**NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY**
**COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES**
**SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE**

**SCCJ Ph.D. PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES**
**AY 2023-2024**

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# Contents

- To educate students for a life of fulfillment and accomplishment.
- To create and translate knowledge to meet global and societal needs.

## SCHOOL OF CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE (SCCJ) MISSION STATEMENT

Graduate programs in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice help prepare students for research, policy development, administrative, and supervisory positions within the various sectors of the criminal justice field. Conditions and needs in criminal justice are always changing and, therefore, the program acquaints students with the most current perspectives as well as with substantive knowledge, technical skills, and analytic methodologies.

## SCCJ THEMATIC AREAS

### Law and Justice

The law and justice theme is focused on the legal, socio-political, and philosophical study of crime and criminal justice. Three primary foci shape the thematic area of law and justice. First, there is a focus on the law as a body of rules and institutions, including the history of criminal law, the basic principles of legal code and processes of lawmaking. Second, the thematic area focuses on the sociology of punishment, considering how rationales, strategies and systems of formal control emerge in the context of broader social organizational relations. Finally, the thematic area is concerned with the meaning of justice, and the philosophical and political underpinnings of varied and often competing conceptions. The law and justice area essentially provides a critical theoretical basis for understanding criminal law, criminal justice systems, and the pursuit of justice in their social and historical context.

### Global Criminology and Criminal Justice

The global criminology and criminal justice theme is focused on key dimensions of international issues in crime and justice. The globalization in many spheres - for example, markets, people, capital, culture, information, knowledge, technology, military, biologically relevant substances - is affecting the causes, motives, opportunities and control of misconduct at the local, national and international levels. Global criminology covers a wide range of interconnected issues and focuses on the need to draw from the wisdom and experience of countries other than one's own. Crime-related theory, research and policy are studied through a global lens. A special focus is on international norm

creation, enforcement and control, as well as issues of international standards' legitimacy and justice. Emphasis is placed on the patterns, trends and impact of cross-border criminality (including transnational organized crime) and international law violations with the view of developing preventive and control strategies, mechanisms and measures applicable to traditional and emerging forms of crime.

**Crime and Public Policy**

The crime and public policy theme is focused on the contributions that criminological theory and research can make to (1) advancing our knowledge and understanding of criminal behavior and (2) developing effective policies of crime prevention and control. Our crime focus involves the study of the nature, distribution, and causes of crime and victimization, with particular attention to measuring crime and testing theories about criminal behavior. Our policy focus includes primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention efforts that target individuals, organizations, institutions, communities, and broad social structural and cultural change. The thematic area of crime and public policy is multi-disciplinary: we improve our understanding of crime and its control by applying insights from the social sciences, the humanities, law, and the natural sciences.

**Crime Prevention and Security**

Crime prevention is often viewed as actions intended to prevent crime or criminal offending in the first instance, and originating outside of the criminal justice system. What can be done to prevent a young person from coming in conflict with the law or intervene with at-risk people or high risk places before invoking police, courts, or corrections? As an alternative to formal justice processing or a means of informal social control, crime prevention is organized around three main strategies: developmental, situational, and community prevention. Security concerns facing the United States today are broader and more complex than at any time in our history. They range from longstanding concerns arising from crime, intergroup violence and conflict to more recently recognized concerns associated with threats to social and economic systems (e.g. economic, financial, energy, and health systems) along with threats arising from the degradation of natural/environmental systems. Each of these major types of threats to security is often interconnected, and policies to address them require comprehensive and collaborative initiatives. The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice, because of its historical focus on global concerns, human rights and social justice, has taken a leadership role in addressing the complex character of threats to security.

