

Doctoral Program in Social Welfare Handbook

2025 – 2026

Department of Social Welfare
UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs
<https://luskin.ucla.edu/>

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Introduction

The Department of Social Welfare is part of the [UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs](#) (LSPA), established in 1994 and renamed the UCLA Meyer and Renee Luskin School of Public Affairs, in recognition of a \$50 million gift to the School in 2011. The School has three departments – Public Policy, Social Welfare, Urban Planning – an undergraduate Public Affairs Major, and numerous research centers and activities.

This handbook is intended for use by students and faculty of the UCLA Department of Social Welfare PhD Program. We have tried to produce a current, accurate and informative handbook. All information, however, is subject to revision. **It is the students' responsibility to be familiar with the handbook's content and to follow its guidelines.**

This handbook is intended to be used with the UCLA General Catalog, the Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA, and the Graduate Advisor's Manual (highly recommended) available from the Student and Academic Affairs Section of the [Division of Graduate Education](#) (DGE) in Murphy Hall. These publications go into greater detail than is possible here, and we have deliberately refrained from excess repetition of materials already contained in those sources. A new edition of the [General Catalog](#) is published every two years. It includes course descriptions in all departments and a calendar of important deadlines for the academic year for every aspect of registration, enrollment, student petitions, dissertations, etc. In general, forms for petitions and other requests to the DGE are available from the Student and Academic Affairs Section of DGE.

Mission of the Doctoral Program

The mission of the doctoral program in social welfare is to train scholars to advance the field of social welfare and social work practice through research and knowledge development. The program's purpose is to provide its students with the necessary substantive and methodological expertise that will enable them to assume tenure-track faculty positions in top-tier, research intensive social work programs across the globe.

To achieve that mission, all doctoral students are required to develop advanced knowledge and expertise in three interrelated areas: (1) a substantive area of social welfare; (2) social and behavioral science knowledge applicable to the substantive area; and (3) research skills to support the production of knowledge in the substantive area. Expertise in a substantive area of social welfare provides the foundation for advanced research in the area; social and behavioral science knowledge provides the theory and the empirical findings needed to understand and explain the causes, dynamics and outcomes of the subjects and processes addressed by social welfare; and research

competence is necessary to undertake and design the empirical research necessary to advance scientific knowledge.

The Educational Model

The program has several important features. Research training, both formal and experiential, is the core of the program. Flexibility is provided to help students attain in-depth competence in a substantive area of social welfare. Students progress from a common foundation in understanding social welfare problems, theories, and interventions toward a high degree of individualized specialization. This common foundation emphasizes the acquisition of analytic tools needed to understand, appraise and advance knowledge in social welfare. With these analytical tools, students select a specific area of specialization and develop expertise in that area.

The learning process involves more than classroom instruction. Considerable emphasis is placed on the individualized instructional relationship between students and faculty advisors (mentors). Students are expected to work closely with faculty advisors in their roles as scholars, researchers and teachers. The program is interdisciplinary and students are encouraged to use the rich learning resources of the entire University. Doctoral students enter the program with diverse academic backgrounds and levels of preparation. They may want to enroll in selected MSW courses that can fill in gaps in knowledge needed to pursue advanced work.

Students demonstrate their acquired expertise by producing scholarly work, often through course assignments, mentored research projects, and the written comprehensive examination. While the program requires completion of a limited set of courses, the emphasis is on acquisition of knowledge, and students who demonstrate possession of such knowledge on the basis of prior work and proficiency examinations may be exempt from specific course requirements.

Full-time students are expected to enroll in at least 12 units of study each quarter. Although diversity of educational backgrounds makes it difficult to predict, students are expected to complete the program in approximately four to five years. There are two years of coursework and then the dissertation. Those in the combined MSW/PhD program usually require an additional year.

The Doctoral Curriculum

The doctoral curriculum covers three areas: (1) a substantive area of social welfare, (2) social/behavioral science knowledge, and (3) research skills.

1. Substantive Area of Social Welfare

Knowledge of social welfare is generally organized in substantive areas, such as child welfare, aging, health, mental health, social justice, and poverty. These substantive areas encompass particular social welfare policies, methods of social work intervention (ranging from individual and community practice to policymaking), and an array of services for specific target populations. The attempt to improve the well-being of individuals, groups, and communities is common to all these dimensions. The professional roles and expertise of social workers are exercised through the formation, implementation, and evaluation of social welfare policies, through interventions focused on the individuals and their environments, and through the design, management and improvement of service delivery systems targeted to specific populations or social problems. Every doctoral student develops a specialization in a substantive area of social welfare, which is the focus of study.

As preparation for choosing an area of specialization, each student is required to enroll in a year-long foundation course in their first year of the program, The Craft of Social Welfare Scholarship (SW 229A-B-C). This three-quarter sequence emphasizes analytical frameworks for studying social problems and theoretical frameworks for social welfare intervention (practice and policy) that address diverse social problems. The course also provides students with the tools to analyze, understand, and formulate research questions in specific areas of study. The end result of this course sequence is a bibliography and literature review in an individualized area of study that should provide a foundation for students' next steps for research in the program.

To demonstrate readiness to advance in the doctoral program, all students are required to participate in an end of year consultation in June (see [Consultation](#)). Following successful completion of the consultation, the student and their faculty advisor(s) develop a plan of study (see Study Plan). In the second year, students continue to develop their substantive specialization through a research mentorship and relevant outside courses. These additional courses should be intellectually linked to the choice of specialization, relevant theoretical frameworks, and to the study of research methods to support the production of knowledge within that area of specialization. In the second year, students also complete their written comprehensive exam.

2. Social and Behavioral Science Knowledge

The study of social and behavioral science is one of the essential ingredients for the advancement of social welfare because it provides knowledge to understand and explain the objects, processes and outcomes of social work intervention. Thus, the specialization in a substantive area of social welfare must be integrated with an appropriate and

specific theoretical and empirical body of knowledge derived from the social and behavioral sciences. Examples of social and behavioral science areas include ecological, organizational, social psychological, risk and resilience, critical race, and social learning theoretical perspectives, as well as theories that focus on developmental psychology and child development, public health, social change, or social justice. Students must develop an expertise in such a body of knowledge and learn to apply it to a specific area of social welfare. It is through such application that new models of intervention, anchored in theory and empirical evidence, can be developed and tested.

To achieve such expertise, students are required to take at least three graduate level courses in social and behavioral science. These courses must be chosen in conjunction with the specialization in a substantive area of social welfare. They must be shown to be relevant and important to advancing knowledge in that area. Normally, these courses are taken outside the Department of Social Welfare in one of UCLA's outstanding social and behavioral science departments, or in the University's professional schools, which offer appropriate graduate level social and behavioral science courses. These courses cannot be in the form of a special study or reading course; although in exceptional circumstances the student may petition the Doctoral Program Chair to take one of these courses as a special study.

3. Research Skills

Research skills are essential to conduct studies that advance social welfare knowledge. There are three required methods of gaining these skills: (1) research methods courses, (2) statistics, and (3) research apprenticeship and internship.

a) Research Methods Courses:

In the first year, students must take a three-quarter sequence, Foundations of Scientific Inquiry (SW 249A-B-C)¹. These courses, cross-listed with the Urban Planning department, focus on knowledge development and epistemology, the formulation of research questions and hypotheses, and the various social science methods that are used to answer research questions in social welfare.

After the first year, students are required to complete at least three advanced research methods courses of their choice. The advanced methods courses may range from experimental design to survey research to ethnography. The choice is determined by the students' specialization in a substantive area of social welfare. Typically, social and behavioral science departments within the University offer these courses. Students may

¹ In UP, SW 249A is UP 208A, SW 249B is UP 208D, and SW 249C is UP 208B

opt to complete a minimum of two advanced methods courses if they take four advanced statistics courses.

b) Statistics:

Students must complete at least three advanced graduate level statistics courses, including a multivariate analysis course.

In the first year, incoming students are required to take introductory statistics courses in Fall and Winter quarters. These courses are determined by the Department and are typically taken in the departments of Sociology or Education and count toward the advanced statistics requirement.

With approval from the Doctoral Program Chair, students with sufficient and recent preparation in graduate-level statistics may be exempted from taking the introductory statistics courses. In accordance with their specific interests, and with Doctoral Chair approval of specific courses, they can move on to the advanced courses in Sociology, Public Health, Psychology, Political Science or a related field.

c) Research Apprenticeship (SW 284A-B-C):

The research apprenticeship is designed to expose first year PhD students to conducting research in social welfare and to develop a close working relationship with their faculty advisor. In this 9 unit course (3 per quarter), students will develop a range of applied research skills, including developing research questions, collecting data, cleaning and preparing data, analyzing data, and preparing collaborative work for presentation and publication.

As part of the research apprenticeship, students and research mentors are expected to meet one-on-one for at least an hour each week. The remaining 8 hours each week are to be spent on a variety of research-related activities. This might include attending scheduled research team meetings, completing trainings (e.g., CITI Human Subjects), and completing research related tasks to the best of their ability. Ideally, students can assist on publishable research by the faculty member or team. Finally, students are expected to show initiative in the research process and bring ideas and original thought to the research team.

The course has a [syllabus](#) and required assignments each quarter.

During the research apprenticeship, students and faculty mentors will be invited to meet with the Doctoral Program Chair to reflect on progress. This meeting will be scheduled during the Winter quarter of the first year in the doctoral program.

d) Mentored Research Project:

Beginning in the first quarter of the second year, doctoral students must successfully complete a mentored research project over three quarters by enrolling in the three-course sequence SW 286ABC (Mentored Research Project), which is graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. The purpose of the mentored research project is to provide supervised training and support for a student-led project. Through participation in an ongoing research project (or one initiated by the student and carried out under faculty supervision), students apply and utilize research skills under the guidance of an experienced researcher or team.

The research mentorship must allow students to participate in several or all of the following activities: formulation of research questions, design of research instruments, data collection, human subjects protection application, data analysis, and production of a written product or products for dissemination. Engaging in one or more empirical projects with an experienced mentor with active scholarship is required.

The research mentorship can be completed with either faculty members from the Department or faculty members from other departments with their advisor's approval. There are benefits associated with completing a mentorship inside or outside of Social Welfare. Working with one's advisor is advantageous to continue developing this essential mentor-mentee relationship. With a faculty advisor from Social Welfare, students may become more closely acquainted with a primary research advisor or potential dissertation committee member. With a faculty member outside of the department, a student can become acquainted with interdisciplinary research, research being conducted across the campus, and with faculty who may eventually serve on the student's dissertation committee as an outside member.

This course has a [syllabus](#) and required assignments throughout the year, most of which are co-determined by the student and faculty mentor.

It is highly recommended that students use the research activities conducted under the mentored research project to complete the written comprehensive exam.

Submitting Plan and Final Report

The Doctoral Program Chair must approve the mentored research project. To obtain approval, students must:

- Meet with the prospective faculty member to discuss the mentorship;
- Prepare and submit a proposal for approval, using the [Department's form](#).
- Obtain the faculty supervisor's signature on the form.

- Submit to the Doctoral Program Chair **no later than October 15th** of the second year via the [submission link](#).

Students will receive approval or feedback from the Doctoral Chair within two weeks of submission.

At the end of the second year, at the completion of the mentored research project course sequence, students and faculty must submit a final report. Students should use the [Department's form](#) to complete this report. The report summarizes the student's experiences and progress on the mentored research project over the year. The student should attach product(s) for review, even if in draft form. This report must be **submitted by June 1st** in the year they complete the mentored research project via the [submission link](#).

Faculty mentors must also separately complete a [short evaluation form](#) and email to spasocialwelfare@gmail.com by **June 1st**.

4. Additional Courses & Independent Study Courses

SW 258: Applied Research Design: Dissertation and Thesis Proposal is not required for advancement to candidacy, but is highly recommended for all students in their third year. The seminar is intended to help students write for publication and construct a dissertation proposal. The seminar will allow students to learn about the social welfare research being conducted by other students and provide an opportunity for them to advance their own work. It is also cross-listed with the Urban Planning department.

