume study must reapply to the university. Readmission requires the recommendation of the department chair and the approval of Graduate Studies. Accepted students must pay a readmission fee of \$325.

When a Withdrawal Form and a letter are submitted to GPS, the Admissions and Enrollment Manager sends an e-mail to the appropriate administrative offices, stating that the student has withdrawn. If the student was receiving a stipend, the department must also send a terminating PA form to the Budget and Financial Aid Manager for processing. The Registrar inactivates the student's record. The Cashier handles any refunds to which the student is entitled.

### **Readmission**

Students who later wish to resume study after a voluntary withdrawal must reapply to the university. Readmission requires the recommendation of the department chair and the approval of the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies. Readmitted students must pay a readmission fee of \$325.

### **Medical Withdrawal**

Graduate students may request a medical withdrawal from the university by applying in writing to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at any time during the semester, up until the last day of classes.

Graduate students who wish to seek readmission following a medical withdrawal must submit to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies a written petition for readmission no later than July 1 (June 1 for international students) for the fall semester and November 1 (October 1 for international students) for the spring semester after the medical withdrawal. This petition must include documentation of treatment provided, and students may be required to interview with the director of the Rice Counseling Center or

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Student Health Services or their designees. The petition also must include an academic plan devised in consultation with the student's advisor, advising committee, or director of graduate studies (depending upon the graduate program's advising structure) and approved by the department chair.

Students who withdraw for psychological reasons within the last 5 weeks of either the fall or spring semester will not be eligible to apply for immediate readmission. Students who withdraw for psychological reasons while enrolled during the summer session are not eligible to apply for immediate readmission in the fall; they must wait to reapply for readmission for the spring semester.

Readmission requires the approval of the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies, and readmitted students must pay a readmission fee of \$325.

### **Involuntary Withdrawal**

The university may insist on a student's involuntary withdrawal if, in the judgment of the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies, or her/his designee, the student's behavior includes, but is not limited to, the following: Poses a threat to the safety or welfare of him/herself or other members of the Rice community; Has a serious medical or a psychological condition that the student cannot effectively address while enrolled or which is likely to be severely exacerbated by the Rice academic and/or living environment; Demonstrates behavior that seriously interferes with the education of other members of the Rice community; Is not able to continue functioning as a student. Following an involuntary withdrawal, graduate students who wish to seek readmission must submit a written petition for readmission to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies no later than July 1 (June 1 for international students) for the fall semester and November 1 (October 1 for international students) for the spring semester.

This petition must include documentation of treatment provided, and students may be required to interview with the director of the Rice Counseling Center or Student Health Services or their designees. The petition also must include an academic plan devised in consultation with the student's advisor, advising committee, or director of graduate studies (depending upon the graduate program's advising structure) and approved by the department chair.

Students who are involuntarily withdrawn for psychological reasons within the last 5 weeks of either the fall or spring semester will not be eligible to apply for immediate readmission. Students who withdraw for psychological reasons while enrolled during the summer session are not eligible to apply for immediate readmission in the fall; they must wait to reapply for readmission for the spring semester.

Readmission requires the approval of the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies, and readmitted students must pay a readmission fee of \$325. Further information is available by contacting the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

### **Vacation Policy**

Graduate students in Sociology are expected to fulfill their research assistant or teaching assistant duties approximately 48 weeks per year for 15-20 hours per week; with approximately four weeks of vacation time allowed. *Students should work with their advisors in advance to schedule time off.* We recommend that students need to seek approval from advisors at least four weeks in advance of requested time off to ensure that vacation timing does not conflict with research assistantship duties.

### DISABILITIES SUPPORT SERVICES

Students registered with DSS have a wide range of disabilities including learning disabilities, attention deficit disorders, physical or medical conditions, sensory loss, or psychiatric or psychological conditions, etc. DSS establishes eligibility for disability-related assistance, notifies and consults with faculty on needed accommodations, and provides adaptive equipment or resources as needed.

Rice University is committed to providing equal opportunity and access to the educational environment. Disability Support Services supports and implements federal guidelines included in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. DSS strives to make programs and facilities accessible to students with disabilities using a wide range of support services.

Disability Support Services works with community and state agencies such as the Texas Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to coordinate campus services for students with disabilities. For Houston area agencies, DSS will refer students as needed. Students from other states may want to contact their state vocational rehabilitation agencies if special equipment or services are needed while attending Rice University.

#### **Establishing eligibility as a student with a disability**

Disability Support Services will facilitate reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. A disability, as defined by federal law, is a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities such as walking, hearing, seeing or learning. A student requesting accommodations must self-identify and provide recent documentation of his or her disability to DSS. This documentation is used to establish the student as an individual with a disability, and provides rationale for reasonable accommodations.

New students are advised to contact DSS following admission to ensure eligibility is established and any needed, reasonable accommodations are evaluated and approved in a timely manner. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Students are encouraged to refer to the Disability Documentation Guidelines. These guidelines help students and their families know what information is needed to establish eligibility as a student with a disability that necessitates accommodations. For students who wish to document an Attention Deficit Disorder, the guidelines developed by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) are recommended. Refer to the ETS Resources for Test Takers with Disabilities at <http://www.ets.org>.

Director, Disability Support Services, Alan Russell  
Rice University MS-802  
P. O. Box 1892  
Houston, TX 77251-1892  
713/348-5841 (voice) 713/348-5888 (fax) Email: [adarice@rice.edu](mailto:adarice@rice.edu)

### YOUR HEALTH

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All degree-seeking students are required to maintain health insurance. Students who do not complete an Insurance Enrollment or Waiver form will have their account put on hold. If you already have health insurance and want to waive the Rice Plan, complete the Insurance Waiver form indicating that other coverage is in place.

**Health Insurance Frequently Asked Questions:** <http://graduate.rice.edu/healthinsurancefaq/>

**Rice University Student Health Insurance Plan:** <http://studenthealthinsurance.rice.edu/>

**Insurance Subsidy for Doctoral Students:** <http://graduate.rice.edu/healthsubsidy/>

### Payroll Deduction for Health Insurance

In order to alleviate the financial burden of the cost of health insurance, Rice offers a payroll deduction option for graduate students meeting these criteria:

- Full time graduate student
- Receiving a Rice stipend of at least \$5,000 per academic year over both fall and spring semesters
- Enrolled in the annual Rice medical insurance plan

In the payroll deduction option, insurance premiums will be taken in 15 equal deductions from the student's stipend checks, beginning with the September 30th check and ending with the April 30th check. If, for any reason, the student's stipend ends before the premiums have all been collected, the student is responsible for paying the balance due. Graduate students should look for this option when enrolling on-line for the Rice student health insurance plan.