**Fairness and Legitimacy in the Criminal Justice System**

This thematic area is focused broadly on the fairness and legitimacy of criminal justice institutions in their practice and policy. The area focuses on several key questions. The first is whether criminal justice agents and institutions represent and respond to historically marginalized groups *fairly*. The second taps into perceptions of *legitimacy* by asking how institutions are viewed by the public, and particularly by historically marginalized populations. The third involves potential differences in crime among historically marginalized groups, and the connections between this crime and law-making and enforcing processes. The fourth involves perceptions: the way historically marginalized groups perceive crime and justice and the way they are perceived by others as connected to crime. In all of these questions, we utilize a broad definition of marginalized groups, including those organized along the lines of race, ethnicity, class, immigration status, gender, and sexual orientation, among others. Research and classes in this theme promote the advantages of viewing crime and criminal justice issues from a diversity of perspectives, and encourage critical reflections on our institutions and their policies and practices.

## PROGRAMMATIC LEARNING OUTCOMES

The doctoral program in Criminology and Justice Policy is designed to create independent scholars with a distinct area of specialization and the skills necessary to contribute to the intellectual development of their area and the field more generally. The program is research oriented and practice oriented.

The Ph.D. program is strongly committed to producing the next generation of research-productive scholars. Coursework, qualifying examinations, and dissertation structure are geared toward providing students with the theoretical, methodological, quantitative, qualitative, and practical skills needed to obtain top-tier academic positions in the discipline. Additionally, students work with faculty members to individualize their courses of study within existing frameworks to fulfill career aspirations.

In keeping with Northeastern's long-standing, practice-oriented approach to education, the Ph.D. program links students to city, regional, and national agencies. Students gain valuable experience working with practitioners through faculty who collaborate with policy-makers via grant-work. Students are encouraged to apply skills obtained through the Ph.D. program to practice.

Over the course of their programs, students in the doctoral program in Criminology and Justice Policy are expected to:

- Apply acquired foundational knowledge in the field of criminology and justice policy to theoretical and policy questions in the realm of criminology and justice policy.

- Understand the role of systemic racism and intersecting dimensions of oppression in the development of policies and practices across the criminal justice system, as well as in crime and justice theory and research.

- Critique the knowledge base in a specific domain within the field of criminology and justice policy to demonstrate advanced mastery of theoretical explanations for crime, its causes and consequences.

- Design and carry out original research using methodological tools acquired to develop new theoretical or empirical insights and expand the knowledge base in the field of criminology and justice policy.

The achievement of specific learning outcomes is assessed through a series of qualifying examinations. Each qualifying examination is associated with one of the three specific learning objectives and are described in more detail in relevant sections of this document:

- A "Foundations Examination" (the First Qualifying Examination), graded by a committee, assesses the student's mastery of foundational knowledge gained through the first-year required courses in the program.

- An "Area Exam" (the Second Qualifying Examination) graded by a committee, assesses the student's ability to critique the knowledge base in a specific domain within the field of criminology and justice policy to demonstrate advanced mastery of theoretical explanations for crime, its causes and consequences.

- A "Publishable Paper" (the Third Qualifying Examination), reviewed by a committee, and revised through the Practicum in Writing and Publishing assesses the student's ability to contribute to a specific domain within the field of criminology and justice policy.

- The dissertation proposal defense and dissertation defense, before a committee, assess the student's ability to become independent scholars contributing to the ongoing development of knowledge across the field of criminology and justice policy.

## CRIMINOLOGY AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (SCCJGSA)

Graduate students in Criminology and Criminal Justice have a graduate student association. All graduate students are encouraged to participate in SCCJGSA meetings and events. The SCCJGSA seeks to foster a healthy graduate student culture in which students can develop academically as well as professionally while learning and establishing long-lasting relationships with fellow students and faculty.

## UNIVERSITY GRADUATE STUDIES POLICIES

The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice's policies and procedures document must be used in conjunction with the Northeastern University Graduate Catalog and Graduate Bylaws. Additional university-wide policies can be found on the Provost's Office website.

University-wide policies apply to matters of transfer credit, degree requirements, registration requirements, incomplete coursework, parental leave, and leaves of absence. If you need help finding a policy, please contact the graduate program director or administrator.