Doctoral study includes many credits earned outside of formal course structures. Independent, informal study is a crucial element of the academic journey in which students become independent scholars. Unstructured course offerings also serve an important practical function, permitting students to receive credit, and maintain full-time enrollment, for endeavors outside the classroom. Advanced students eventually enroll in non-classroom credits for their entire course load.

ALL COURSES of an independent nature (i.e., any credits in which the student is not enrolled in a conventional class), including teaching practicum, mentored research project, critical issues seminar, Working Papers Colloquium, dissertation, or any independent study are taken on an S/U (i.e., not letter-graded) basis ONLY.

SW 596B: Special Study and Research Doctoral Independent study is available by arrangement at any stage of doctoral study. This is most commonly used up until the dissertation writing process begins, when students will enroll in SW 599 (see below).

SW 597B: Preparation for the Qualifying Examination may be taken by arrangement to prepare for the oral qualifying examination related to the dissertation proposal. When the comprehensive examinations have been passed, this course is used to prepare the dissertation proposal and the oral defense of the dissertation proposal (oral qualifying examination), which is a prerequisite to advancement to doctoral candidacy.

SW 599: PhD Dissertation Research in Social Welfare is ordinarily taken while conducting dissertation research under faculty guidance, following passage of the oral qualifying exam.

Other Electives

In addition to the courses required for the degree and those individual study and research courses (500 series courses) deemed necessary by the student and their advisor, students are encouraged to enroll in electives both within and outside the Department. Reading courses in special areas of faculty expertise and student interest are strongly encouraged. Selected MSW seminars, such as the M290 series in advanced policy, may be taken with the approval of the student's advisor. Students are encouraged to make known their particular interests for possible elective course offerings.

Repeating Courses

No course except those in the 500 series (e.g., **SW 501**, SW 596B, SW 597B, SW 599) may be enrolled in more than once unless the UCLA General Catalog specifically lists it as a course that may be repeated for credit (e.g., SW 258). The only exception to this is the case where a “deferred report,” “failed,” or “unsatisfactory” was the final grade in the course. In these cases, the course may be taken for a second time. In cases of a deferred report grade, repetition of the course must be approved by petition. The grade assigned at each enrollment is permanently recorded.

Auditing Courses

If students wish to audit a course, they should obtain permission from the course instructor and discuss it with their advisor. Auditing is not recorded on the official University transcript.

Overview of Doctoral Curriculum 2025 – 2026

First Year Required Enrollment

Quarter	Course
Fall	SW 229A
	SW 249A (cross-listed with Urban Planning)
	SW 284A (enroll with faculty advisor)

	SOCIOL 210A (PTE number will be provided)
Winter	SW 229B
	SW 249B (cross-listed with Urban Planning)
	SW 284B (enroll with faculty advisor)
	SOCIOL 210B (PTE number will be provided)
Spring	SW 229C
	SW 249C (cross-listed with Urban Planning)
	SW 284C (enroll with faculty advisor)
	SOCIOL 210C (optional)

Courses Needed Beyond the First Year

Theory Courses: Three courses outside of the department

Research Methods & Statistics Courses: One additional statistics course + three research methods; or two additional statistics and two research methods.

Research Internship: SW 286, taken in the second year

Dissertation and Proposal Writing: SW 258, Optional but recommended

Independent Studies Courses: 500 series

Students must be enrolled in 12 units per quarter

Doctoral Curriculum and Expected Milestones

Courses	Expected Progress by End of Each Year
Year 1 • The Craft of Social Work Scholarship (SW 229ABC) • Scientific Inquiry (SW 249ABC) • Statistics Courses (3 quarters) • Research Apprenticeship (SW 284ABC)	Year 1 • File Individualized Development Plan • Complete End of Year Consultation • File Annual Progress Report
Year 2 • 3 Social and Behavioral Science Courses • 3 Quarters of Research Internship (SW 286C) • 3 Advanced Research Methods Courses • Additional Courses	Year 2 • File Study Plan and Mentored Research Plan • Complete Mentored Research Project & File Final Report • File Annual Progress Report

Year 3 • Critical Issues (SW 258) • 2 Quarters of Independent Study (SW 596) • Additional Courses	Year 3 • Approved Written Comprehensive Exam • Dissertation Committee Appointed • Dissertation Proposal Developed • Pass Oral Defense of Dissertation Proposal • File Annual Progress Report
Years 4 – 5+ • Dissertation Research (SW 599)	Years 4 – 5+ • Dissertation Completed

*Progress on dissertation milestones vary across students. On an ongoing basis, in addition to these stated milestones, students are expected to be publishing research with their mentor and other collaborators and presenting at conferences.

Deadlines at a Glance

Year 1	
<i>Milestone</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
File Annual Progress Report	May 30 th Download Form Submit Here
Oral Consultation	Scheduled during Spring quarter and takes place in June
Year 2	
Study Plan	December 1 st Download Form Submit Here
File Mentored Research Project Plan	October 15 th Download Form Submit Here
File Annual Progress Report	May 30 th Download Form Submit Here
File Final Report for Mentored Research Project	June 1 st Download Form Submit Here
Submit Written Comprehensive Exam (Publishable Paper)	First submission deadline in Year 2: September 15 th Final submission deadline in Year 3: November 15 th First Submission and Revised Submission
Year 3 and Above	
File Annual Progress Report	May 30 th Download Form Submit Here
Submit Dissertation Proposal and Advancement to Candidacy Form	Depends on individual student progress
Defend Dissertation Proposal	Depends on individual student progress
File Dissertation	Depends on individual student progress

The Combined MSW/PhD Program

The combined MSW/PhD program begins with one full year of MSW coursework and first-year practicum placement. In the summer after the first year, students complete a full-time MSW internship. This summer internship placement requires students to be enrolled in the practicum course (SW 402ABC) in the summer, and this enrollment carries additional fees. In the second year, students complete the PhD first-year course curriculum, in addition to completing any courses required for the MSW. Students typically earn a MSW after the second year and are encouraged to attend graduation with their MSW cohort. Thereafter, they continue through the PhD program.

Students will need to take more classes compared to peers on their track in order to complete the required electives in their area of concentration. This may mean taking additional units in their first year (to have fewer classes upon entering the PhD curriculum) or additional units in their second year.

Combined students are encouraged to attend doctoral program events during their first year in the program, to begin meeting with their doctoral program mentor, and to get engaged in research with their mentor, time permitting.

First Year Combined MSW/PhD Courses

	Fall	Winter	Spring	Summer
Generalist Practice	SW 210A (4 units)	SW 210B (4 units)	SW 210C (4 units)	
Theories of Human Behavior & Social Systems	SW 211A (4 units) Optional: SW 202A* (Adult Psychopathology) (4 units)	SW 211B (4 units)		
Social Welfare Policy and Leadership	SW 214A (4 units)			
Social Welfare Research Methods & Statistics		SW 213A – Waived (SW 249A will substitute in Year 2)	SW 213B – Waived (Statistics will substitute in Year 2)	
Practicum	SW 401A (3 units) SW 405 (1 unit)	SW 401B (3 units)	SW 401C (3 units)	Second Year Practicum/SW 402ABC

Area of Concentration			Choose AoC core course: SW 232/242/252	
Total Units	16 – 20 units	11 units	11 units	12 units

*Note: 51 total units recommended

Sample Curriculum for Students in Combined MSW/PhD Program

Year 1 Courses The first year is generally the same as all first year MSW students.		
MSW	Required Courses	PhD Courses Fulfilling MSW Requirements
Generalist Practice	SW 210ABC (3 courses)	N/A
Theory	SW 211AB and SW 212 (3 courses)	N/A
Leadership and Policy	SW 214A (1 course)	N/A
Research and Statistics	SW 213AB (2 courses)	SW 249A and 1 quarter of statistics will substitute (taken in Year 2 of MSW/Year 1 of PhD)
Practicum	SW 401ABC and SW 405 (4 courses)	N/A

Year 2 Courses by Area of Concentration

Student receives the MSW degree upon completion of the required 92 units.

Child and Family Well-Being			
MSW	Required Courses	PhD Courses Fulfilling MSW Requirements	Substitutions
Practice	1 required	1 course (SW 231A, 231N or 231S)	N/A
Policy	1 required	1 course (SW 290J or 290N)	N/A
Theory	1 required (SW 202B)	Fulfilled by PhD program	SW 299A
Outside AoC	1 required	Fulfilled by PhD program	SW 229B
MSW Electives	2 required	1 course (related to AoC)	SW 229C
Research Capstone	3 required (SW 260ABC	Completed in Year 2*	SW 284ABC

Practicum	3 required (SW 402ABC)	Required (Summer Block)	N/A
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Health and Mental Health Across the Lifespan			
MSW	Required Courses	PhD Courses Fulfilling MSW Requirements	Substitutions
Practice	2 required	1 course (SW 231K or 231M)	SW 229A
Policy	2 required	1 course (SW 290K or 290M)	SW 229B
MSW Electives	2 required	1 course (related to AoC)	SW 229C
Research Capstone	3 required (SW 260ABC)	Completed in Year 2*	SW 284ABC
Practicum	3 required (SW 402ABC)	Required (Summer Block)	N/A

Social and Economic Justice			
MSW	Required Courses	PhD Courses Fulfilling MSW Requirements	Substitutions
Practice	2 required	1 course (SW 241J)	SW 229A
Policy	2 required	1 course (SW 290D or 290L)	SW 229B
MSW Electives	2 required	1 course (related to AoC)	SW 229C
Research Capstone	3 required (SW 260ABC)	Completed in Year 2*	SW 284ABC
Practicum	3 required (SW 402ABC)	Required (Summer Block)	N/A

*Note: Capstone project is required for the MSW degree, but will be combined with the Research Mentorship (SW 284ABC) in Year 2 of the MSW/Year 1 of the PhD program.

Registration and Enrollment

Detailed information on registration and enrollment procedures is contained in the [Schedule of Classes](#). Registration can be completed several weeks before the beginning of each quarter. Registration consists of two main steps: paying fees and enrolling in classes.

Paying Fees

All students are assigned a BAR (Billing and Accounts Receivable) account. A BAR account records all charges and payments (excluding housing) associated with registration along with other service charges that are assessed to students. Accounts are administered electronically (eBill, through MyUCLA). Students must pay all charges in full by the 20th of the month following the posting date of the charge. If the 20th falls on a weekend or holiday, the due date is the last business day prior to the 20th. Students should check their MyUCLA accounts monthly to ensure timely payments are made.

Enrollment in Classes

Enrollment in classes is completed through MyUCLA. You must complete both processes by the established deadlines to be officially registered and enrolled for the term.

The online [Schedule of Classes](#) contains listings of class times, meeting rooms, and instructors throughout the University. For additional information on enrollment and coursework in your second year and beyond, please see the [enrollment tip sheet](#).

MyUCLA enables all UCLA students to acquire information via the internet from their University academic records stored on the Registrar's computer database. MyUCLA allows you to process your class enrollment, to obtain course confirmation, grades for any completed term, GPA, completed units, outstanding holds, and other information. Via MyUCLA, you will enroll in classes, add, drop, or exchange classes/sections, put yourself on the waitlist for a class, see your study list, and obtain instructor names for all courses.

The student ID number and security code, both of which are provided to you on admission by the Division of Graduate Education, gain access to MyUCLA. You enroll during your assigned appointment periods, which you also obtain by checking your MyUCLA account. Visit [Graduate Student Enrollment Passes](#) for more information. All students are responsible for observing procedures and deadline dates as published by the Registrar.

Continuous Registration

Unless granted a formal leave of absence, or unless eligible for the filing fee for the dissertation, students are **required** to register in 12 units for all three quarters of each academic year (see descriptions of the 500 course series above).