Health Insurance Options for Early Matriculates: Health Service Fee for Summer Early Grad Matriculates

There is a mandatory \$123 Health Service fee for the summer semester for early matriculates. There is no discount for partial summer terms. This entitles the new student to access to the Health & Wellness Center, the Counseling Center, and to wellness programs. For more info, contact [hlsv@rice.edu](mailto:hlsv@rice.edu) or see [health.rice.edu](http://health.rice.edu).

Health Insurance Options for Summer Early Grad Matriculates

Proof of health insurance is required for all students at Rice University. The Rice medical insurance subsidy is only available to full-time doctoral students enrolled in the Rice Aetna plan upon official (fall) matriculation. If you have determined that your health insurance has expired you could:

Check with your current school or job to see if there is a continuation plan or COBRA that may be purchased. This may be preferred over purchasing a new plan for a short period of time. If your current insurance does not expire till August 15 or later, you would be fully covered until the Rice Plan starts in August, and would not need to purchase a new policy.

Early matriculating students will be eligible for the Student Assurance Services plans that are currently available for International Students. This is our recommended option. Students can register on line at <http://www.sas-mn.com/studentslookupl.php>. Choose "Texas" and then select "Rice University-International Students." Note that the material will indicate that these plans are designed for international

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students, but they are available for any early matriculating graduate student starting at Rice in the summer of 2010 and thereafter. Our service representative there is Paul Fisher, and he can be contacted at paul@psihealthplans.com, (830) 626-0360, or (210) 861-8696 (cell) if there are any questions or problems.

There are also other options available - such as the following:

<http://www.ehealthinsurance.com/ehi/Census.fs>

<https://www.temporaryinsurance.com/STMConsumer/Quote/ContentPages/StartQuote.aspx>.

These are not endorsed by Rice University, but may offer appropriate coverage for a particular student.

### GRADUATE STUDENT FINANCES

#### Stipends

Graduate stipends are distributed semi-monthly through the Rice payroll system. For payroll purposes, the fall semester begins on August 16th, first payday on August 30th; the spring semester begins on January 1st, first payday on January 15th. The last paycheck for the spring semester is issued on May 15th. If you will be receiving a stipend through your department, these must be completed in order for your check to be released on the appropriate payday:

- You must be registered full-time (at least 9 hours in fall/spring; 6 hours in summer) for the current semester in which you are receiving a student stipend.
- You may be asked to complete your [1-9](#), presenting original documents to your department coordinator or the Payroll Office.
- If you have not submitted to Payroll a [W-4](#) tax form, you will still receive pay, but taxes will be withheld at the highest rate.

For pay periods, see the Student Payroll Calendars on the Human Resources website at <http://professor.rice.edu/professor/Calendar10.asp>. Graduate stipends are paid on the GR payroll.

When you arrive on campus, you will be able to sign up for direct deposit of your paychecks and suppression of paper check stubs by submitting this form:

[http://professor.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/Professor/Finance/Controllers\\_Office/Student%20Direct%20Deposit%20Form.pdf](http://professor.rice.edu/uploadedFiles/Professor/Finance/Controllers_Office/Student%20Direct%20Deposit%20Form.pdf). Please note that you must attach a voided check from your checking account to this form.

For specific questions about your stipend not answered here, please contact your department graduate coordinator.

It is important to note that students who are judged to be not in good academic standing may have their stipends reduced or terminated, even if they are allowed to continue in the program. If a student is at risk of this, it will be clearly communicated in the annual evaluation letter from the DGS, as well as what the student needs to do to avoid stipend reductions or terminations.

### REQUIREMENTS FOR PHD IN SOCIOLOGY

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The PhD program is typically a five-year degree program during which students must complete 90 semester hours of graduate study. The course work is sequenced and is typically completed in two and a half years, at which point students should have completed their master's thesis and their MA degree. Students generally take the two comprehensive exams soon after the completion of the MA degree, and complete their dissertation in the next two years. The program is built on an apprentice model and students who receive funding are required to work on research or teaching tasks with a faculty member in the department for about twenty hours per week in addition to fulfilling course requirements. Such research assignments will be decided with the student's best interests in mind and will generally lead to research publications. Research assistant hours must be research or teaching hours with an advisor, and RA hours generally will not include time spent on independent research projects or the dissertation. In addition, students will complete one formal Teaching Assistant assignment during their five years.

Admission—Students are admitted on a competitive basis. Admitted students must have a baccalaureate degree (BA or BS) or equivalent, a minimum 3.0 (B) GPA in undergraduate work, and the intent to complete a PhD in sociology. The admissions committee considers GRE scores, undergraduate GPA, letters of recommendation, writing samples, a personal essay, and professional experience, and strongly encourages applications from women and minority groups. Students admitted to the program are generally offered financial support in the form of tuition scholarships and/or stipends for living expenses.

Academic Advising – Each first year student will be assigned a provisional advisor for the first year. The student will work with the advisor on research or teaching tasks for approximately twenty hours per week (a minimum of 15 hours a week). At the conclusion of the first semester, the student, advisor, and graduate committee will decide together whether the first-year advisor should remain the student's primary advisor throughout his or her graduate career. After the first year, students should feel free to consult with the DGS if they would like to change advisors, although these changes will normally only occur at the conclusion of each semester.

Informal Advising - Each first year student will be paired with a continuing student mentor. This informal relationship serves to help introduce the student to the department's policies, procedures, and social life, and is intended to ease the transition into graduate school.

### **Required Courses**

Our program offers specialized training in the following areas: Race/Ethnicity, Urban and Community, Population Health, Religion and Culture, and Gender.

Required courses include:

- UNIV 500 (or 501): Principles of Effective College Teach-in (3 credit)
- SOCI 526: Contemporary Social Theory
- SOCI 541: Qualitative Research Methods
- SOCI 580: Classical Social Theory
- SOCI 5XX: Research Design
- SOCI 582: Quantitative Data Analysis I
- SOCI 583: Quantitative Data Analysis II
- SOCI 596: Statistical computer programming (1 credit)
- SOCI 610: Professionalization Workshop (1 credit)

Additional Courses:



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- SOCI 605: Non-Thesis Graduate Research
- SOCI 606: Thesis Seminar
- SOCI 700: Doctoral Research

The sequence of courses will normally be as follows:

First Semester:

- Classical Social Theory or Contemporary Social Theory
- Elective 1 or Qualitative Methods
- Elective 2

Second Semester

- Quantitative Data Analysis I
- Statistical computer programming (1-credit course)
- Research Design
- Qualitative Research Methods or Elective

Third Semester:

- Contemporary Social Theory or Classical Social Theory
- Quantitative Data Analysis II
- University 500

Fourth Semester:

- Thesis Seminar
- Electives (at least 1, and you may take courses at other campuses or in other departments)
- University 501 (only if unable to take 500 in the third semester)

Semesters 5-10: Electives, Comprehensive Exams, and Dissertation

### **Professionalization Workshop**

All graduate students will be required to attend the Professionalization Workshop (SOC 610), which the department will hold throughout the academic school year. With 8-10 meetings per year, these will cover a wide range of topics designed to help students prepare for the variety of roles and obligations involved with an academic career. Topics may include writing a CV, preparing for academic job interviews, and applying for grants. The Director of Graduate Studies generally plans these workshops. Students should register for SOC 610 each semester (up to six semesters), and will receive one credit per semester for a total of six credits.