## SCCJ ACADEMIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### Student Employment Policies

Faculty in the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice often have (or pursue) funding for research projects. To ensure greater equity for faculty and students, the College of Social Sciences and Humanities has established the following standard hourly rates that should be used when applying for funding or when hiring students:

- Doctoral: $25.00/hour*
- Masters Students: $19.00/hour
- Undergraduate Students: $16.00/hour

These rates apply to all hires made on or after September 1, 2022.

### SGA Research Opportunities

The College of Social Sciences and Humanities posts SGA research opportunities via an online portal each semester. While students with year-round funding must apply to summer positions via the research opportunities portal in February, all currently funded students are eligible and encouraged to apply for competitive summer positions.

## SCCJ Forms

Current versions of all forms referred to in this document are available on our website.

## Registration

Students must register for courses via the Student Hub web portal. Stipended graduate assistantships require full-time registration. To ensure timely stipend payments, students should register when registration opens for the next academic term. Please refer to the Registrar's website for additional course registration information and timelines.

## Grading System

| A | 4.0 | This grade is awarded to those students whose performance in the course has been of outstanding graduate caliber |
|---|---|---|
| A - | 3.667 | |
| B+ | 3.333 | |
| B | 3.0 | This grade is awarded to those students whose performance has been at a satisfactory level. |
| B- | 2.667 | |
| C+ | 2.333 | |
| C | 2.0 | This grade is awarded to those students whose performance in the course is not at the level expected in graduate work.  This grade indicates significant and substantial gaps in the student's understanding of the subject matter and is generally predictive of problems in successfully completing the doctoral program. |
| C- | 1.667 | |
| S | Satisfactory | |
| U | Unsatisfactory | |
| I | Incomplete | In accordance with University policy, all incomplete grades must be completed within one academic year. The student must also have on file with the Graduate Program Office a signed Incomplete Grade Petition Form. |
| F | Failure | |

## Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements

**College of Social Sciences and Humanities (CSSH) GPA Requirements**

CSSH requires that that Ph.D. students maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5. When a student's cumulative GPA falls below this requirement, the student is placed on academic probation by the college.

## Academic Advisor

All Ph.D. students are advised by the Ph.D. program director on matters related to program planning. Doctoral students are assigned to a faculty member as a Teaching or Research Assistant during the first year in the program. During the spring semester in their first year, doctoral students will choose an academic advisor, who will serve as their 2nd Qualifying Area Exam Chair. The role of the advisor is to: assist the student in planning their course of study while at Northeastern; to provide the student with both academic and professional advice; and to oversee the 2nd Qualifying Exam process. Students may opt to change academic advisors at any time during their time in the program.

## Annual Program Planning

By March 1st of each academic year, all doctoral students are required to complete and submit program plans to the SCCJ graduate office. Each student will then meet one-on-one with the PhD Program Director for an annual review meeting.

A full faculty review of doctoral students occurs in April. Prior to the beginning of each academic year (on or before September 1st), all doctoral students will be individually notified in writing of the program's expectations for their progress over the next academic year. The notification will also indicate whether or not they are making satisfactory progress toward degree requirements.

## PH.D. IN CRIMINOLOGY AND JUSTICE POLICY DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

*Note: Please refer to the [Graduate Catalog](#) for detailed degree requirements*