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence (LOA) may be granted by approval of the Department of Social Welfare and the Division of Graduate Education to continuing students in good standing

(3.0 GPA), who have completed at least one quarter in graduate status at UCLA. [Leave of Absence](#) forms and the associated policy can be found on the Division of Graduate Education website. You are urged to make a request for leave early to allow time for consultation with your advisor and for obtaining the appropriate signatures. The LOA forms must be filed no later than the end of the second week during the quarter the leave is to begin. Students on leave should remain in communication with the Doctoral Program Chair and the Director of Student Services concerning their intentions to return to the program.

[Residence Requirements and Time for Completion of Doctoral Study](#)

The University requires all graduate students working toward a degree to complete at least two years of academic residence in graduate status at the University of California, including one year in continuous residence at UCLA. Academic residence consists of registration in at least one course (four units) of graduate or upper division work per quarter. Enrollment in two consecutive six-week summer sessions or one eight-week summer session may count as one quarter of academic residence. See UCLA's [Residence Requirements](#) for detailed regulations.

[Time to Degree](#)

Normative time-to-degree is between four and five years (12 to 15 quarters). Completion of the degree cannot exceed seven years (21 quarters). It is expected that students will complete all course requirements within nine quarters (three years) and defend their dissertation proposals and advance to candidacy within three or four years. The completion of the dissertation varies from two to six quarters after advancement to candidacy. Any student who has not completed the degree requirements within the maximum seven-year (21 quarter) limit may not be allowed to continue in the program without the permission of the Doctoral Program Committee. Students entering their sixth year who have not advanced to candidacy will be given a time frame by the Doctoral Committee to complete all requirements, including the defense of their proposal. Failure to meet those deadlines will result in dismissal from the program.

[Grading](#)

The work of graduate students is reported in terms of the following grades:

Grade	Description
A	Superior achievement
B	Satisfactorily demonstrated potential for professional achievement in the field of study

C	Passed the course but did not do work indicative of potential for professional achievement in the field of study; the Division of Graduate Education does not recognize a C- for degree credit and requires re-enrollment in the course.
F	Fail
I	Incomplete
IP	In Progress
DR	Deferred Report
S	Satisfactory
U	Unsatisfactory

*The passing grades A, B, and C may be modified by plus (+) or minus (-) suffixes.

Courses in which a student receives an S grade are counted in satisfaction of degree requirements, but courses in which an S, U, DR, I or IP has been awarded are disregarded in determining a student's grade point average.

Minimum GPA Requirement

The grades A, B and S denote satisfactory progress toward a degree. Graduate students are subject to dismissal if their cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0.

S/U Grading Basis

All core doctoral courses (SW 229ABC and SW 249ABC) offered within the Department of Social Welfare must be taken on a letter grade basis only. SW 284ABC (Research Apprenticeship), SW 258 (Dissertation Proposal Writing), SW 286C (Research Mentorship), and the 500-series courses in the Department of Social Welfare (SW 596B, SW 597B and SW 599) are offered on the grading basis of S/U only. Lecture courses taken in other schools and departments of the University may, with the approval of the course instructor and the student's advisor, be taken on either a letter grade or S/U basis. Except in unusual circumstances, seminar courses or independent study courses within or outside the department are taken on an S/U basis. The grade of S is awarded only for work that would otherwise receive a grade of B or better. In any quarter, students may enroll outside the Department of Social Welfare in no more than one seminar or lecture course they choose to take on an S/U basis instead of for a letter grade. There is no limit on enrollment in outside courses offered to all students on an S/U basis only.

Incomplete Grades

The instructor may assign the "incomplete" grade when work is of passing quality but is incomplete for good reason. Assigning an "incomplete" is at the discretion of the instructor, who is not obligated to do so. If an instructor issues an "incomplete," the

remaining coursework must be finished by the end of your next completed quarter (Fall, Winter, Spring). Otherwise, the “incomplete” will automatically lapse to an “F”.

The maximum timeline for final assignment submission is at the discretion of the instructor and can be for less than the timeline for lapse of incomplete.

It is the student’s responsibility to discuss with the instructor the conditions and time frame for completing the course by the next regular term. Do not re-enroll in the course!

If you cannot remove the “incomplete” within the allowed time frame, you must petition to the Doctoral Program Chair and Director of Student Services to request an extension of time.

Doctoral Study Plan and Annual Progress Reports

Because students pursue a highly individualized course of study toward their PhD, they need a “big picture plan” that guides them in selecting the relevant and appropriate courses offered by the various disciplines to achieve their educational objectives. The plan, covering their course of study from the second year and onward, ensures that after the program, students can demonstrate in-depth expertise in their chosen area of specialization. The study plan helps the students, with the supervision of their faculty advisors, maintain a coherent organizing framework for their course of study. It is designed to reduce the risk of taking courses and pursuing topics of study that do not contribute substantively to their ultimate educational objectives.

The purpose of the annual progress reports (see below) is to give the students an opportunity to review, with their faculty advisors, their progress in meeting their study plan objectives, to make revisions to the plan when necessary, and to map out strategies to respond to issues and barriers that may impede the student’s progress.

Doctoral Study Plan (Second Years)

The doctoral study plan outlines the student’s intended course of study and must specify: (1) the substantive area of specialization in social welfare; (2) the behavioral/social sciences relevant to the social welfare specialization; and (3) the research methods appropriate for conducting research in the social welfare substantive area. These three areas must be chosen through close consultation with the faculty advisor.

Students are expected to develop the study plan together with their faculty advisor no later than the Fall Quarter of their second year. To maintain good academic standing, students must submit their study plan via the [Department Form](#), which must be signed

by the advisor and submitted via [this link](#) to the Doctoral Program Chair for approval by December 1st.

The substantive area in social welfare refers to a field of practice, program, policy, or some combination of the above. It is important that students select an area that has a significant body of knowledge (i.e., theory and research). Students are asked to provide a brief but specific description of the substantive area in social welfare indicating some of its major themes. Some examples of major theoretical or research writings should be listed.

The substantive focus in behavioral/social sciences must rely on an integrated body of theory and research that is relevant to the social welfare area. By relevance we mean that the behavioral/social science knowledge is needed to understand and explain the problems, issues, processes or outcomes of social welfare intervention. The integrated body of theory and research may be anchored in one or more disciplines. It is also important that the student, with the guidance of the faculty advisor, identify a sufficient number of courses in this area. Students are asked to provide a brief but detailed description of the behavioral/social sciences focus, indicating some of its key components. Students should indicate how such a body of knowledge is relevant to their substantive area in social welfare, and should list some examples of major theoretical or research works in the behavioral/social sciences. Students should provide examples of courses they might take in this area.

The selection of the advanced research methods courses must be dictated by the choice of the substantive area in social welfare and the behavioral/social sciences focus. It should be informed by the type of research methodologies students are likely to undertake to advance the relevant knowledge in the substantive area in social welfare. Students should indicate the content area of the research methods in which they plan to specialize. They should list the research courses they intend to take.

[Annual Progress Report](#)

The doctoral student progress report outlines students' achievements during the current year, beginning at the end of year one. All students should complete this form each year, which allows students to list the accomplishments and benchmarks achieved by the student cumulatively in the program. The progress report should also note significant changes or revisions in the study plan. Understandably, the plan may need to be revised due to students' experiences in the various courses, emergence of new research opportunities, or shifts in interest. These revisions should be reflected in the annual progress report. The progress report should also identify issues students may have experienced in trying to meet their study objectives and strategies to deal with them. The

doctoral student progress report should be completed using the [Department Form](#), signed by the doctoral advisor and submitted to the Doctoral Program Chair no later than May 30th using this [submission link](#).

End of First Year Consultation

Students must fulfill their course requirements, participate in an end of year consultation during their first year, and pass a written comprehensive examination before beginning work on their doctoral dissertation.

The first-year review consultation dates will be scheduled during the first half of the Spring quarter and typically occur in June during finals week. This end-of-year review serves as a check-in for doctoral students. The primary advisor, one or more members of the doctoral committee, and the chair of the doctoral committee all participate. The consultation is typically one hour in length. It involves a brief presentation by the student of their first-year accomplishments and their plans for the second year and beyond. The goal of the consultation session is to provide feedback and support to students as they transition into their second year.

Preparation for the Consultation

Specific submission instructions and submission date will be announced in the Spring Quarter for each cohort.

- Submit, approximately one week before the consultation, a 2-page document describing first-year accomplishments, research questions the student hopes to address in the second year, and topics and ideas for their dissertation.
- Prepare a short (~10 minute) presentation with visuals to highlight your research areas of focus and next steps for research, and any questions or feedback sought from faculty.
- Be prepared to discuss how significant assignments or papers from the two foundation course sequences (SW 229, SW 249) and any other material supported or did not support your growth as a scholar.

The student's advisor should take notes during the consultation and debrief with the student to process and incorporate feedback into next steps.

Criteria for Passing

All students at the end of their first year must participate in the end-of-year consultation to progress in the program. By early June of the first year, students should have completed the core seminars (SW 229ABC and SW 249ABC, SW 284-Research Apprenticeship) and maintained an overall 3.0 GPA. If you still need to successfully

complete the course sequences, a second consultation may be scheduled after all the required coursework is finished. This decision will be based on a review of your overall progress in the program and the need for additional review. The doctoral committee will evaluate each case individually to determine the appropriate action.

Written Comprehensive Exam

The overall purpose of the written comprehensive exam is to demonstrate a capacity to integrate theory and research bearing on a social welfare problem. The student demonstrates this competence by crafting a full length manuscript that articulates a significant social welfare question, uses the most relevant social science theory and empirical research to elucidate and frame the problem, implements an appropriate analytic procedure to extend knowledge about that problem, and presents and discusses the results of that inquiry. The review process closely mirrors the submission and review procedures of an academic journal.

A. Format

The written exam should clearly demonstrate the student's substantive knowledge (theoretical and empirical) of a social welfare issue and analytic capabilities. The paper should follow a standard format for the type of scholarly article that the paper represents. The paper may be written for a social science or social welfare-related journal. The target journal for the paper should be identified in the [submission form](#).

The student is expected to display a mastery of the subject, its theoretical and empirical foundations, and its applicability to a social welfare problem or issue. As a general guide, the written comprehensive exam is expected to be about 25-35 pages of text, not including references and tables and must conform to a scholarly writing style, such as the common APA format used by many social welfare and social science journals, with 12-point, Times, New Roman, or Arial font.

B. Content

The student has wide latitude in selecting a topic and organizing the approach to addressing that topic. The specific topic, however, should be relevant to social welfare and be sufficiently broad and established so that there is a body of scholarly literature and research that can be critically brought to bear on the problem, and the analyses should be rigorous.

The methods of inquiry and analysis are unrestricted, so long as the methodology is systematic and appropriate for the research question. The paper must conform to accepted, rigorous methods of scientific inquiry and analysis, whether the paper is based

on original or secondary data, qualitative or quantitative methods of inquiry, or involves an experiment, survey, interviews, or a case study.

The paper should generally begin with a clear description of the problem in question, followed by a critical review and assessment of the theory and research bearing on that problem, a rigorous analysis of new or existing information or data, and a discussion of the implications of this analysis.

The written exam may emerge as a product of the second-year mentored research project, an extension of a previously written course paper, or the result of a new inquiry. A purely descriptive review of some body of literature would not meet this requirement, nor would a paper that reports data without embedding it in some intellectual or research tradition.

C. Authorship

Although the written exam must be sole authored by the student, the student is permitted and encouraged to seek feedback and advice from faculty advisors as the paper is conceptualized, drafted and revised.

When the subject matter and data emerge from collaborative research efforts or a mentored research project, the student should clarify the purpose of the sole authorship requirement in advance of beginning the written examination. This can be done with the student's faculty advisor and/or the Doctoral Program Chair. For example, a student may use a preexisting data set or one collected by a team, yet the student, for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the examination, writes the paper as a sole author.