### **Additional Courses**

Until students have passed both comprehensive exams and defended the dissertation proposal, they must enroll in at least one substantive departmental course each semester (e.g. one “on the books” course, generally an elective). Additional options (beyond substantive courses) include SOC 606, MA Thesis Research, in which students may enroll for 3 hours in up to two semesters. Students also may enroll in SOC 605, “Non-Thesis Graduate Research,” which generally takes the form of an independent reading course with a professor (usually to prepare for comprehensive exams).

### Coursework

Sociology students must maintain a minimum GPA of 2.66 (or a B-) in all required courses. Please note that this is higher than the 2.33 GPA required by the graduate school guidelines to avoid academic probation. In addition, if a student receives a grade lower than a B- in any required course, he/she may retake the course in question once more. If the student again receives a grade lower than a B-, the student is not making satisfactory progress and will be dismissed from the program. After the first grade in a required course below a B-, the student, his/her advisor, and the Director of Graduate Studies will meet to make a plan to assist the student in making adequate progress.

### Master's Thesis

In addition to required course work, graduate students must also write and orally defend a master's thesis. This should be a publishable length paper, suitable for submission to a scholarly research journal shortly after it is defended. The master's thesis committee will be comprised of three tenured or tenure-track sociology faculty. There will be four possible outcomes of the Master's Thesis Defense Examination: (1) High Pass with Distinction, receive Master's degree and continue in the PhD program; (2) Pass, receive Master's degree and continue in the PhD program; (3) low pass, receive Master's Degree, and leave the program; and (4) fail and leave the program.

### Comprehensive Exams

Students will be required to take comprehensive exams that demonstrate their expertise in two of the following five areas: 1) Race, Ethnicity, and Immigration, 2) Urban and Community, 3) Population Health, 4) Religion and Culture, or 5) Gender.

The two comprehensive exams are a significant academic milestone to progressing in the Rice University Sociology Ph.D. program, a standard and time-tested means of demonstrating overarching knowledge of a field. The knowledge gained from preparing for and taking these exams will serve students for a lifetime. The exams are the last step before the dissertation to obtaining a Ph.D., and the department's last opportunity to assess a student's more general knowledge of the field. Therefore, the exams should only be taken after a significant period of coursework and study, and in consultation with the sociology faculty (most especially, a student's primary advisor as well as the Director of Graduate Studies). Demonstration of expertise means that students should be able to: a) summarize basic questions, issues, and debates within each specialty area; b) compare and contrast basic theoretical orientations and middle-range theories in each area; c) understand and apply methodological approaches specific to each substantive area; and d) develop specific policy implications of theory and research in each area.

Comprehensive exams will be offered usually in July and December of each calendar year, but this is negotiated within each committee and the DGS. Successful defense of the Master's Thesis should normally be completed before students pursue planning for their comprehensive exam. Each concentration is responsible for the reading list and content of the exam, but all will consist of a timed, closed-note and closed-book written exam, followed shortly thereafter by an oral exam administered by the exam committee for each concentration. The standard timeline for taking the two comprehensive exams will be: One in December of the third year; and the second the next July (following the completion of the third year). Students may petition the Director of Graduate Studies to take the exams

sooner, or to take two exams at once, with the permission of their advisor. However, it is the department's recommendation that students take one at a time and on the standard timeline outlined above.

### Comprehensive Exam Procedure

Once the student and advisor have agreed upon the exam dates, please inform the Graduate Coordinator (currently Shirley Tapscott), the Director of Graduate Studies, and the chair of the relevant comps committee (see below) by sending an email and CC'ing all three people. The Graduate Coordinator will work with the student and the committee to schedule a time and quiet place (on-campus) to take the exam, and the student will use a departmental laptop provided for the purpose of taking comprehensive exams. Please note that all exams are closed-note and closed-book. A copy of the reading list will be provided by the committee for use during the exam, but no other materials will be allowed. One-to-two business days after submitting the answers to the written exam, the comps committee will convene and conduct the oral exam. The chair of the committee will provide a student with a copy of her written exams the day of the oral for reference during the oral portion of the examination. After the oral exam, students will wait outside the exam room while the faculty determines the grade of the exam. Students will then be called back into the exam room and will be told their grade.

### Grading

Comprehensive exams in our department may receive one of four grades; High Pass; Pass; Conditional Fail (opportunity to retake or revise); and Fail and Leave the Program. Although the exam may consist of several questions, or parts, and is comprised of a written and an oral portion, only one total grade will be received. If a student receives a grade of Conditional Fail, she may be asked to revise one or more of the written answers, or to retake a new exam. This decision will be at the discretion of the Comprehensive Examination committee.

Comps Chairs:

- Gender – Bridget Gorman
- Population Health – Rachel Kimbro
- Race/Ethnicity and Immigration – Jenifer Bratter
- Religion and Culture – Elaine Howard Ecklund
- Urban and Community – Ruth Lopez Turley

### Teaching

In order to fulfill the teaching requirements of the PhD program students will need to act as a TA for **at least two courses as well as possible teaching to help the major advisor** and take a three-credit course offered by the Center of Teaching Excellence on either the Principles for Effective College Teaching (UNIV 500) or Research on teaching and learning (UNIV 501). If students so choose, they may participate in the Certificate in teaching and learning program offered by the CTE, which would include taking these courses in addition to others (see <http://cte.rice.edu/for-graduate-students-postdoctoral-scholars/> for details). After acting as a TA twice and taken the appropriate teaching courses, post-MA students may also apply to teach their own courses or teach a course that is currently on the books. The syllabus for the course that a student wishes to teach must be provided one year in advance of the course

and must be approved by both the Director of Graduate Studies and the Director of Undergraduate Studies and the course must fulfill a department need. If a student is past the fifth year, teaching in the department would be compensated with pay. The possibility of teaching for salary will vary from year to year and depends on availability of funds and teaching needs of the department. Salary fluctuates so please see the department coordinator for specifics.

### **TAship**

During the semesters that a student acts as a TA she will need to spend about 5-10 hours a week (at the discretion of the instructor) in teaching-related activities for a course and the rest of the time in research. The student will be assigned a course to teach that is in line with her own interests as well as the needs of the department. Students may also provide minor help with a course other semesters but semesters that a student is not an official TA for a course should be devoted primarily to research with the research supervisor. The TAship typically includes a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 3 independent lectures (for MWF or TTh classes), or a maximum of two lectures (for once-per-week courses), office hours, and substantial grading. The faculty member who supervises the student's TAship is required to provide an evaluation of performance to the graduate committee.