**Bachelor's Entry:** 54 Credits (26 credits of core requirements and 28 credits of electives)

**Advanced Standing:** 42 Credits (26 credits of requirements and 16 credits of electives)

### PhD Curriculum by Program Year

| | Fall Semester | Spring Semester | Summer Semester |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Year 1** | Pro-seminar 1<br>Criminology and Public Policy 1<br>Quantitative Analysis<br>Theories of Criminal Justice Process | Pro-seminar 2<br>Criminology and Public Policy 2<br>Advanced Quantitative Analysis<br>Advanced Research and Evaluation Methods | *Completion of 1st Qualifying Exam:*<br>**Foundations Exam** |
| **Year 2** | Electives x 4 (BA/BS Entry)<br>Electives x 2 (Adv. Entry) | Electives x 3 (BA/BS Entry)<br>Elective x 2 (Adv. Entry) | *Completion of 2nd Qualifying Exam:*<br>**Area Exam** |
| **Year 3** | Exam Prep<br>*Draft of Publishable Paper Due by December 1* | Exam Prep<br>*Writing and Publishing Practicum* | *Completion of 3rd Qualifying Exam:*<br>**Publishable Paper**<br>*(can be completed in Year 2)* |
| **Year 4** | Research | Research | Practicum in Teaching<br>*Completion of* **Dissertation Proposal** *(can be completed in Year 3)* |
| **Year 5** | Dissertation Term 1 | Dissertation Term 2 | Dissertation Continuation through Degree Completion |

## Core Requirements

All students take 26 semester hours of required coursework (12 four semester hour core courses, plus a two-semester hour practicum). The zero credit two-semester Pro-Seminar is also required of all 1st year students. All students preparing to teach for the first time are required to take a zero credit Practicum in Teaching.

## Electives

For students entering the program with a bachelor's degree, a total of twenty-eight (28) semester hours of elective credit (7 electives) is needed in order to complete this requirement. For student given advanced entry, a total of sixteen (16) semester hours of elective credit (4 electives) is needed in order to complete this requirement. Students may pursue specialized interests by selecting courses up to two courses in other graduate programs at Northeastern (additional electives outside of criminology and criminal justice require SCCH graduate program approval).

## Directed Studies

In order to pursue specialized interests not covered by the curriculum, Ph.D. students are allowed to enroll in up to two directed studies (8 semester hours) during the graduate program. Students may petition to increase the number of directed studies taken. Such petitions will be approved by the school's Ph.D. Program Director. In a directed study, students are able to explore an in-depth area of literature or to conduct a research project, under the close supervision of a member of the faculty. Once the directed study is approved by the Ph.D. Program Director as well as any relevant faculty, the student must register for the directed study through the [Student Hub](#).

## Qualifying Examination Preparation, Research, and Dissertation Coursework

After completing traditional coursework, students will enroll in various zero credit courses. These courses provide students with an opportunity to remain full-time, pursue directed studies, prepare for qualifying exams, and engage in dissertation work.

| CRIM 8986 Research | Summer research, directed study, and dissertation proposal work |
|---|---|
| CRIM 8960 Exam Prep | 2nd Qualifying Exam preparation |
| CRIM 9900 Dissertation 1 | ABD, first semester + working on dissertation |
| CRIM 9991 Dissertation 2 | ABD, second semester + working on dissertation |
| CRIM 9996 Dissertation Continuation | ABD, third semester + working on dissertation |

All students will enroll in Exam Prep with their Area Exam and/or Publishable Paper Chair when preparing for the 2nd and/or 3rd Qualifying Exams. Students who are working on their own proposals (after passing the 2nd and 3rd Qualifying Exams) and students who are working with faculty on a directed research project will enroll in Research with their faculty mentor. Both courses trigger full-time status, as do the various Dissertation courses. Students who successfully defend proposals will be advanced to candidacy and will register in Dissertation 1 and Dissertation 2 with their dissertation chair in the semesters immediately following candidacy.

Each of these courses requires a grade for the student that reflects progress over any given semester. A grade of "Satisfactory" is assigned when the student is making progress and has met the requirement of communication with faculty throughout the semester. A grade of "unsatisfactory" is assigned when the student has failed to initiate contact over the course of a semester or appears to have stopped making satisfactory progress. Unsatisfactory progress in qualifying exam preparation, doctoral research, dissertation, or dissertation continuation courses in any semester will result in academic probation and may result in loss of funding or dismissal from the program as specified in the "Doctor of Philosophy Progress Expectations, Academic Probation, and Qualifying Examinations" section.