If questions arise about the student's contributions to the scholarly paper, the Doctoral Program Chair may request a statement from a mentor or research supervisor to clarify the student's role as the sole author.

D. Evaluation Standards and Process

There are two review processes to fulfill the written comprehensive examination requirement – Internal or External review. Students may wish to simultaneously submit a manuscript for internal and external review. Approval from either process will be accepted as evidence of passing the written exam. However, on the [submission form](#), the student must indicate which process they will follow for satisfaction of the requirement.

E. Procedures and Deadlines

The written exam can be undertaken at any time after the student has successfully passed the first-year oral examination. The first deadline for submitting a draft is September 15th of the second year and the final submission deadline is November 15th of

the following year (third year of study). Continuation and funding in the doctoral program is contingent upon meeting this deadline.

In exceptional circumstances and per the Division of Graduate Education policies, a student may apply to extend this deadline. Extension requests must be filed in writing by September 15th of the third year of study and submitted to the Doctoral Program Chair, which is one month prior to their final deadline. Based on the submission schedule below, students have seven opportunities to submit their written comprehensive exam. Most students actually submit toward the end of the second year (March or May) or in September or November of their third year.

The written comprehensive examination must be completed before the student officially nominates their dissertation committee and submits their dissertation proposal.

Option A: Internal Review Process

Submission and Review Deadlines

There are five review periods for new paper submissions. Students can expect to receive decisions on the first draft of the papers within five weeks after submission. The review schedule is as follows:

Review Period	Submit By	Decision By
1	September 15 th	October 21 st
2	November 15 th	December 21 st
3	January 15 th	February 21 st
4	March 15 th	April 21 st
5	May 15 th	June 21 st

Note: The first deadline for submitting a draft is September 15th of the second year and the final submission deadline is November 15th of the following year (third year of study).

Reviewers

Two faculty members from inside the social welfare department will review each paper. Students also have the option to request an additional reviewer from outside the department, if that person has substantive or methodological expertise in the subject area and will agree to review the paper within the 5-week time frame. There is no guarantee that recommended reviewers will be used. Reviewer selection is at the discretion of the Doctoral Chair.

Submission and Assessment

The student author submits their publishable paper electronically via the [submission form](#). See the review schedule above for submission deadlines. The Doctoral Program Chair will distribute copies of the paper to two (or three, in the case of an additional outside person) faculty reviewers with an evaluation form. Reviewers are instructed to evaluate the paper, making comments about the paper either on the manuscript or separately, complete a rating form, and forward the form, comments and manuscript to the Doctoral Program Chair. The evaluation form will ask the reviewer to determine whether the paper: (1) meets the requirement of a scholarly publication, (2) needs minor revisions to meet the requirement, or (3) needs major revisions to meet the requirement. The outcome of the review will be determined by agreement between two reviewers. If two reviewers agree that the manuscript meets the first standard above, the requirement is fulfilled and the Doctoral Program Chair informs the student. Reviewers' comments about the paper will be forwarded to the student.

If two reviewers agree that the paper needs minor revisions, the Doctoral Program Chair will forward the reviewers' comments and ask the student to revise the manuscript, addressing the concerns of the reviewers, and resubmit the paper within three months. The student may wish to meet with one or more reviewers to discuss the revisions. Upon receiving the revised manuscript, the Doctoral Program Chair may accept the revised manuscript as now fulfilling the requirement or ask one or more of the original reviewers to reassess the paper.

If two reviewers agree that the paper needs major revisions, the Doctoral Program Chair will forward the reviewers' comments and ask the student to revise the manuscript, addressing the concerns of the reviewers, and to resubmit the paper within six months. The student is encouraged to meet with the reviewers to discuss the revisions. Upon receiving the revised manuscript, the Doctoral Program Chair will submit the revision to the two internal faculty reviewers to reassess the paper. If the revised submission is judged to require major revisions, the Doctoral Committee will meet with the student's faculty advisor to determine the student's status in the program.

In cases where the reviewers do not agree, the Doctoral Program Chair will decide on the appropriate course of action. Occasionally, and especially when reviewers have diverging opinions about a submission, the Doctoral Program Chair may consult with a third reviewer and/or the Doctoral Committee.

Revisions

Students should submit their revised manuscripts and cover letters via the [submission form](#). Revisions are required to be submitted to the Doctoral Program Chair within three months of receipt of the initial decision. **After three months, the paper will be considered a new submission.** Students should expect their revised manuscript to be assessed within six weeks of resubmission during the academic year. Please note that the time for second reviews in the summer months may take up to twelve weeks.

Revision Cover Letters

All students must include a detailed cover letter when submitting a revised paper. Addressed to the Doctoral Program Chair, the letter addresses each reviewer's critiques. Responses to each critical comment may take one of the following forms: text changes, per the suggestion/criticism; further explication/justification in the text, dealing with the issue; (infrequently) arguing in the letter that the material should stand as written, disagreeing with the reviewer; modifications or blending of these responses. How an author responds to reviewers' critiques is a critical aspect of the scholarly process. The tone should be respectful and responsive, but not acquiescent when the reviewer is misguided or biased in the view of the author. Even the toughest reviewer can usually be accommodated, albeit sometimes with considerable effort.

Option B: External Review Process

In this option, the student submits the paper to a peer-reviewed journal. The student must be sole author of the paper (the same rules apply as internal review). The choice of the journal must be approved by the student's faculty advisor and the Doctoral Committee ***prior to submission.***

Obtaining Prior Approval

To obtain this approval, the student should submit the request by email to the Doctoral Program Chair, with a brief abstract of the paper and the selected journal. If the journal choice is not approved, the Doctoral Committee will make a recommendation to the student about other options.

Once the choice of a journal has been approved, the student should submit to the Doctoral Program Chair a copy of the paper with the cover letter sent to the editor of the target journal. Acceptance of the paper for publication in the approved journal fulfills the publishable paper requirement. "Resubmit with revisions" or "accepted pending revisions" do not satisfy the requirements of the publishable paper. A copy of the acceptance notification letter from the editor must be filed with the Doctoral Program Chair, who will then approve the completion of the written comprehensive requirement.

Per conventions in scholarly publication, the manuscript may be submitted to only one journal at a time.

Review Time

Submission to a journal is likely to take a minimum of three to four months, for the initial review, and re-reviews can also take several months. Usually it is best to allow the journal at least four months before making an inquiry.

Dissertation

The purpose of the dissertation is to undertake a substantial research project, which results in a significant advancement of knowledge in social welfare. It has to demonstrate originality, analytical integrity, a high degree of scholarship, and sound research methodology. It should represent the integration of all three areas of the doctoral curriculum—substantive knowledge in social welfare, social and behavioral science knowledge, and research skills.

Getting Started & Finding Support

Doctoral students should work closely with their advisors to select a dissertation topic and design a dissertation study that is meaningful and feasible. The selection of a topic and design of a study results from idea generation and discussion with one's advisor over a period of time. Students can begin thinking about their dissertation at any point in the program, but should be actively thinking and planning in Year 3.

The doctoral course SW 258 is designed to support students in developing their dissertation proposals, and we strongly encourage doctoral students to take this course in their third or fourth year.

The UCLA Graduate Writing Center offers [summer dissertation boot camps](#) to support students in writing their dissertation proposals. We highly recommend this program, and the deadline to apply is typically in May or June.

Formation of the Dissertation Committee

After successfully passing the written comprehensive examination, the student begins work on the dissertation proposal. The first step is to select a member of the faculty to serve as chair of the student's dissertation committee. The student works with the chair of their committee to form the full committee, consisting of a minimum of four faculty members. At least two members must be from the Department of Social Welfare, at least one must be from another department and at least two must be tenured (see [Standards and Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA](#) and the [Minimum Standards for Doctoral Committee Constitution](#) for further details).

Students should discuss their dissertation plans with each prospective committee member before the committee membership is submitted for formal nomination. The student prepares the [doctoral committee nomination form](#) and submits it to the Director of Student Services and the Doctoral Program Chair for review. The Department of Social Welfare makes a formal nomination of the student's doctoral dissertation committee to the Division of Graduate Education, who then gives approval. The process of formal nomination and approval from the Division of Graduate Education ordinarily takes approximately two weeks, but should be initiated as soon as the committee membership has been arranged. Membership of the committee is subject to the regulation of the Graduate Council. Detailed information is provided in the [UCLA General Catalog](#).

Students may wish to have a faculty member outside of UCLA serve on their dissertation committee. They must hold an academic senate faculty appointment or equivalent at their university. The student must submit their CV and their appointment to the committee must be approved by UCLA Graduate Division.

A [Nomination of Doctoral Committee form](#) can be obtained at the Division of Graduate Education website. If it is necessary to change the membership of the student's doctoral committee at any point following its approval by the Division of Graduate Education, official request must be made to the Division of Graduate Education via the [Doctoral Committee Reconstitution Form](#).

Oral Defense of the Dissertation Proposal (Oral Qualifying Examination)

The oral qualifying examination covers the student's dissertation proposal and related areas. This examination is administered by the student's approved dissertation committee, which must be formally approved by the Division of Graduate Education prior to the examination date. All members of the committee are required to be present at the oral qualifying exam.

Before the Exam

When the date and time of the oral qualifying examination have been set, the Director of Student Services must be notified. The Director of Student Services will ensure that all benchmarks have been met for the exam to take place on the scheduled date. Before the exam, students should consult with the Director of Student Services and confirm preparation of the official oral qualifying exam form. Circulation of the oral exam record will take place electronically post exam.

Students should also coordinate with the Director of Student Services to book a conference room for the defense.

Students are expected to have shared a final version of their dissertation proposals to all committee members one month in advance of the defense date. Committee members may choose to offer some discretion in this time window.

Structure of Oral Defense & Student Presentation

The oral proposal defense is typically two hours in length. The oral defense begins with confidential conferral among committee members.

Students are expected to prepare a short (15-minute) presentation outlining their proposal, with a focus on the rationale, methods, and analytic plan. The committee members will have read the latest draft and will be prepared to discuss it.

The remaining time is devoted to committee member questions for the student and discussion. At the end of the defense, committee members confer confidentially. Each member reaches a decision about whether the qualifying examination is passed or not passed, and the committee reaches consensus about required revisions and next steps for the student.

Results

Each member of the committee reports the oral qualifying examination as "passed" or "not passed." A student may not be advanced to candidacy if more than one member votes "not passed," regardless of the size of the committee. Upon majority vote of the doctoral dissertation committee, the oral qualifying examination may be repeated once.

The results of the oral qualifying examination are immediately reported via electronic circulation to the Division of Graduate Education, with signatures of all committee members. The dissertation proposal and defense approval forms are now both electronic.

Timing and Eligibility

The student must be officially registered at the University in order to take the oral qualifying examination. However, this exam may be taken during the summer if the student was registered for the preceding Spring Quarter.

Note: The Division of Graduate Education must approve any deviations to these protocols in advance or the results of the examination may not be valid.
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Structure of the Dissertation Proposal

There are two options for the structure of the dissertation: (1) Standard Dissertation; or (2) Multiple Manuscript Dissertation (MMD). The following sections outline the research proposal structure for each of these options.

Standard Dissertation Proposal

The research proposal delineates the specific area of the student's research. It should state the purpose, scope, methodology, and overall organization of the study in outline form. The proposal should cover the following components.

Format

1. Title
2. Background
 - a. This should include a statement of the problem and its background; the purpose of the study (gap or gaps to be filled); the theoretical/conceptual framework that will guide the study; the questions or hypotheses to be tested; the importance of the study; and the definition of any terms that are relevant.
3. Review of the Literature
 - a. This should include what is known about the problem, what is not known (gaps), how the problem has been studied (empirical evidence), and what is known about the theoretical perspective/framework that will inform the study, including how this perspective will inform the selection of variables of interest.
4. Research Methods
 - a. Research design, participants, instrumentation, data analytic methods, limitations.
5. Additional Sections
 - a. Some dissertation committee chairs may also require additional chapters for the standard dissertation proposal, such as a chapter on theory. The student should work closely with their dissertation committee chair and dissertation committee members to ensure that the proposal put forward is in an acceptable format to all members prior to scheduling the proposal defense date.