*Timing of the TA-ship.* Normally, graduate students would first TA during their third or fourth semester (i.e. during their second year in the program). These appointments are assigned by the DGS and generally students are assigned to assist faculty teaching required or large under courses. For the second TA-ship, students must consult with their faculty adviser for the appropriate timing. These second appointments may involve greater degree of responsibility on the part of the student, such as multiple guest lectures, organization of lecture content, and meetings with students.

### **Advance to Candidacy**

Upon completion of both the comprehensive examinations and the dissertation prospectus defense, the faculty will vote on whether to grant PhD candidacy to the student. Rice University rules require that PhD candidacy **MUST** be achieved prior to the student's ninth semester. This includes defending the proposal and filing the appropriate paperwork.

### **Student Assessment and Evaluation**

Students will be evaluated on an on-going basis throughout the program. It is strongly suggested that students write a short, weekly report describing their research or teaching progress to their advisor. On an annual basis, students must turn in a personal evaluation form (the template will be provided by the graduate program administrator) and updated curriculum vitae. All faculty will evaluate each student during an all-department meeting. The Director of Graduate Studies will then provide a written letter establishing the student's progress and documenting any areas of needed improvement. A copy of this letter will be provided to the student's advisor and the Sociology Graduate Coordinator. After this, the student will meet with the primary faculty advisor to discuss the evaluation.

At the end of the second semester, faculty will convene and vote on whether to advance first year students to the second year of the program. This decision will be based on (1) quality of completed coursework and grades and (2) faculty reviews of individual student progress, and it will be conveyed to the students at the end of the second semester.

In all subsequent years, and for all students not making adequate progress, the annual letter of evaluation will include specific recommendations for the student to improve. In addition, the letter will be explicit about the program's expectations for their progress, and if necessary, that stipend reductions or terminations, as well as dismissal from the program, are options if adequate progress continues to not be made.

### **Second Year: Completion of the Master's Thesis and Degree Requirements**

Normally, the oral defense of the master's thesis will occur in the spring semester of the second year. Students who do not defend their MA thesis by the end of their fifth semester will be at risk of not making adequate progress in the program. Regardless of the timing of the defense, students should *file* for candidacy by the beginning of the Spring semester of their second year.

### **Third Year: Comprehensive Examinations and Dissertation Proposal**

In addition to completing the third-year course sequence, graduate students must also pass written exams in two substantive areas. The next step is for students to prepare a dissertation proposal which must be publicly defended. Upon completion of both the comprehensive examinations and the dissertation proposal defense, the faculty will vote on whether to grant PhD candidacy to the student.

### **Dissertation**

After PhD candidacy is granted, students will commence work on their dissertation. Each dissertation committee will be comprised of at least three tenured or tenure-track faculty members, including one outside faculty member from another department. Students may add additional faculty members to their committee from outside Rice, but three Rice faculty must be on the committee (two from the sociology department and one from a different Rice department). The key members of this committee will meet annually with the student to examine his or her research progress and provide a written evaluation of the student's progress. The dissertation itself must follow a three-paper or book format, unless the student petitions for a different format (possible other formats might include visual media components) and that format is approved by the department chair, with dissertation committee support. Finally, the candidate must pass a public oral examination, defending his or her dissertation, in order to obtain the PhD degree.

### **Public Lecture for Final Year PhD Candidates**

Students who have achieved candidacy are obligated to give a lecture in the department (coordinated with the Sociology Colloquium series) during the semester they anticipate going on the job market. This is a 40 minute lecture that is modelled after an academic job talk. These lectures will be hosted by the department and include faculty and graduate students as audience members. Students must have this completed before defending their dissertation, even if not applying for a university position.

## MASTER'S AND PHD THESIS INFORMATION

### **Approval of PhD and Master's Candidacy**

Candidacy marks a midpoint in the course of graduate education. Achieving candidacy for the PhD signals that a graduate student has: (a) completed required course work, (b) passed required exams to

demonstrate his/her comprehensive grasp of the subject area, (c) demonstrated the ability for clear oral and written communication, and (d) shown the ability to carry on scholarly work in his/her subject area.

Students must file their applications for approval of PhD and MA/MS candidacy in the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies on or before November 1 for January conferral and on or before February 1 for May conferral. Students may take the final oral examination in defense of their thesis only after the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies approves their candidacy. PhD students must be approved for candidacy before the beginning of the ninth semester of their enrollment at Rice.

### **Thesis Committee**

The thesis committee administers the oral examination for the student's thesis defense and has final approval/disapproval authority and responsibility for the written thesis.

A thesis committee is composed of at least three members. Two, including the committee chair, must be members of the student's department faculty; in doctoral thesis committees one member must have his or her primary appointment in another department within the university. At least three members of the committee must meet one of the following requirements:

- Tenured or tenure-track members of the Rice faculty
- Research faculty holding the rank of faculty fellow, senior faculty fellow, or distinguished faculty fellow
- Faculty who have been certified as thesis committee members by the dean of graduate and postdoctoral studies

The composition of the thesis committee must always meet the guidelines mentioned above. The committee chair need not be the thesis director. The chair, however, must be either a tenured or tenure-track member of the major department or a research faculty member of the major department. Additional members of the committee, who may or may not meet the above criteria, may be selected with the approval of the department chair. These would be in addition to the three required members.

Candidates are responsible for keeping the members of their committee informed about the nature and progress of their research. They also must establish a schedule for thesis completion and review. The members of the committee, in turn, should review the thesis in a timely manner, approving a preliminary form of the thesis before scheduling the oral examination.

### **Dissertation Proposal**

Unlike advancing to MA candidacy, advancing to PhD candidacy involves the public defense of a thesis proposal. This is routinely a closed hearing with the student and their committee where they present the scope of their project, its significance and connection to the larger literature, the specific questions and associated research methods employed to conduct the research, and a timeline for completion. While students should work with their adviser and chair on the exact format, the following are guidelines that students are encouraged to follow. This document should be approximately 20-25 pages in length including: an abstract (500-700 words), background literature review of the area related to central topic (about 5-7 pages), motivating theoretical and empirical rationale, central research questions, assertion of

data collection or description of secondary data source, rationale for how data collection or data sources will allow answer to research question, and detailed timeline for completion of work. If relevant, rationale for funding needed and plan to achievement.