## Ph.D. Milestones

In addition to the above-mentioned coursework, students in the doctoral program in Criminology and Justice Policy are expected to meet a series of annual progress milestones.

Annual progress milestones include:

1. the successful completion of a Foundations Exam (1$^{st}$ Qualifying Exam) at the end of the first year of study;
2. the successful completion of an Area Exam (2$^{nd}$ Qualifying Exam) by the end of the second year of study;
3. the successful completion of a Publishable Paper (3$^{rd}$ Qualifying Exam) by the end of the third year of study;
4. the completion of a Proposal Defense by the end of the fourth year of study; and
5. annual progress toward a dissertation defense in each of the years that follow.

In addition to properly registering for courses each semester, [Ph.D. students must also communicate the achievement of milestones to CSSH and SCCJ Graduate Offices](#).

| Ph.D. Milestone Reporting | |
|---|---|
| **Qualifying Exam 1: Foundations Exam** | Doctoral students will receive grades and grading committee member comments via email from the Ph.D. Program Director. No form is necessary. |
| **Qualifying Exam 2: Area Exam** | Students will submit the Area Exam summary and their approved annotated bibliography to the SCCJ graduate office. |
| **Qualifying Exam 3: Publishable Paper** | Students must complete a full, committee-approved, draft of the paper before the end of the Fall semester in their third year in the program. Students will revise the paper through the Practicum in Writing and Publishing in the Spring semester of their third year in the program. Following successful completion of the practicum, students will submit the final approved draft of the Publishable Paper to the SCCJ graduate office and will report if/when the paper is submitted to a journal. |
| **Proposal Defense** | Candidates should work with the SCCJ department to announce and schedule their defense at least two weeks prior to the defense. Once a doctoral student achieves candidacy, they must complete the Candidacy Form provided by CSSH to be submitted to the CSSH Graduate Office. The student will also report on their qualifying exams using this form. |
| **En-Route Master's** | Doctoral students who enter the Ph.D. program with a bachelor's degree or non-CJ Master's degree are eligible to earn a MS in CJ by completing coursework in the Ph.D. program. Students will receive a notification from the Registrar regarding "graduating" with a MS degree. No action is required on behalf of the student. Doctoral students will not attend graduation when they receive their MS. |
| **Dissertation Defense** | Candidates should work with the SCCJ department to announce and schedule their defense at least two weeks prior to the defense. Doctoral candidates are also responsible for scheduling a formatting appointment with the CSSH Graduate Office. Please reference the CSSH website for all deadlines and forms related to the defense. |

# SCCJ PhD Program Qualifying Exams

## First Qualifying Examination: Foundations Exam

The required coursework in year one in the doctoral program (comprised of two semesters of criminological theory, two semesters of statistics, one semester of advanced research methods, and one semester of criminal justice process) provides a broad foundational knowledge in the discipline. To ensure that all students have mastered the foundational material emphasized across the required courses for the Ph.D. program and can successfully integrate theory, research, and policy, all full-time funded Ph.D. students are required to take a "Foundations Examination" at the end of their first year in the doctoral program (or upon successful completion of all required courses in the doctoral program curriculum).

## Foundations Examination Eligibility

Students must meet the following criteria to be considered eligible to take the Foundations Examination:

- Successfully completed the required courses with passing grades, AND:

- Successfully completed a minimum of 24 credit hours in the program, AND;

- Be in good academic standing.

The examination is typically administered on the first Monday-Thursday in May after all first-year courses are completed, thus aligning with, yet distinct from, the required courses. The Foundations Examination is a take-home, open book, examination that requires students to answer one of two provided questions (the questions are typically distributed electronically on the first Monday in May by 9am and are due on the following Thursday morning at 9am). The Foundations Exam questions are designed to test theoretical, methodological, and statistical knowledge, thereby providing the opportunity to assess each student's knowledge base from the required courses in the first year of study.