Multiple Manuscript Dissertation Proposal

The purpose of the multiple manuscript dissertation (MMD) is to provide an alternative format for students to complete their independent doctoral research, one that is intended to provide a more efficient route to publishing their dissertation findings in peer-reviewed journals.

Format

Steps 1, 2, and 3 above apply. The Background should include a clear description of how the planned articles will form a cohesive body of work that supports a theme or themes

that will be expressed clearly in an introductory chapter; i.e., what aspects of the problem will be addressed in each article, how the body of work will be related, and what journals the student has in mind for submission of the papers. The Literature Review should include a description of what is known and what is not about the problem of focus, and how each article will advance knowledge regarding gaps in the current evidence. Research Methods should address data, design, analytic strategies, and how these will be either similar or different with respect to each article. See the discussion below regarding the defense of the multiple article dissertation.

General Guidelines

The format of the MMD will include an introduction, three articles, and a conclusion.

The introduction (no more than 15 pages) should provide an introduction to the study, the overarching research questions/aims and a brief description of the three manuscripts.

The three papers should be stand-alone journal articles (about 20 to 35 double-spaced pages, excluding tables, figures, and references). Each article should aim to make a theoretical, empirical, and/or analytical contribution to the field of study. The papers can use different methodologies, datasets, and data analysis plans. Still, they must be tied to a central topic and set of research questions that must be communicated in the dissertation proposal.

The committee will ultimately approve the content and type of each article. For example, a committee may approve a dissertation with two primarily empirical articles and one primarily theoretical article. Each article should be formatted and written in APA style.

The conclusion to the MMD (of no more than 15 pages) should tie together the three papers and discuss the overall originality and significance of the work as a whole for social welfare practice and/or policy.

The MMD is an independent research endeavor. The student is responsible for the conceptualization, analysis, and writing of the dissertation papers. Students are expected to seek close guidance and mentorship from their dissertation committee chair and other dissertation committee members in the process of writing their dissertation. Although the dissertation manuscripts are sole authored, this does not preclude eventual publishing with mentors or colleagues in peer reviewed journals.

Students may not use their written comprehensive exam as one of the papers for the MMD, and the papers cannot be under consideration by any journal or published prior to the dissertation defense.

Procedure

During the dissertation proposal defense, students will indicate if they wish to use the MMD format. If so, they should be prepared to discuss their dissertation research plan as a whole as well as a brief conceptualization of the content of the three papers.

If, after the successful defense of an MMD proposal, a student wishes to change their format to a traditional dissertation or vice-versa, the student must seek the committee's written approval for this change at least two months prior to the defense date.

Advancement to Candidacy

Students who are in good standing (GPA above 3.0) are advanced to candidacy when they pass their oral qualifying exam and complete all the program requirements except the dissertation. Upon passage of the oral qualifying exam, an Advancement to Candidacy fee is billed to the student and is charged on BruinBill. All rights and privileges thereafter are awarded to the student.

Human Subjects Review

All research projects involving human subjects (even if they involve analysis of existing records) must be approved by the UCLA Institutional Review Board (IRB). The Human Subjects Protection Committee must give its approval of the dissertation proposal for protection of the subjects involved before the research can be conducted. Forms and information on the required procedure are available online at the [UCLA Office of Human Research Protection Program website](#). When in doubt, students should file a request, even if your study may be exempt or approved at another institution.

Final Oral Defense of the Dissertation

Students must complete a final oral examination (i.e., defense) of their dissertation. All committee members must attend the final oral exam and vote on the exam result. A student may pass with one negative vote. In case of failure, the student's doctoral committee determines whether or not the candidate may be re-examined.

In exceptional circumstances, the dissertation committee may, by unanimous vote, agree to waive the final oral examination. However, any member of the student's doctoral committee may require that a final oral examination in defense of the dissertation be held. Any change in the final oral examination requirement must be reported to the Division of Graduate Education by means of a Doctoral Committee Reconstitution form.

Structure of the Defense & Student Presentation

The dissertation defense is typically two hours in length. The defense begins with confidential conferral among committee members.

Students are expected to prepare a short (15-minute) presentation outlining their dissertation, with a focus on findings. The committee members will have read the latest draft and will be prepared to discuss it.

The remaining time is devoted to committee member questions for the student and discussion. At the end of the defense, committee members confer confidentially. Each member reaches a decision about whether the examination is passed or not passed, and the committee reaches consensus about required revisions and next steps for the student.

Policy on Remote Presence for Oral Exams

A student may request remote participation from the committee chair or co-chairs. Oral qualifying examinations or final oral examinations (defense of dissertation) may be held fully or partially remote with the approval of the committee chair or co-chairs.

Student Responsibilities for Proposal and Defense Meetings

Students are responsible for arranging the room and audio-visual equipment as needed, and for arranging a time satisfactory to all committee members. The student should email the committee their final product at least two weeks in advance of the dissertation defense.

No refreshments or drinks are to be purchased or arranged by students.

Once the dissertation is finalized, the committee members will receive electronic notification for approval from the Division of Graduate Education. There are no longer paper forms.

Completion and Filing of Dissertation

Signatures & Approval

The completed dissertation must be given electronic signature approval by all members of the student's doctoral committee. Approval of the dissertation must be unanimous. A negative decision is indicated by a refusal to sign the electronic dissertation.

When the dissertation has final approval by the student's doctoral dissertation committee, the student submits the dissertation electronically and all committee members must approve the dissertation online. Students are not considered to have completed their dissertation until all members have electronically approved the dissertation.

Preparation of Final Manuscript for Filing

For guidance in filing procedures and preparation of the manuscript, students should consult the Division of Graduate Education publication, [Regulations for Thesis and](#)

[Dissertations Preparation](#). It is updated each academic year. It is also advisable to attend one of the orientation meetings normally held during the third week of classes each quarter by the [Division of Graduate Education](#) and/or attend their drop-in hours.

It is important to allow sufficient time for the preparation and proofreading of the final manuscript and to make any necessary arrangements well before the projected date for filing the dissertation. Special consideration should be given to possible copyright of the dissertation, since the author will be unable to obtain copyright for the publication of the dissertation in another form at some later date unless the author has obtained copyright at the time of first publication by University Microfilms, or unless the dissertation has been so completely revised as to constitute a new work. There is a fee (about \$35) for the University Microfilms copyright service.

Filing Deadline

The last date for filing the dissertation in final form occurs ten days to two weeks before the degree date. The exact date is in the calendar printed in the [UCLA General Catalog](#). It should be noted that the deadline for submission of the final draft of the dissertation to members of the committee is approximately one month prior to the last date for filing the final manuscript.

Filing Fee

If the student has completed all degree requirements, except the filing of the dissertation and/or the final oral examination, the student may be eligible to pay a modest filing fee during the quarter in which the degree is to be awarded, instead of registering. Information and forms for this purpose are available in the [Student and Academic Affairs Section of the Division of Graduate Education](#) online. (Note: These requirements change occasionally and students should contact the Division of Graduate Education during the year they expect to file their dissertations.)

Luskin Commencement and the University Hooding Ceremony

Doctoral graduates are encouraged to attend both the University Doctoral Hooding Ceremony and the exercises conducted by Luskin School of Public Affairs (LSPA). In the LSPA ceremony, the chair of the student's dissertation committee briefly describes the student's intellectual journey and presents the degree. The hooding ceremony, however, is the official campus exercise for awarding of the doctoral degree.

LSPA Commencement Ceremony

To participate in the Luskin School of Public Affairs' commencement ceremony, doctoral candidates (who may not yet be eligible for the University hooding ceremony) must meet the following requirements:

1. Schedule dissertation defense by end of summer quarter.
2. Obtain approval from their dissertation committee chair.
3. Submit a completed request form by the end of second week of Spring quarter to the Director of Student Services. The requested form can be obtained from the Director of Student Services.
4. Respond to Department emails confirming your participation in the ceremony.

Students should confirm with their dissertation chair that they are attending the LSPA Commencement Ceremony. If the dissertation chair will not be present to introduce the student and present their degree, the student should work with the chair to identify and ask an alternative faculty member, such as a committee member.

Doctoral Hooding Ceremony

To be eligible to participate, doctoral students upload their completed dissertation and have all committee members approve on or before a date set by the Division of Graduate Education (usually in the first week of June). Doctoral students who complete the filing process are sent an email invitation with information they need to participate in the ceremony. Students who file during the Spring quarter receive the material soon after their dissertation is signed off by all committee members. For more information, visit the [Division of Graduate Education calendar](#).

Fellowships and Financial Aid

Guaranteed Funding Packages

The Doctoral Program of the Department of Social Welfare provides various sources of funding, including fellowships, fee/tuition awards, and teaching assistantships. In the Department of Social Welfare, we allocate funding packages equally for all members of a given cohort based on the availability of resources. These packages, communicated in students' offer letters, reflect funding we can guarantee for the first four years in the program.

Tuition Support

Tuition support outside of recruitment package commitments is provided via ASE/TA work appointments. We typically match between student need and available positions based on course content and expertise. Additional considerations balance several principles, including (1) the need for fairness across all students; (2) encouraging students to seek fellowships and other aid; (3) equity in assigning TA positions; (4) recognition of faculty members' needs and differential teaching abilities across students; (5) the department's matching requirements on some awards; (6) progress toward the degree; (7) new allocations received during the academic year; (8) the specific requirements of awards; and (9) other special circumstances and opportunities.

Allocation of tuition support is based on departmental service (ASE/TA positions), academic performance and financial need. Priority for ASE/TA positions is given to students in their first four years of study, when students have heavy course loads and fewer opportunities to engage in work appointments. Students must be willing to work in service to the Social Welfare Department or the Luskin Public Affairs Undergraduate Program to receive tuition support outside of their recruitment contract funded tuition quarters. Stipend funding is not dependent on acceptance of a work appointment.

The Department does not cover non-resident tuition fees for non-international students after the first year. Students may seek to establish [California residency](#) during the summer after their first year. The Department sends out reminders about residency in the summer, and it is the students' responsibility to pursue in-state residency. Residency questions should be directed to the Residency Deputy.

Applying for Fellowships and Aid

Students are strongly encouraged to apply for scholarships and other aid from the Division of Graduate Education, various programs and departments in the University, and extramural funding sources, including competitive training and dissertation grants.

Predoctoral fellowships are designed to support your doctoral training. Some are available to first-year graduate students whereas others (e.g., NIH) are generally designed for students in their third year.

Dissertation grants are designed to support your dissertation research and are typically received in your last year in the program but applied for earlier.

The Fellowship and Assistantship Office of the Division of Graduate Education administer University fellowships and is a source of information and application forms for many fellowships offered by private foundations and agencies. The [UCLA GRAPES database](#) is a useful resource for available funding and should be checked regularly.

Students are strongly encouraged to apply for the Division of Graduate Education fellowship funding (i.e., Graduate Research Mentorship (GRM) and/or other Privately Endowed fellowships before advancing to candidacy and the Dissertation Year Fellowship and/or Privately Endowed Fellowships after advancing to candidacy. Application deadlines for these University fellowships are generally mid-January prior to the fellowship year. Deadlines for privately funded fellowships vary but are usually one year before the actual fellowship award. Interested students should check with the Fellowship and Assistantship Office regularly to keep informed of opportunities as they become available.

Students are strongly encouraged to apply for outside foundation, National Science Foundation (NSF) or National Institutes of Health (NIH) fellowships as well. Students who apply for extramural grants (i.e., from outside of the university) will need to work with their faculty mentor's fund manager and the UCLA OCGA (Office of Contract and Grant Administration) to officially submit the application and to process the paperwork and manage the grant award when it is received.