### **Announcement of Thesis Defenses (PhD and MA)**

Oral examinations for the **doctoral degree** must be announced at least two weeks in advance. Oral examination announcements are to be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by entering the information into the Graduate Students Thesis Defense Announcement form at <http://events.rice.edu/rgs>. An automatically generated email will be sent to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Oral examinations for the **master's degree** must be announced at least one week in advance in the same manner as the doctoral defense.

### **Oral Examination in Defense of Thesis**

The public oral defense of a thesis is intended to be an examination of a completed body of work and should be scheduled only when the dissertation or Master's Thesis is essentially completed. At least one copy of the thesis must be available in the departmental office not less than two calendar weeks prior to the date of the oral defense. The length of the oral examination and the subject matter on which the candidate is questioned are left to the judgment of the committee. The defense should be scheduled by the student after consultation with the thesis advisor, who agrees that the thesis is completed and ready to be defended. All members of the thesis committee must be present for the oral defense. A candidate must be enrolled in the semester in which his or her oral examination is held. Students who defend during the summer must enroll in the summer session of classes. For the purpose of the oral defense only, enrollment in a semester is considered valid through the Friday of the first week of class of the following semester. Students passing the oral examination on or before the end of the first week of classes of any semester do not have to register for that or any subsequent semester even though they may be continuing to make minor revisions to the final copy of their thesis. Should a candidate fail, the committee chair may schedule a second examination. Students who fail a second time must withdraw from the university.

Students must send a copy of their approval of candidacy form, signed by the thesis committee signifying successful defense of the thesis, to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies within one week after the oral examination. The original approval of candidacy form must be turned in when the thesis is submitted.

No later than six months from the date of the examination, candidates who successfully passed the oral examination in defense of the thesis must submit two signed copies of the thesis to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. If the thesis is not ready for final signature by the end of the six-month period, the "pass" will be revoked and an additional oral defense will need to be scheduled. Applications for an extension without reexamination must be made by the candidate with the unanimous support of the thesis committee, endorsed by the school dean, and approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Extensions of this six-month period for completion without reexamination will be granted only in rare circumstances. PhD students must defend their theses before the end of the 16th semester of their

residency at Rice. Master's students must defend their theses before the end of the eighth semester of their residency at Rice.

### **Thesis Regulations and Procedures**

The thesis is the principal record of a student's work for an advanced degree. It is permanently preserved in the library. Instructions for thesis submission and guidelines for thesis formatting are provided by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies at the time of approval of candidacy. Additional copies of these instructions are available from the [Office of Graduate and Postgraduate Studies](#) and can also be accessed on their website.

Students must have the original signatures of their thesis committee on two title pages of their dissertation. Students submitting a dissertation for the PhD or DMA must fill out a Survey of Earned Doctorates form.

All students submitting theses, whether for master's or doctoral degrees, must complete a University Microfilms International (UMI) contract. Students must pay their fees for microfilming and binding their theses to the cashier before submitting the two copies to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies for approval. Students have six months from the date of their defense to submit their thesis. However, in order to qualify for a given commencement, they must meet the submission deadline for that commencement per the Academic Calendar.

### **Candidacy**

In thesis programs, the attainment of candidacy marks the completion of all requirements for the degree other than those related to research leading to the writing, submission, and defense of the thesis.

### **Candidacy Petitions**

Each thesis student must petition for candidacy. Petitions for candidacy are available at: <http://graduate.rice.edu/forms/>. Students may take the final oral examination in defense of their thesis only after the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies approves their candidacy.

### **Time Boundaries and Deadlines for Petitioning for Candidacy**

PhD students must be approved for candidacy before the beginning of the ninth semester of their residency at Rice. Master's students must be approved for candidacy before the beginning of the fifth semester of their residency at Rice. Additionally, if a student plans to defend and submit a thesis for the next degree conferral, students must file their applications for approval of PhD and M.A./M.S. candidacy in the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies before November 1 for mid-year conferral and before March 1 for May conferral.

When candidacy is approved, a thesis committee consisting of at least three tenured or tenure track faculty or research fellows is appointed. This committee is responsible for reviewing the thesis and for examining the candidate on the subject matter contained therein. Almost all other actions necessary for final completion of the remaining degree requirements is the sole responsibility of the candidate. Some of these responsibilities are listed below in the order in which they need to be undertaken. Resources for thesis defense and thesis submission are available at: <http://graduate.rice.edu/thesis/>



### The Candidate's Responsibilities

Consult with members of the Thesis Committee about the nature and progress of research as the project develops.

NOTE: The writing of the thesis should be a serious concern. Correct grammar and spelling, as well as logical organization and a clear, literate prose style are expected. Guidelines for thesis format are available on the GPS website.

### Oral Defense

The public oral defense of a thesis is intended to be an examination of a completed body of work and should be scheduled only when the dissertation is essentially completed. At least one copy of the thesis must be available in the departmental office not less than two calendar weeks prior to the date of the oral defense. The length of the oral examination and the subject matter on which the candidate is questioned are left to the judgment of the committee. The defense should be scheduled by the student after consultation with the thesis advisor, who agrees that the thesis is completed and ready to be defended. All members of the thesis committee must be present for the oral defense. A candidate must be enrolled in the semester in which his or her oral examination is held. Students who defend during the summer must enroll in the summer session of classes. For the purpose of the oral defense only, enrollment in a semester is considered valid through the Friday of the first week of class of the following semester. Students passing the oral examination on or before the end of the first week of classes of any semester do not have to register for that or any subsequent semester even though they may be continuing to make minor revisions to the final copy of their thesis.

### Time Boundaries

PhD students must defend their theses before the end of the sixteenth semester of their residency at Rice. Master's students must defend their theses before the end of the eighth semester of their residency at Rice, but please note that our department expects that students will not take more than three and ideally two years to complete this step. Additional information on time boundaries for graduate students at Rice may be found here -<http://graduate.rice.edu/boundaries/>.

### Procedures

1. Schedule the final oral examination in defense of thesis to take place at a time agreeable to all members of the committee. Be sure to consult the deadlines listed in the Academic Calendar to ensure that you meet the defense deadline for commencement. In order to graduate, the final thesis must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies before noon on the deadline listed in the Academic Calendar (or six months after the oral defense, whichever occurs first).
2. Arrange for public notice to appear prior to the oral examination. For the doctoral degree, the examination must be publicly announced. Students should note that announcements should be made at least two weeks before the scheduled defense. Defense announcements can be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies by filling out the following form: <http://events.rice.edu/rgs/>. In appropriate circumstances an oral examination for the PhD may be scheduled during the summer, and the procedure for posting of notice is the same as during the regular school year.

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For the master's degree, public notice of the oral examination should be posted one week prior to the defense via <http://events.rice.edu/rgs/>.

3. The Original Approval of Candidacy form (initials in the top right corner will be in red) will be sent to your department as soon as the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies receives the defense announcement. The members of your committee must sign the Candidacy form. If your thesis committee has changed since you achieved candidacy, the candidacy form must be revised prior to your defense.