A foundations exam sample question is provided in the appendix of this SCCJ graduate program policies and procedures manual. The sample question is provided to illustrate the "type" of question that might be appropriate for the Foundations Examination. Each SCCJ grading committee is responsible for drafting two questions for the Foundations Exam, so the form and substance of questions will vary from year to year.

Foundations exam questions are designed to elicit a response that demonstrates a student's ability to *integrate theory with methods and statistics and to think critically about policy implications of work in criminology and criminal justice*. The expectation is doctoral-level mastery of the material taught across the first year required coursework (in theory, process, policy, research and quantitative methods). Students should devote appropriate effort to each part of the question as strength in one area cannot make up for deficiencies in another.

The examination is graded by a two person grading team comprised of a grading committee of SCCJ faculty members (the grading committee is comprised of members of the graduate committee and faculty who teach the first-year required coursework).

The Exam is graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Committee members must agree on the decision. In cases where the committee does not agree, a third faculty member will provide input to reach a final decision. To pass the examination, a student must ultimately receive a passing grade from at least two members of the grading committee.

In instances where the committee agrees that *modest* revisions could potentially bring an otherwise failing exam to a grade of pass, the student will have two business days to submit a revised exam. If the revised answer does not sufficiently remedy the deficiencies, the student will fail the exam, be placed on Academic Probation and will be required to retake the exam at the next available opportunity.

If required to retake the exam, the second attempt at the Foundations Exam is graded on a Pass or Fail basis. Failure to pass the Foundations Exam after the second attempt will result in a recommendation for dismissal from the program.

### Foundations Examination Progress Expectations and Probation Guidelines

Funding in the Ph.D. program is predicated on satisfactory academic progress. To maintain satisfactory progress, full-time funded Ph.D. students are expected to have passed the Foundations Exam in May immediately following the end of the first year of study. Students who do not pass the Foundations Exam in May are placed on academic probation for failure to make satisfactory progress. As an end of the first-year exam, students who fail the Foundations exam will be placed on academic probation for the Fall and Spring semesters of the first year. The student will remain on Academic Probation in the summer semester and will be given one opportunity to retake the Foundations Exam in June.

The Foundations Exam is a benchmark exam designed to assess potential for success in a PhD program. Failure to successfully complete the first qualifying exam after a second attempt in June will result in a recommendation for dismissal from the program prior to the beginning of the second year.

Students who are on Academic Probation for failure to pass the Foundations Exam are required to continue making satisfactory progress toward other annual milestones.

## Second Qualifying Examination: Area Exam

After demonstrating their foundational knowledge in year one, students devote themselves to an area of specialization in year two. The purpose of the area exam is to allow students to begin to focus their studies in a broadly defined area of their choosing. *The area should be defined broadly enough that there is a reasonably defined body of theoretical and empirical literature in the area.* The dissertation will usually be drawn from the area but will necessarily be narrower in focus than the area of specialization. The area exam process is described in this section and a more specific timeline with due dates follows.

During the second semester of the first year in the doctoral program, students will work with the Ph.D. Program Director to select a faculty mentor appropriate to their area of interest who will oversee the Second Qualifying Exam (serving as Chair). The Ph.D. Program Director assigns a second faculty "Reader" to form a two-person committee for the Second Qualifying Examination (also referred to as an "Area Exam").

After taking the First Qualifying "Foundations" Exam in May, the student will work with their Second Qualifying Exam Chair to define an 'area of scholarly focus' and to identify the seminal readings in the area. To initiate the process, the student should write a brief (~one page) summary of the area they would like to focus on and how it relates to their more specific research interests, accompanied by an initial draft of a reading list. The reading list, which should include a blend of classic and contemporary books, chapters, and peer-reviewed articles, will comprise the literature that a scholar in the area would be expected to be fluent with (the list can be divided into subsections where appropriate). Once an initial list has been created by the student in ongoing consultation with the Chair, the reader shall be given an opportunity to review the area summary and add to the initial reading list. The list should be approved by both committee members before the end of the summer following the student's first year.