Seeking Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) Positions

Announcements about graduate research assistantships (GSRs) may be distributed by email or posted in the doctoral student office area, but inquiries with individual faculty members are also recommended. Students should also explore the University's GSR Marketplace for GSR positions across the University.

Research assistants are appointed to the title Graduate Student Researcher (GSR) and are selected on the basis of scholastic achievement and promise as creative scholars. GSRs assist faculty with scholarly research under the direction and supervision of a faculty member.

Eligibility for Departmental Funding

All students must be registered and enrolled in at least 12 units by the third week of each quarter to be eligible to work and receive departmental funding.

Students should consult their offer letters for any additional requirements for funding eligibility. Some students are required to seek funding outside of the department to be eligible for funding in the fourth year.

Regulations and procedures regarding fellowships and financial aid are varied and subject to change. Although many sources of funds are available to doctoral students, most opportunities are competitive. Students are advised to make inquiries well in advance as they look ahead to the next year and to not assume that any one approach to obtaining support will be successful.

International students may be ineligible for some sources of funding, and are encouraged to review the section below on guidance for international students.

Maximum Earnings

Students are limited to how much financial support they can receive from the University, and the University's policy can be found here: <https://grad.ucla.edu/funding/financial-aid/maximum-limit-of-merit-based-support/>.

Emergency Aid and Loans

The UCLA Financial Aid Office administers grants-in-aid and loans to students. University emergency loans may be applied for at the Student Loan Service, A227 Murphy Hall. An emergency loan is generally for an amount up to \$1,000. Students are eligible for one emergency loan per academic year.

Teaching Assistantships

Having doctoral students serve as Teaching Assistants (TA) benefits both the Department and doctoral students. The Department gains the talents and energy of a group of developing scholars who assist with MSW and undergraduate courses. Doctoral students receive income, fee remission and acquire some teaching experience under the supervision of faculty advisors.

There are several job titles under the umbrella of Academic Student Employee (ASE), including teaching assistant, teaching associate, teaching fellow, and special reader. These positions all involve supporting classroom instruction and student learning and vary in the scope of responsibilities and job descriptions.

Application Process

The Department will send out a call for applications to TA positions, usually in the winter or early spring for the next academic year. Students will indicate their preferences for TAing for particular courses. Preferences cannot always be honored. TAs are matched to courses based on factors such as their preferences, expertise, and Departmental needs. Assignments are communicated with students as soon as they are finalized.

Students who do not apply by the stated deadline may not receive a ASE/TA position, as they may already be filled.

Responsibilities of Students

TAs may be assigned a variety of tasks, including leading discussion groups, developing and grading assignments, preparing and grading tests, assembling reading materials and bibliographies, holding office hours, or preparing a guest lecture. TAs with 25%

appointments are expected to devote approximately 110 (varies based on minimum required for fee remissions) hours per quarter to these endeavors. TAs may enroll in Independent Study (SW 375, 2 units) during the quarter they are working to reflect the learning that is expected and the mentoring that the faculty are expected to provide them. The 2 units associated with a 375 enrollment must be in addition to the required 12 units to maintain eligibility.

Responsibilities of Faculty

All the activities of the TA are to be accomplished under the close supervision and mentoring of the faculty member teaching the course. It is the responsibility of the faculty to meet regularly with the TA, to negotiate and monitor how the allotted hours will be allocated over the quarter, to provide guidance, feedback and advice about methods of teaching, grading, and handling problems with students.

Evaluation

Faculty teaching supervisors are strongly encouraged to provide graduate TAs with regular feedback on their performance throughout the quarter they are teaching. Students may request a letter or recommendation from their faculty-teaching mentors for future job applications and opportunities. All students will be notified if an evaluation letter is placed in their file and will be given an opportunity to respond.

Resolving Conflicts

It is inappropriate for a TA to be given sole or primary responsibility for developing the course syllabus, for selecting the required readings, for teaching the class, or for course grading. In this case, TAs should discuss the issue with the Instructor.

When problems between a TA and an instructor develop that are not resolved, the instructor or TA may ask the Doctoral Program Chair to help them find a resolution. If the situation still cannot be resolved, the situation will then be handled by the Department Chair, and if necessary, the Department of Labor Relations.

Training/Orientation Prerequisites

The department requires that all TAs participate in the campus-wide TA Orientation Conference, held each September. Because all of our doctoral students will hold a TA position during their course of study, we strongly recommend that students take this training at the beginning of their second year in the doctoral program. In addition, all new TAs must take the TA introduction class (495), and all hired TAs must attend an orientation session to be held in the Luskin School each fall. Students will be compensated for the orientation.

International Student Requirements

International graduate students, including permanent residents, must pass the TOP (Test of Oral Proficiency) exam prior to being appointed under any teaching title.

Benefits and Policies

Tuition Remissions

All appointments of 25% for registered students are eligible for 100% tuition remission for the quarter they are teaching along with applicable health benefits (note that there will still be a small balance that the student is responsible for paying).

A TA can receive only one fee remission per term (i.e., tuition is paid only once for the student) and any other fee support that has been allocated to a student will be forfeited and cannot be redirected to them in any other way. Please notify the Doctoral Program Chair and Director of Student Services ASAP if you anticipate receiving fee support from more than one source.

Maximum Work Appointments

Students are subject to maximum work appointments as a ASE/TA at the university. This maximum appointment is 12 quarters of ASE/TAships until advancement to candidacy and 18 quarters total. For students who served as a ASE/TA at UCLA prior to joining the Social Welfare program, those quarters of ASE/TA appointments count toward the maximum appointment limit.

Childcare Reimbursement

Graduate Student TAs are eligible to participate in a childcare reimbursement program of up to \$1,350 per quarter for children up to the age of 12. The [application](#) and a [fact and FAQ sheet](#) for the Academic Student Employee Child Care Reimbursement Program are available online.

Leaves

Under the current contract, paid leaves for childcare or health related reasons are available for monthly employees (TAs).

Allocation of Workload

By the beginning of week 2 of the quarter, a document specifying students' responsibilities and workload must be completed by the instructor and given to the Doctoral Program Chair. (See Appendix B for examples.) This anticipated allocation of workload responsibilities can be modified once the quarter is underway, and these modifications must be noted and signed with all parties receiving copies of the revised

agreement. The University is responsible for ensuring that students do not exceed their allocated hours. Students must take initiative to notify their teaching mentor/instructor if their workload is expected to exceed the number of allocated hours so that adjustments in workload may be made in a timely fashion.

Union

ASE and teaching assistantships are unionized positions. Visit <https://www.uaw4811.org/> for more information.

Conference Funding

Eligibility for Funding

Students must first use their allotted \$1,000 in travel funding from the Division of Graduate Education (DGE) before they can request departmental funds. Only \$500 can be used annually. This means that first and second year students are ineligible for departmental conference travel funding.

Only one travel award is allowed per student, per year whether you use DGE funding or request departmental funding.

Students must be in good standing, enrolled in 12 units with GPA above 3.0 and have no pending disciplinary actions.

The Department allows students who are presenting authors up to \$500 in travel reimbursement. The student must be first or presenting author on the work being presented. Attending a conference without presenting does not qualify for departmental funding.

Students in year 7 and beyond are not eligible for departmental conference travel funds.

Students who receive other funding awards for conference travel are not eligible to receive departmental funds.

Documentation Required for Requesting Departmental Funding

Requests to the department should be submitted after travel is completed.

A copy of letter or email of acceptance of abstract for paper or poster presentation must be submitted with the following information:

1. name of conference
2. date of conference
3. location of conference

Receipts must be submitted to Ervin Huang via [THIS FORM](#) within 2 weeks of travel to allow for processing.

Allowable Expenses (with receipt)

- Registration/membership fees related to the conference.
- Airfare (economy only) and fee for one checked bag**
- Car rental**
- Lodging (up to \$333/per night, but is not reimbursable if travel is within 40 miles of residence or for a day trip)
- Mileage for personal car only – with mileage calculation documentation
- Gas reimbursement for car rental only
- Bus, train, cab/ride share, shuttle, parking (with receipt).
- Meals (up to \$92/per day as of January 1st, 2025 but cannot be reimbursed if it is a day trip)

**For these expenses, documents must show itemized charges and form of payment (or zero balance), dates, and the student's name. Click [here](#) for campus policy regarding travel.

Unallowable Expenses

- Airfare paid for by non-cash certificates (e.g., airline miles).
- Airfare to multiple destinations will be questioned and may be excluded.
- Charges for additional checked bags.
- Travel insurance for airfare.
- Travel insurance for car rental.
- Lodging extras such as room service, gym fees, movie/video, phone charges.
- Lodging in someone's home, within a 40-mile radius of the traveler's residence or office.
- Gas not reimbursable for personal car travel.
- Mileage amount claimed cannot exceed the cost of airfare to the travel destination.
- Optional banquet or networking events.
- Material expense: printing, post, computer application, etc.
- Transportation and lodging combined as a package travel deal cannot be reimbursed, unless the vendor provides a breakdown of all expenses and applicable taxes (such as airfare, airfare tax, room rate per night and room tax per night).

Requesting Funds: Timeline and Form

The reimbursement request will need to be submitted by the Department within 45 days of the travel/conference. Original receipts must be submitted to Ervin Huang within 2 weeks of travel to allow for processing.

Submit your request via [THIS FORM](#).

Housing, Parking, and Transportation

University Housing

Students wishing to live in University owned housing should apply ASAP as space is in high demand. University housing is not guaranteed. Go to <https://housing.ucla.edu> and click on “My Housing” to complete the application. This website has a map of and information for off-campus housing.

Housing Resources

Here are some articles on how to find an apartment in Los Angeles. Please keep in my mind that UCLA is located on the west side of Los Angeles. The Luskin School of Public Affairs’ address is 337 Charles E. Young Drive East, Los Angeles, CA 90095.

Curbed Los Angeles: The Los Angeles Renters’ Guide:

<https://la.curbed.com/2018/6/21/17477888/los-angeles-apartments-renters-guide>

Los Angeles Times: Looking for Your First Apartment in L.A.? Start Here:

<https://www.latimes.com/homeless-housing/story/2021-10-10/guide-to-finding-first-la-apartment>

PODS Blogs: L.A. Moving Guide: The Ultimate Guide to Los Angeles Neighborhoods:

<https://www.pods.com/blog/l-a-moving-guide-the-ultimate-guide-to-los-angeles-neighborhoods>

L.A. Moving Guide: How to Find an Apartment in Los Angeles:

<https://www.pods.com/blog/l-a-moving-guide-how-to-find-an-apartment-in-los-angeles>

For other online housing links, please see the following:

Apartments.com (Rentals): <https://www.apartments.com/>

Zillow (Rentals): https://www.zillow.com/homes/for_rent/

Redfin (Rentals): <https://www.redfin.com/>

Craigslist Los Angeles: <https://losangeles.craigslist.org/search/apa>

Facebook Market (Property Rentals): Please login to your individual accounts for access.

Please contact Nael Rogers for additional assistance with housing resources. Their email is NaelRogers@luskin.ucla.edu.

Parking

Students can purchase a parking permit via [UCLA Transportation](#). Due to the limited number of parking allotments available in the School of Public Affairs, permits will be dispersed on a first-come, first-serve basis. Students are encouraged to carpool or take public transportation if possible. Note that parking permits are not effective until the first day of classes. Be prepared to pay for parking (\$17) when you come to orientation or arrange for other transportation. It is nearly impossible to find street parking near campus. We encourage you to obtain a permit or explore other transportation options with the UCLA Parking and Commuter Services Office. Please contact UCLA Transportation with any questions at (310) 794-7433 or via email at pcoordinate@ts.ucla.edu.