4. Within a week after the final oral examination in defense of thesis is passed, a copy of the Approval of Candidacy form, signed (and dated) by the thesis committee, to the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies (MS-13) must be submitted [online](#). This signifies a successful defense of the thesis. Students passing the oral examination on or before the end of the first week of classes of any semester do not have to register for that or any subsequent semester even though they may be continuing to make minor revisions to the final copy of their thesis. Following the successful passing of the oral examination in defense of the thesis, two signed copies (with original signatures) of the thesis must be submitted [online](#) to Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies no later than six months from the date of the examination, if committee members will be unavailable at the time of thesis submission, arrangements must be made in advance for the title pages to be prepared. Suggestions for completing this title page are available on this website and with your department coordinator. Students who wish to graduate in a particular semester are also subject to the deadlines found in the academic calendar.

If you will not be registered during this six month period, but still need access to the Rice Network, this is option now available. Please visit this link for assistance.

5. Prepare the final copy of the thesis in accordance with instructions contained in the document entitled "Thesis Format." Note: The Thesis Format instructions are good practice guidelines.

Once the final copy of the thesis is prepared, it must be submitted to the Office of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies. Thesis submission hours are Monday - Friday 1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. or by appointment. Thesis submission hours are expanded during the two weeks prior to a semester deadline. Please note the GPS Office is closed between Noon and 1:00 pm each day.

### **Thesis Format**

After reviewing these guidelines, if doubt exists as to the correct format of the thesis, the candidate is encouraged to consult with the Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies Office before the final copies are printed. Make sure to consult the GPS office website to determine all formatting guidelines for the thesis.

Thesis Template Library: <http://graduate.rice.edu/thesistemp/>

### **Thesis Submission**

No later than six months from the date of the examination, candidates who successfully passed the oral examination in defense of the thesis must submit two unbound copies with original signatures of the thesis to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. If the thesis is not ready for final signature by the end of the six-month period, the "pass" will be revoked and an additional oral defense will need to be scheduled. Applications for an extension without reexamination must be made by the candidate with the

unanimous support of the thesis committee, endorsed by the school dean, and approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. If the end of the sixth months falls on a weekend or holiday, the thesis is due on the business day preceding the deadline. Extensions of this six-month period for completion without reexamination will be granted only in rare circumstances.

If you will not be registered during this six month period, but still need access to the Rice Network, this is now available.

All Forms: <http://graduate.rice.edu/forms/>

### DEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT FOR TRAVEL AND RESEARCH EXPENSES

#### Travel Support

A core part of the graduate student experience is students' presenting their work and engaging with scholars at academic conferences. The department offers some support for travel and this represents one of several options students seeking support may pursue. Below is a summary of the travel policy for the department. Please see the department's Owl-Space page for more details on making travel arrangements.

**What does travel funding cover?** Support for travel may be extended to cover some or all of the following travel-related expenses: hotels or other lodging arrangements, airline flights to and from the destination, mileage for gas to and from the destination, parking, public transit tickets, and/or taxis. In the event of a conference or course, travel funding may also cover the costs of registration or attendance. In some instances, per diem travel support may be available to cover the costs of meals.

**Identifying a funding source.** There are multiple avenues by which students may obtain funding for travel. It is important to note that students must identify a funding source and what it will cover prior to making travel arrangements in order to receive support from the department.

**Departmental Travel Fund.** The department will fund student travel in the case that students are on the conference program to present an co/authored paper for up to \$750 per visit. Students may access this option up to (but no more than) three times during their tenure as graduate students of the program. Students who wish to use the departmental travel fund will need to obtain the paper application, which is available under the "Resources" tab on the Sociology Graduate Students Owlspace page. This form must be filled out, signed by the student's academic adviser, and returned to the Department Administrator (Terri Arellano) in order for a student's request for funding to be considered. Along with the application, students should attach any relevant supporting documents that outline why they are traveling and/or what they are doing (e.g., presenting a paper at a conference). It is important to note that submitting an application for departmental funding does not guarantee travel support. These applications will be reviewed by the Director of Graduate Studies and the Department Administrator will notify students of the outcome.

**Adviser Provided Travel Support** Students should discuss with their academic adviser whether travel support is available for each travel event. If a student's adviser had agreed to provide travel support for a particular trip, the student should then discuss with their adviser the amount of funding that will be provided for the trip (e.g., a lump sum) and/or what expenses will and will not be covered. Prior to

making travel plans, the student should email the Department Administrator (Terri Arellano) to notify her that the student's adviser will be funding their travel expenses. The student's adviser should be copied (CCed) on this email.

**Student Grants.** Students who wish to use their own grant accounts to fund their travel do not need to obtain approval to do so. Students should notify the Department Administrator of the funding source when turning in receipts for reimbursement or assistance in ensuring that the receipts are returned to the foundation or agency in the case of an external grant.

**Non-Departmental Funding:** For any other funding sources, please follow the appropriate procedures for using funding and obtaining reimbursement. The Department Administrator is not involved with travel funding procedures when funds are provided from outside the department.

### Research Support

In addition to the above support related to travel, the department also offers a small amount of support for research related expenses up to the amount of \$750 per student. The application can be found on-line at the Sociology Graduate Student Owl-Space page under the Resources tab in the "Internal Funding Application" folder. This fund provides financial support for research-related expenses incurred by PhD students conducting Master's or Dissertation projects. Research-related expenses refer to monies spent on data collection or analysis and include items such as transcription of interviews, providing incentives, or the procurement of a secondary dataset. This fund does not cover travel-related expenses to a conference or another professional meeting, research that is not related to the student's thesis or dissertation, nor can it be used to support a project where someone other than the applicant is the primary investigator.

Each student may apply for a total of \$750 during his or her time in the program. This may be divided up across several applications or applied for in one lump sum. Approval of funds is contingent on the strength of the application and the availability of funding in the current fiscal year. The deadline is rolling so students may apply for this at any point they wish.

### WARNING, PROBATION AND DISQUALIFICATION

Please check the GPS office website for most recent guidelines. The GPS office current guidelines take precedence over this handbook.

The following guidelines were adopted to assure fairness in problem resolution for graduate students at Rice University. The first goal is to obtain compliance with Rice's policies while striving to uphold standards and raise the quality of graduate programs. The second goal is to provide graduate students with an environment that has high standards, clear assessments of their achievements, and fair and transparent procedures for handling cases of inadequate academic progress.

### DISMISSAL

The two most common grounds for dismissal of a graduate student are (1) inadequate academic progress, or (2) a disciplinary violation resulting in a University sanction.