Over the course of the second year in the doctoral program, the student turns the initial approved reading list into an annotated bibliography through writing their own descriptive and evaluative summary of each reading. At a minimum each annotation should provide an overview of the source's main thesis or argument and, where appropriate, place it in a historical context. The annotation must also include a description of the relevance of the source to the student's own research and/or how it relates to other readings in the bibliography. The development of the annotated bibliography continues through the second year of study. Periodic check-ins with the area exam chair to ensure ongoing progress are recommended (scheduling those check-ins is the responsibility of the student).

Once the annotated bibliography is complete, students will prepare a 3–5-page introduction to the bibliography formally defining their area of specialization, thematically organizing and synthesizing the associated literature that comprises the bibliography that follows.

By July 15th of the second year of study, the student shall provide a copy of the area summary and accompanying annotated bibliography to both committee members. To pass the second qualifying exam, the student must meet with the two committee members to discuss the annotated bibliography and what they have learned through the process of preparing it. This meeting shall take place in early to mid-August after the second year of study. The meeting will involve both committee members simultaneously and will be a closed meeting between the committee and student.

Students pass the second qualifying exam once both committee members agree that the student has a developed a reasonably defined area of specialization and has demonstrated sufficient mastery of that area (please note: even where students pass the 2nd Qualifying exam, the committee may suggest additional readings as appropriate).

To maintain satisfactory progress, students must submit their final committee-approved annotated bibliography to SCCJ's Ph.D. program director by August 31st prior to the start of their third year of doctoral study.

### Progress Expectations and Timeline: 2nd Qualifying "Area" Examination
The area exam process begins in the summer following the first year of study and concludes by the August following the second year of study. After taking the Foundations exam in May, students begin drafting their 1-page 'area statement' which describes their

area of focus (and any subareas within the area) and draft an initial reading list/ bibliography which will become a 5-page area statement and annotated bibliography through the exam process.

- 2nd Exam Committee Chair Selected/Reader Assigned: <span style="color:red">Prior to the end of the spring semester of the 1st year of doctoral study</span>
- 1 page Area Statement and Initial Reading List to Chair: <span style="color:red">No later than June 15</span>
- Area Exam Statement and Bibliography to Assigned Reader: <span style="color:red">No later than July 15</span>
- Area Exam Statement and Bibliography Approval Expected:  <span style="color:red">No later than August 15</span>
- **Submit approved initial statement and bibliography to by August 31**
- Work on Area Exam Answer Commences: <span style="color:red">By the beginning of the 2nd year of study.</span>
- 5-page Area Statement and Annotated Bibliography to Committee: <span style="color:red">by July 15</span>
- Area Exam Meeting with the Committee:  <span style="color:red">by August 15</span>
- Area Exam Completed: <span style="color:red">by August 31 of the student's 2nd year</span>
- **Submit final statement and annotated bibliography by August 31**

## 2nd Qualifying Exam: Progress Expectations and Probation Guidelines

Funding in the Ph.D. program is predicated on satisfactory progress toward degree completion. To maintain satisfactory progress, full-time funded Ph.D. students are expected to complete the Area Exam by the end of the second year of study (August 31st).

If significant gaps in the knowledge base are noted in the initial August meeting with the committee, the committee shall recommend additional readings and/or strategies to address the deficiencies and schedule a follow-up meeting to be held before the end of the Fall semester. If the student does not demonstrate sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge during that second meeting, they shall be put on probation and given one final opportunity to pass the exam in the Spring semester. Failure to complete the area exam by the end of the Spring semester of the 3rd year of funding may result in a recommendation for the loss of funding or dismissal.