Transportation Options to UCLA

Here is a [guide](#) from UCLA's Transportation department on how to commute to UCLA. [Public transportation](#) is frequently used by students given its affordability. Use the Transportation office's [Trip Planner](#) to find the best route and to map out your commute. You can also use this tool to find a [carpool](#) with other UCLA community members.

Employment Policies

Work Limits

It is the University's policy that no student can work more than 50% during the academic year without an Authorization to Work approval for up to 75%. The form to apply for an authorization to work 75% time is here: <https://grad.ucla.edu/gss/appm/maxauth.pdf> Students needing to work more than 50%, who are in good standing and who are making timely degree progress may request an authorization to work more than 50%. These requests should be directed to the Director of Student Services who will prepare the request and begin the approval process.

In the summer months, students can work up to 100% time.

International students are bound to different restrictions based on their visa and campus/federal policies.

Students awarded Division of Graduate Education fellowships may not work over 25% time without having their fellowship award compromised.

Cota Robles Fellows and those receiving the GRM may not work at all in the Fall quarter without an approved exception request.

Students receiving all other fellowships should check with the Director of Student Services regarding the accompanying policy on employment. We encourage students to have these discussions prior to applying for and accepting fellowships.

Students are discouraged from taking on substantial teaching, service or administrative roles outside the University or its allied institutions. Full-time work outside the University is incompatible with steady progress toward the degree.

Fee Remissions

It should be noted that both GSR and ASE/TA positions carry fee remissions. Students combining GSR positions with ASE/TA work should consult with their PI to ensure that the grant is able to cover the GSR portion of fee remission.

Tuition is covered by the department providing the ASE/TA position. For this reason, students must let the department know if they are working in one of these roles outside of the department prior to starting the position, as this has implications for where the student's tuition is charged.

For GSR positions at 25% time or more, the faculty member/PI is responsible for paying for the student's tuition. For this reason, students must be transparent with PIs about their full funding package before accepting a GSR position and while working as a GSR, as these details have implications for financial planning on the part of the faculty/PI.

Childcare Reimbursement

ASE/TAs and GSRs may be eligible for childcare reimbursement. Please see the [Division of Graduate Education](#) policy and the UC contract with the [UAW union](#) representing ASE/TAs and GSRs.

Guidance for International Students

International students face unique challenges while participating in a Doctoral program. International Luskin is a new group created to improve international students' academic and social experiences across all programs at Luskin School of Public Affairs. Please email internationalluskin@gmail.com for more information about the group during the 2025 – 2026 school year.

Funding

Selected scholarships, fellowships, and research grants that do not require U.S. citizenship are found below. To search opportunities by international limitations, please use the [UCLA Graduate Center database](#).

Grants:	Fellowships/Scholarships:
Dissertation Grants: • The American Educational Research Association (AERA) • Investigator Award and Innovative Research Grant: Arthritis Foundation Fellowship & Grant Opportunities • John F. Kennedy Library Foundation • Franklin Research Grants: American Philosophical Society (APS) • Grants-in-Aid of Research Program: Sigma Xi • AAA Northeast Asia Council (NEAC) Korean Studies Grants • Fellowship Grant for Alternatives to Animal Research in Women's Health and Sex Differences • Craft Research Fund Graduate Grant • Getty Library Research Grants • Small Grants for Doctoral Research in Second or Foreign Language Assessment: TOEFL • Grants-in-Aid for Research at the Rockefeller Archive Center Awards: • K Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award • NIH Director's Early Independence Award Program • Smithsonian Native American Awards Program (for visiting students) • Mariam K. Chamberlain Dissertation Award: International Center for Research on Women	• Postdoctoral Fellowships In the Humanities, Arts, Sciences, and Professions • Career Development Program: Leukemia and Lymphoma Society (LLS) • LSRF Fellowship (Eligibility: lab work) • Fellowships at the Wilson Center • Academy Scholars Program: Harvard Academy for International and Area Studies • Fellowship Competition: Andrew W. Mellon Foundation • Scoville Fellowship • Society Fellowships: Society for the Humanities (SCH) • Los Alamos National Laboratory, Oppenheimer Postdoctoral Fellowships • Getty Postdoctoral Fellowships (Residential) • Lawrence Postdoctoral Fellowship • Residential Fellowships: The National Humanities Center • CRI Irvington Postdoctoral Fellowships • UCLA Institute of Transportation Studies Dissertation Fellowship • Spencer Dissertation Fellowship Program • Fellowship Program for Scientists, Engineers, and Mathematicians • World Politics and Statecraft Fellowship • BPI Polikoff-Gautreaux Fellowship • Howard Hughes Medical Institute Gilliam Fellowships for Advanced Study: EXROP • George C Marshall/ Baruch Fellowships • Hench Post-Dissertation Fellowships: American Antiquarian Society (AAS) • Woodrow Wilson Dissertation Fellowship in Women's Studies • Elings Prize Postdoctoral Fellowship

Employment

International students should check employment and teaching restrictions based on visa status, citizenship, and the presence of a U.S. bank account. For information on employment for J-1 scholars and other questions, please visit the [UCLA Dashew Center](#)

for [International Students and Scholarships website \(DCISS\)](#). For F-1 and J-1 students, the following guidelines apply:

	On-Campus Employment	Academic Training	
		CPT (Curricular Practical Training)	OPT (Post-Completion Optional Practical Training)
F1	Can work on campus without obtaining employment authorization from DCISS or the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) in positions such as teaching assistantships, research assistantships, or student positions in service	Allowed to work in off-campus part-time or full-time academic employment or internships relevant to curriculum. Requirements from Graduate students to qualify here .	Available for employment in the U.S. directly related to their field of study after their degree completion, Various opportunities, deadlines.
Relevant Links:			
CPT request form , to be submitted to an F-1 counselor at least 1 week prior to start date, alongside a copy of employment offer.			
OPT Guidelines , OPT request form , and instructions on requirements .			
J-1	May work on campus (up to 20 hours per week or 50% time) while school is in session and full time during the quarter/semester breaks and summer vacation. Must be in good academic standing and obtain on-campus work authorization from DCISS (max 1 year). Full-time pre-completion academic training may be available for students who are participating in a program that requires more than 20 hours per week or students who have advanced to candidacy. More information can be found here .	May have the opportunity to engage in paid or unpaid employment anywhere in the U.S. which is directly related to their major, during or after completion of their studies, provided certain requirements are met. More guidelines on Academic Training found here .	
Relevant Links:			
On-campus employment request form			
Social Security Support Letter from DCISS to apply for an SSN.			

Academic training request form , academic training application submission form
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*On campus jobs may be limited by campus closures and distancing policies.

Other Resources

UCLA's Dashew Center for International Students and Scholars provides guidance on all aspects of life, including unexpected transitional components of coming to live in the United States. [A resource guide on the following topics can be found at the Dashew Center's website:](#)

- Banking and Budget Support
- Driver's License and ID Card
- Housing Advice
- Cell Phones/SIM Cards

On-Campus Library and Computer Resources

Students in the Department of Social Welfare have ready access to an excellent library system staffed by exceptionally competent personnel. The keystone in the system for doctoral students is the Charles E. Young Research Library. Other important links in the system are the Powell (College) Library, the Management Library and the Biomedical Library located in the Center for Health Sciences. Demonstrations and workshops in using the various online systems are available at the beginning of each quarter. Students are strongly urged to attend them; workshops are posted to the UCLA Library website.

Obtaining a BruinCard

As soon as possible after arrival at UCLA, students should apply for their official UCLA ID or Bruin Card (which serves as a library card, debit card for on-campus purchases, and access card). BruinCards can be obtained at the [BruinCard Center](#). Please review the website for hours and necessary documentation to bring with you.

Computing

Students in the School of Public Affairs can access a computing classroom and walk-in computer lab, as well as computers in the commons of the doctoral offices suite. LSPA is primarily a Windows environment and all of the 50 stations in the labs are PCs. Several remote sites are also supported in the Public Affairs Building, including the offices for PhD students. The lab supports Microsoft Office; Stata, SAS, and SPSS statistical packages; and the GIS suite. LSPA also supports a wireless network in the building, and most classrooms have dedicated projection facilities. Access to the complete resources of UCLA, including the Library, is available to all students electronically.

Use of lab facilities and resources for non-instructional activities (i.e., project work) is available on a subscription basis. Printing is charged on a per page basis. Each subscriber is assigned personal file storage (work files only—no software may be installed) and can use any email account they may already have or use UCLA's Bruin-Online service. Visit the website for details. The lab runs on a "terminal-services" model, which allows you to access the lab software and your files from any computer – Mac or PC – with a web browser. All stations also support Flash Media to allow easy backup of your files.

IT Support and Resources

The [Luskin Help Desk](#) is available Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm and by email at helpme@luskin.ucla.edu.

A variety of UCLA software is available for download for graduate students. See [UCLA Digital and Technology Solutions software downloads](#):

Student Resources:

- [Research Support](#)
- [Textbooks](#)
- [UCLA CLICC – Virtual Desktop Systems](#)
- [Connecting from Off Campus](#)
- [UCLA Zoom Help](#)
- [Bruin Learn Support](#)

Administration of the Doctoral Program

A Doctoral Committee, led by the Doctoral Program Chair, governs the doctoral program. This Committee meets regularly to set policies, make admission decisions, monitor the progress of students and oversee the program. The Committee consists of approximately six faculty members and two student representatives. Major policy or curriculum changes are discussed and voted on by the full faculty.

Doctoral students meet periodically to discuss issues of concern. They select from their membership two representatives to serve on the Doctoral Committee and to represent the student body on issues affecting students.

Student Involvement in the Doctoral Program

There are several ways for doctoral students to get involved with the doctoral program. Examples include:

Dean's Committee (inactive for 2025 – 2026)

- 2 – 3 students
- This committee works with the Dean of the Luskin School and the representatives from the Urban Planning Department to present student-identified needs. See “Roles and Responsibilities for Doctoral Student Representatives to the Dean’s Committee” below.

Student Engagement Committee

- 2 students
- This committee is in charge of creating and running the professional development workshops and opportunities throughout the year. See “Roles and Responsibilities of Student Engagement Committee” below.

Doctoral Student Representatives

- 2 students
- This committee meets with the Doctoral Program Chair and represents Social Welfare PhD students at most doctoral committee meetings. See “Roles and Responsibilities for Doctoral Student Representatives” below.

Other Opportunities

- Students may also initiate their own ways of getting involved. For example, last year a student started a “Sunshine Committee,” which sent periodic emails about students’ participation in conferences, awards received, and other positive updates.

Roles and Responsibilities for Doctoral Student Representatives

Students who previously served in this role created the following notes to guide other students who may wish to get involved with the doctoral program in the future.

1. Attend doctoral committee meetings
 - a. Take notes
 - b. Reach out to students prior to meeting to ask for input
 - i. Create anonymous Google form for students to submit program feedback and/or any concerns that students want brought up to the doctoral committee that month.
2. Represent student concerns at committee meetings and other venues.
 - a. Keep an open dialogue both with students and the Doctoral Program Chair. You are the representatives for ALL doctoral students.
 - b. Help facilitate departmental solutions to problems or concerns voiced by the student body.

3. Meet with Doctoral Program Chair before school starts and typically at least once a quarter, and before the end of the academic year.
4. Work with the Doctoral Program Chair to plan the end of the year town hall meeting.
5. Coordinate the Peer Program for incoming first year students.
 - a. Reach out to current students before the academic year to ask for volunteers.
6. Plan social events (aim for 1/quarter). Examples: Welcome events, happy hours, holiday events, etc.
7. Planning 'get to know faculty' talks (coordinate with professional development liaison).
8. Keep students updated on upcoming events via e-mail, word of mouth, and the PhD office white board.
9. Attend the department open house (for students interested in applying to the program).
10. Attend the Admitted Students' Day & Welcome Day.
 - a. Reps serve as a guide to new students throughout the day (e.g., help them with their meeting schedules, give them a tour of campus, escort them to dinner, have them sign up for the Luskin computer lab, etc.).
11. Coordinate with the Professional Development Committee and the Dean's Committee.
12. Coordinate ad hoc events targeting PhD students as needed.
13. Collect suggestions for modifications to the doctoral handbook to present to the Doctoral Program Committee.