Graduate students whose cumulative grade point average or the average for the most recently completed semester (including the summer semester) falls below 2.66 are placed on probationary status; many

programs have stricter standards. Probationary status applies if this grade standard has not been met. Students must be notified in writing of their probationary status. The period of probation extends to the end of the next semester in which the student is enrolled. Once students are placed on probationary status, they have one semester to improve their grades. If the next semester again results in grade point average below the required grade, the student will be immediately dismissed without further warning. Students will be notified once final grades have been received and posted to their records. S/U grades cannot be used to end probationary status.

Graduate programs must provide students upon entry to the program with detailed requirements, deadlines, and other program policies. Students are then responsible for meeting program and university requirements in their program of education. A student who is failing to meet departmental or university requirements, such as failing to meet grade requirements, failing to pass required examinations by the required time, or failing to advance to candidacy or defend her/his thesis within the required time, is subject to dismissal without further warning.

When a student is judged not to be making adequate academic progress, he or she must be warned in writing of the possibility of dismissal and given clear information about what must be done within a specified time period to alleviate the problem. These expectations must be reasonable and consistent with expectations held for all students similarly situated in the program. If the student does not meet the stated requirements within the time frame specified, he or she will be dismissed by the graduate program.

It is difficult to give a precise and general definition of "adequate academic progress" for graduate students, due to the variation in requirements among different graduate programs. Nevertheless, some general principles do apply. For example, most graduate programs consist of two stages. The first stage, preceding candidacy, typically consists of explicit requirements and milestones, such as course requirements, exams, research projects, and the like. In this stage, adequate academic progress typically means compliance with the requirements and milestones of the program, as well as research progress when applicable. The second stage, post-candidacy, is often referred to as "all but dissertation" (ABD). In this stage, graduate students are expected to conduct research and write and defend their theses/dissertations. As the second stage typically lacks explicit intermediate milestones, it is harder to assess academic progress during this stage. It is extremely important, therefore, for graduate programs to make their expectations explicit for post-candidacy graduate students.

Post-candidacy graduate students often enroll only in research courses. Such courses can offer standard letter grades or satisfactory/unsatisfactory (S/U) grades. Grading mode, however, must be uniform within a section of a research course. Thus, all students in such a section should receive letter grades or all should receive S/U grades.

Graduate programs must establish mechanisms for tracking, reviewing, and documenting academic progress of graduate students on an ongoing basis and must provide graduate students a written assessment of their academic progress at least annually. In some graduate programs this ongoing progress review is carried out by a student's thesis committee, while in others it is carried out by a standing faculty committee. Although a student's supervisor plays an important role in reviewing the student's academic progress, the responsibility for conducting the review process lies with the program and requires the involvement of additional faculty members in the program. For graduate students who are primarily

engaged in coursework, for example, professional master's students, the transcript is an adequate form of written assessment.

Dismissal of a graduate student requires that the student be notified of his/her dismissal from the graduate program. Such a notice is distinct from any earlier warning, which lets the student know of the possibility of dismissal. All dismissal notices, as well as warnings of possible dismissal, must be in writing, with a copy sent to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. Email communication is considered to be "in writing". (Academic units should archive copies of all email communications pertaining to student dismissal.)

Because of the serious consequences of dismissal from a graduate program, dismissed students must receive a 15-day notice of the dismissal. **Such a notice may precede the trigger for the dismissal. For example, a program can notify a student 15 days before an examination that failure to pass the examination with a certain minimal grade would result in dismissal.** In general, dismissal should not take effect during a semester in which the student is enrolled. Dismissals that take effect during a semester are exceptional and must be approved by the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. A dismissal will be held in abeyance until the petition and appeal process is concluded, as students may petition for a dismissal to be revoked as described below.

Graduate students often receive financial support in the form of graduate stipend and tuition waivers. The termination of financial support to a graduate student, while not equivalent to dismissal, is a serious action that could deprive students of their financial ability to continue graduate studies. Consequently, the procedure to terminate a student's financial support before the end of the financial-support commitment period should be analogous to those for dismissal as described above.

Active participation in required academic activities (for example, laboratory work in certain science and engineering programs) is a basic condition for continued financial support. Students who are absent from such required activities for contiguous two weeks without permission and without mitigating circumstances may be subject to termination of financial support. In addition, they may be judged to be not making adequate academic progress. Thus, if absences have to occur, they must be pre-arranged with the student's supervisor, except for medical and family emergencies, in which cases timely notification is required. Graduate advisors and programs should be aware of unexplained student absences and must provide immediate written warnings when students are not present and carrying out required academic activities for more than one week.

When the source of a graduate stipend is an externally sponsored research grant, the principal investigator is responsible for certifying that compensation paid to those who are supported by the grant faithfully corresponds to actual effort in carrying out the sponsored research. This process is referred to as "effort certification." The requirements above to give students warnings and notices before dismissal or termination of stipend are separate and independent of the effort-certification requirement. If a principal investigator determines that a graduate student is not contributing to the sponsored project that is the source of the student's stipend, then the charge for the affected pay period must be reallocated to another fund by the program.

### **PETITIONS and APPEALS**

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Graduate students may petition for exceptions to academic requirements, regulations, and judgments. A course requirement is an example of an academic requirement. Allowed time to degree is an example of an academic regulation. Course grades and dismissals from programs are examples of academic judgments.

In general, petitions will be handled at the lowest appropriate level. A petition regarding requirements, regulations, or judgments of a graduate program will be handled at that level, that is, by the program. Such petitions need to follow procedures established by these programs. A petition regarding University requirements, regulations, or judgment must be submitted to the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies; such a petition must be accompanied by a recommendation from the program. When the program's recommendation is negative, or when the petition requests a major exception—for example, an extension of allowed time to degree by more than 1/2 semester—the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies may also obtain the recommendation of the school overseeing the program (when relevant) and the Graduate Council with regard to such petitions.

Petitions for exceptions to academic requirements, regulations, and judgments should be viewed as unusual, rather than typical. Extensions of various time limits, such as time to candidacy or time to defense, will not be granted routinely. Students requesting such extensions have to document the unusual circumstances justifying their request, demonstrate their academic progress towards the goal, and provide a concrete plan for meeting the goal within the requested extension.

Petitions regarding academic decisions must be submitted in writing within 15 days from the time that the student knew or should reasonably have known of the decision being petitioned, or within 15 days after an informal effort to resolve the situation has not been successful. Petitions seeking exceptions to academic requirements or regulations should be submitted in writing at least 30 days before the requirement or regulation takes effect. For example, a petition to extend allowed time to degree should be submitted at least 30 days before the deadline in effect. Late petitions may be dismissed, except for unusual situations when a delay is found justifiable by the unit receiving the petition. Petitions must be acknowledged in writing immediately upon their receipt by the receiving unit. Email communication is considered to be "in writing".