Other Notes:

- One way to increase attendance at events is to advertise well in advance and send reminders. Having a point person per cohort can be very helpful. That way you can send more targeted emails. When doing an off-campus networking event (e.g., First Wednesdays), one of the reps will have to put the total bill on a personal credit card. Make sure to have a sign-in sheet at the event and take a photo of the bill after you sign it. After that you will need to submit that bill to Tanya or someone in the third-floor business office with the original sign in sheet and bill (keep the photo of the bill for your own records/in case anything gets misplaced). You will typically be reimbursed in about 3 or 4 weeks. If you aren't currently working as a TA/Special Reader/GSR and have Bruin Direct Deposit set

up, then you will get a check mailed to you. Talk with the Doctoral Program Chair beforehand to get an idea of the budget, so everyone is on the same page about expectations.

- Past doctoral student representatives had a shared Google folder (uclaluskinswdocreps@gmail.com) where we would keep the doc student rep stuff all together. Past reps have kept a detailed spreadsheet of buddies, RSVPs for events, etc.

Roles and Responsibilities for Student Engagement Committee

Students who previously served in this role created the following notes to guide other students who may wish to get involved with the doctoral program in the future.

1. Identify professional development workshop topics.
 - a. Survey students about what topics interest them, days of the week/times that generally work for them, and potential speakers they would be interested in hearing from.
 - b. Aim for at least one workshop and/or professional development event (i.e., writing retreat, mock job talks) per quarter.
2. Plan professional development workshops
 - a. Reach out to potential speakers
 - b. Email the office coordinator to reserve the room, create fliers, and order food for the events
 - c. Use Eventbrite and flier to recruit students (can open these events to urban planning and master's students too).
3. Plan quarterly or yearly writing retreats
 - a. Invite the PhD students to participate in a writing retreat where everyone can discuss their writing and dedicate time to making progress on their work. Ask department staff about funding for food and booking a space.
4. Planning 'get to know faculty' talks (coordinate with student reps).
5. Keep students updated on upcoming events via e-mail, word of mouth, and the PhD office white board.

Roles and Responsibilities for Doctoral Student Representatives at the Dean's Committee

Students who previously served in this role created the following notes to guide other students who may wish to get involved with the doctoral program in the future.

This committee works with the Dean of Luskin and the reps from Urban Planning to present student-identified needs. The needs include but are not limited to:

1. Ph.D. funding (send out annual funding to all the doctoral students in SW and UP)
2. Faculty and student Mentorship
3. TA/GSR training and opportunities
4. The international student support group at Luskin
5. Social event between SW and UP doctoral students
6. Career development

Reporting Experiences of Discrimination and Harassment

The Department deeply values diversity, equity, and inclusion. We do not tolerate harassment or discrimination based on race, ancestry, national origin, disability, religion, age, gender, sexuality, or other category.

Any student who experiences discrimination or harassment should directly report their experience to the Discrimination Prevention Office via the online complaint form:

<https://ucla.i-sight.com/external/case/new/complaint>

Anonymous Comments to Social Welfare Department

To facilitate students' sharing about negative experiences including discrimination and harassment in the Department, we invite students to submit anonymous comments to the Social Welfare Department using this [form](#).

The Doctoral Program Chair and staff have access to this form and the comments and will check it at least weekly. The Doctoral Program Chair will determine how to address the comment, and may, for example, bring the issue to the Doctoral Committee or faculty for discussion, and may, if warranted, craft a response to the doctoral students.

Any comments or feedback for the Doctoral Program Chair and staff that students wish to share anonymously can be submitted via this link.

Doctoral Student Office Space

Each doctoral student is assigned a study area on the first floor of the Public Affairs Building. The assignments are made by the Doctoral Committee Student Representatives. Students should check their email and follow instructions to express interest in an office space.

When students graduate or no longer need office space, they are expected to completely clear out their area and arrange a time to return their keys to the Doctoral Student Representatives.

Expectations for Student Professionalism

Ethics and Integrity

Doctoral study requires adhering to high standards of ethics and integrity in research, service, teaching, and other academic endeavors. Students should adhere to the [UCLA Student Code of Conduct](#). For example, plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity and will not be tolerated. Students must adhere to all ethical guidelines and Institutional Review Board protocols with respect to conducting research with human subjects.

Professional Interactions

To maximize their own education and create a positive learning environment, students are expected to show professionalism in all interactions. This includes:

- Showing up on time and prepared for classes, meetings, and events.
- Meeting agreed-upon deadlines.
- Communicating absences and requesting extensions well in advance and with good reason.
- Making constructive contributions.

Responsibility and Initiative

Successful doctoral students are self-motivated and take ownership of their education, which entails seeking out resources and support when needed, taking advantage of available opportunities, and communicating clearly and promptly when obstacles or other issues arise.

Students are expected to fully read and regularly consult this handbook to fully understand Department guidelines and deadlines for program milestones.

Students are expected to check their email regularly for notifications about department policies, resources, and guidelines.

Respect for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Doctoral students are expected to show respect for all forms of diversity and to contribute to a department climate of equity, inclusion, and anti-racism.

Student Engagement

Doctoral students are expected to attend Departmental events, especially those held for doctoral students. Students should attend the PhD welcome day, the end of year PhD celebration, professional development events, job talks and departmental colloquia, and doctoral student social gatherings.

Balancing the Many Demands in a Doctoral Program

Students balance multiple objectives during their doctoral career, including:

- Progress toward the degree
- Gaining relevant career experience, primarily related to research, but also teaching and socialization in the academy and in social work
- Generating income
- Personal/family life, not discussed here

The objectives can be either divergent or complementary, depending on the individual's circumstances and choices. As individual circumstances vary with respect to financial support, personal/family responsibilities, career preparation and scholastic progress, each student must find their own way to balance their priorities. In general, students who are most successful in obtaining funding while making progress toward the degree:

- Regularly search for opportunities via the internet, via online searches, listserv membership, email inquiries to foundations
- Demonstrate eagerness to gain experience, as well as the need for funding
- Weigh the value of research experience relevant to their career interests/objectives as well as the income generated via a given position
- Consider the advantages and disadvantages of a rapid advance toward the degree vs. teaching and submission of peer-reviewed manuscripts vs. foundational pursuits (e.g., coursework in the 3rd year and beyond, learning not related to one's dissertation)

Students are encouraged to discuss these priorities with their faculty advisor and the Doctoral Program Chair regularly in order to craft an individualized plan.

Mental Health Resources

UCLA's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) supports students' with mental health struggles, substance use, family concerns, and psychiatric medication needs. All registered UCLA students are eligible for their services; visit prices vary according to the insurance provider. Visit the [CAPS website](#) for hours and to make an appointment.

24/7 crisis support is also available by phone at 310-825-0768. In addition to therapy and psychiatry appointments, group therapy is available as well. Visit the [CAPS website](#).

A Caveat About the Handbook

Although the handbook is an important guide for incoming and current students, the faculty have the right to make changes on an annual basis, and to make clarifying

procedural modifications at any time. Significant changes will apply to the stages of a program that lie ahead for a given cohort—but not for stages that a cohort has already passed.

Substantive modifications in program requirements (e.g., requiring an additional course requirement) would in most instances not apply to cohorts already at that stage of their doctoral studies (e.g., a new course requirement for first year students would not apply to students already taking first year courses). Procedural clarifications or modifications of an incremental nature, often applying to non-classroom requirements, would ordinarily apply to all students unless such changes would disrupt or significantly disadvantage students already in the program.

If you need to see the program policies from your admission year, please see the department's Director of Student Services, Tanya Youssephzadeh. The handbook of the current school year is available on the Luskin website on the [“Resources for Students”](#) page.

Appendices

Appendix A: Use Websites for Social Welfare PhD Students

UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs Resources for Students

- [Social Welfare Resources for Students](#)
- [Luskin Graduate Student Resources](#)

UCLA General Information

- [Bruin Card Information](#)
- Information Regarding [Registration and Enrollment](#)
- [UCLA General Course Catalog](#)
- [Schedule of Classes](#)
- [UCLA Residence Requirements](#)

UCLA Division of Graduate Education Resources and Forms

- [Standards & Procedures for Graduate Study at UCLA](#), effective September 2025
- [The Fellowship and Assistantship Office of the Division of Graduate Education Yearly Booklet](#)
- [Nomination of Doctoral Committee](#)
- [Leave of Absence Policy Information and Form](#)
- [GSR Guidelines](#)
- [The Academic Student Employee Child Care Reimbursement Program](#)

- [The Division of Graduate Education Events Calendar](#)

[UCLA Graduate Funding Database \(GRAPES\)](#)

[UCLA Graduate Resources Center](#)

[UCLA Institutional Review Board \(IRB\) Forms](#)

[Human Subjects Protection Certification \(CITI training\)](#)

Dissertation and Thesis Resources

- [Writing Your Thesis or Dissertation](#)
- [Filing Your Thesis or Dissertation](#)

[Statistics Consulting](#)

[Students with Dependents](#)

[Social Welfare Action Plan to Address Anti-Blackness and Racism \(7/2020\)](#)

Appendix B: Academic Student Employee Description of Duties

The job duties for the Academic Student Employee (ASE) are likely to include:

- Attend Lectures
- Instruct section(s)/lab(s)
- Prepare for sections
- Hold office hours
- Respond to student emails/participate in online forum
- Attend meetings with faculty member/other TAs
- Read and evaluate papers, assignments, quizzes, and/or exams
- Proctor exams
- Provide individual and/or group tutoring
- Maintain/ submit student records (e.g. grades)
- Perform other tasks as assigned.

Each week TAs will be required to attend one of the two large classes (approx. two hours) in addition to their assigned discussion section (approx. one hour) and office hours for individual and group meetings with students (approx. one hour). Students should anticipate spending the remaining time each week (approx. six hours) helping the instructor prepare materials for large classes, preparing materials for discussion sections, grading assignments, corresponding with students and the instructor via CCLE and email, etc. During finals week TAs should anticipate spending approximately ten hours grading students' final examinations and posting those grades to BruinLearn.

A Teaching Assistant with a 25% appointment shall not be assigned a workload of more than 110 hours per quarter or a workload of over 40 hours in any one week. The number of hours worked in excess of 20 hours per week may not total more than 50 hours per quarter. A Teaching Assistant with a 50% appointment shall not be assigned a workload of more than 220 hours per quarter. In addition, a Teaching Assistant with an appointment of 50% or less shall not be assigned a workload of more than 40 hours in any one week or more than 8 hours on any one day.

Appendix C: Social Welfare Department Doctoral Student Forms

Conference Funding Reimbursement Request Form

- [Submission Portal](#)

Mentored Research Plan

- [Downloadable Form](#)
- [Submission Portal](#)

Mentored Research Project - Final Report, Student Version

- [Downloadable Form](#)
- [Submission Portal](#)

Study Plan

- [Downloadable Form](#)
- [Submission Portal](#)

Written Exam / Publishable Paper Submission Form

- [Submission Portal](#)
- *use this for first submissions and for revised submissions.

Annual Report Form

- [Downloadable Form](#)
- [Submission Portal](#)

Anonymous Reporting Form

- [Submission Portal](#)

Appendix D: Faculty Mentor Forms and Resources

Written Exam / Publishable Paper Faculty Evaluation Form

- [Submission Portal](#)

Mentored Research Project - Final Report, Faculty Version

- [Downloadable Form](#)
- Email to spasocialwelfare@gmail.com

UCLA's Graduate Advisor's Manual

- [The Graduate Advisor's Manual](#)