A student (or other parties affected by the decision) is allowed only one level of appeal from a decision regarding a petition. In general, the appeal process will be resolved at the lowest level possible. When the petition is decided at the department level, the appeal must be submitted to the school. When the petition is decided at a school level, the appeal must be handled by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies. When the petition is decided by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the appellant may submit an appeal to the Provost. An appeal must be submitted within 15 days from receipt of the decision that is being appealed. Late appeals will be dismissed, except for unusual situations when a delay is justified. Appeals must be acknowledged in writing immediately upon their receipt by the receiving unit. Email communication is considered to be "in writing".

A petition/appeal should indicate the requirement, regulation, or judgment that is the subject of the petition/appeal, the specific exception requested, and the grounds for the request. An appeal must indicate why the decision involving the earlier petition was incorrectly decided. Grounds for a petition/appeal could be procedural errors by academic or administrative personnel or special circumstances found to be mitigating by the unit receiving the petition/appeal. Disagreement over evaluation of academic quality

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will not be considered as an appropriate basis for petitions/appeals unless the evaluation is found to be patently unreasonable by the unit receiving the petition/appeal. Petitions involving a violation of University policy or improper conduct by University personnel will be handled as grievances (see [Grievances](#)).

Petitions and appeals should be resolved within 30 days of their submission. When such resolution cannot be achieved within 30 days, students will be informed of the delay before the 30 days are over. A resolution of the petition or appeal must be achieved within 60 days. A lack of resolution of a petition within 60 days is an acceptable cause for an appeal.

An academic program directly managing graduate students must establish a standing Petitions, Appeals, and Grievances Committee. A petition by a student will be handled by a committee consisting of at least three faculty members. The committee must be independent of the cause for the petition. Members of a student's thesis committee must not participate in the handling of a petition by the student. (The department chair or dean may appoint ad-hoc members to the committee to ensure independence of the committee.)

The committee will conduct an investigation of the circumstances and reach a decision regarding the petition. Their written report to the graduate director, and the chair (or dean) will describe the circumstances, the decision, and the rationale for the decision. The graduate director or chair (or dean) will convey the final decision to the student and include the committee report. (Redaction from the report is allowed to protect the privacy of other students.) In case of decisions by the faculty members of a graduate program acting as a committee of the whole, petitions will also be considered by the Petitions, Appeals, and Grievances Committee, which will reconsider the decision in view of the information provided in the petition. This committee may choose to bring the matter back for consideration by the faculty members of the academic program, acting as a committee of the whole. For petitions submitted to the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, the dean may in her or his discretion handle these in a similar manner by enlisting the assistance of a subcommittee of the Graduate Council, which will submit its report to the chair of the Council and to the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

An appeal handled by a school may be handled by the school dean or by an associate dean. The handling officer may convene an ad-hoc faculty committee or establish a standing committee. An appeal handled by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies may be referred to a subcommittee of the Graduate Council, composed of three faculty members (representing diverse disciplines within the university) and a graduate student. Such committees must be independent of the cause for the petition. In general, officers or committees handling the appeal should not try to substitute their judgment for that of the unit handling the petition. Rather, their task is to consider whether the petition was handled appropriately, whether all relevant circumstances have been considered, and whether University policy has been appropriately interpreted and applied. Nevertheless, a petition decision may be overturned if the officer or committee handling the appeal finds the petition decision to be patently unreasonable.

All time frames in this procedure refer to academic calendar days, and exclude mid-term, interterm and summer recesses. (This exclusion does not apply to a student who is enrolled during the summer.) All petitions and appeals, as well as responses to petitions and appeals, must be in writing. Email communication is considered to be "in writing". (Academic units should archive copies of all email communications pertaining to petitions and appeals.)



### **GRIEVANCES**

Grievances are different from petitions and appeals. Petitions and appeals involve exceptions to academic requirements, regulations, and judgments. A grievance is a complaint regarding inappropriate conduct by other students, faculty members, or staff. Inappropriate conduct encompasses both inappropriate personal conduct, such as sexual harassment, as well as inappropriate official conduct, such as violation of University policies. Specific policies exist to address grievances based on discrimination or sexual harassment and these policies must be followed in situations involving these issues. Grievances against another student may be raised with the assistant dean of student judicial programs and addressed under the Code of Student Conduct. In other cases, a student may present a grievance in writing at the lowest appropriate level, typically the department or school. If a satisfactory resolution is not obtained at that level, the student may appeal the outcome of the grievance by presenting the problem at the next administrative level, such as the school, Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies, Provost, or President. Grievances against non-faculty staff members may also be brought to the Employee Relations Director in Rice's Human Resources office.

The procedures for handling grievances are analogous to those for handling petitions and appeals. Students submitting grievances must so indicate in their submissions.

#### **Problem Resolution**

During the course of graduate studies, problems that do not fall under the category of grievances, described above, may arise in the relationship between a graduate student and his/her program or his/her advisor. Students should attempt to resolve such problems by informing the appropriate faculty members and working together to resolve the problem. When attempts to resolve the problem informally are unsuccessful, the following problem resolution procedure will be used:

1. The student will submit the problem in writing to the graduate program chair, who will then attempt to resolve it.
2. If the student remains unsatisfied, the problem will be presented to a committee of the program for resolution. This committee will be a standing committee and not the student's own thesis/dissertation committee. Both the student and the program chair will submit a written record of their views to this committee.
3. If the student remains unsatisfied, the problem will be referred to a standing subcommittee of the Graduate Council and composed of three faculty members (representing diverse disciplines within the university) and a graduate student, with the Dean of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies as an ex-officio member. A written report of proceedings at stage 2 will be presented to the Chair of Graduate Council for forwarding to the subcommittee, along with all other written materials generated during the investigation. The decision of this subcommittee is considered final.

The time frame for handling problem resolution is similar to that for handling petitions, appeals, and grievances. Students may seek guidance on any of these procedures, through discussions with the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies.

#### **Title IX policy at Rice University governing experiences of discrimination**

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Rice encourages any student who has experienced an incident of sexual, relationship, or other interpersonal violence, harassment or gender discrimination to seek support. There are many options available both on and off campus for all graduate students, regardless of whether the perpetrator was a fellow student, a staff or faculty member, or someone not affiliated with the university.

Students should be aware when seeking support on campus that most employees are required by Title IX to disclose all incidents of non-consensual interpersonal behaviors to Title IX professionals on campus who can act to support that student and meet their needs. The therapists at the Rice Counseling Center and the doctors at Student Health Services are confidential, meaning that Rice will not be informed about the incident if a student discloses to one of these Rice staff members. Rice prioritizes student privacy and safety, and only shares disclosed information on a need-to-know basis.

If you are in need of assistance or simply would like to talk to someone, please call Rice Wellbeing and Counseling Center, which includes Title IX Support:

**3311/(713) 348-3311**