## Third Qualifying Examination: Publishable Paper

For the third qualifying examination, students work to produce a sole-authored paper of publishable quality. The paper should not exceed 25 double-spaced pages of text (exclusive of references, tables, and figures). Students determine whether they will complete the publishable paper in the second or third year of the doctoral program. If the student is completing the paper in the second year, a complete draft of the paper must be completed and reviewed by the student's committee members by the end of the Fall semester of the second year. It is then vetted and revised through the CRIM 7706:

Practicum in Writing and Publishing course offered in the Spring semester of the second of coursework. If the student elects to complete the requirement in the third year, a complete draft of the paper, which must be completed and reviewed by the student's committee members before the end of the Fall semester of the third year, is then vetted and revised through the CRIM 7706: Practicum in Writing and Publishing course offered in the Spring semester of the third year of coursework.

The expectation is that the paper will be submitted to an appropriate academic journal or publication outlet, but submission is not required to pass the exam. The student will be deemed to have passed the third qualifying examination once both committee members agree that the paper is of publishable quality AND the student has successfully completed CRIM 7706: Practicum in Writing and Publishing.

### Progress Expectations and Timeline: 3rd Qualifying Exam - "Publishable Paper"

*Note that students are encouraged to work ahead of these deadlines, which indicate the <u>latest dates</u> to compete the exam processes

Students may choose to complete the publishable paper during their second or third year of study.  The dates below guide students in either year rotation. Regardless of this choice, <u>all students</u> must complete the 3rd Qualifying Examination by the end of their third year of study.

- 3rd Qualifying Exam Committee Chair Selected/Reader Assigned: <span style="color:red">Prior to the end of the second year of doctoral study</span>
- Work on Publishable Paper Commences: <span style="color:red">No later than August 1st preceding enrollment in the spring research and writing practicum</span>
- Complete Draft of Publishable Paper Submitted to 2nd Qualifying Exam Committee: <span style="color:red">No later than December 1st preceding enrollment in the spring research and writing practicum</span>
- Formal Committee Reviews of Publishable Paper Due: <span style="color:red">December 21st</span>
- Paper and Reviews Submitted to SCCJ Graduate Program Office: <span style="color:red">December 21st</span>
- Student Completes the Research and Writing Practicum: <span style="color:red">Spring semester</span>
- Student Makes Required Revisions to the Publishable Paper and Prepares to Submit the Paper for Publication: <span style="color:red">Prior to the start of the fall semester following the completion of the research and writing practicum</span>

### 3rd Qualifying Exam: Progress Expectations and Probation Guidelines

Funding in the Ph.D. program is predicated on satisfactory progress toward degree completion. To maintain satisfactory progress, full-time funded Ph.D. students are

expected to complete the Publishable Paper and earn a grade of satisfactory in the Practicum in Writing and Publishing by the end of the third year of study (August 31st).

If a complete draft of the publishable paper is not submitted to committee for review by December 1st of the third year and the student therefore does not qualify for the Practicum (year 3, spring semester), the student will be placed on academic probation with potential loss of funding.

The student will have one additional year to submit the paper to the 3rd Qualifying Examination committee for review (by December 1st in fourth year of study). If the paper is not submitted to the committee by that time and does not enroll in the Practicum in the spring of year 4 in the program, they will be dismissed from the program.

## Dissertation Proposal

### Preparing for the Proposal: Dissertation Format

A doctoral dissertation is a fully executed research project that makes a significant and original contribution to the field of study. A dissertation is required of all candidates in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the granting of the doctoral degree. The School of Criminology and Criminal Justice recognizes two basic dissertation formats: the traditional monograph format and the multiple paper model format.  The format of the dissertation is decided by the student in conjunction with the Chair and the broader committee.

The **traditional dissertation format** is a formal, written thesis that represents the culmination of the candidate's doctoral work. Dissertations differ from the traditional graduate research paper (that one might complete for a course) because the candidate must do more than summarize the existing literature and the empirical findings of others. In a dissertation, the doctoral student demonstrates their ability to contribute substantively to the accumulation and advancement of knowledge. Although the typical model in the social sciences is an original empirical research project, students may propose other types of dissertations (theoretical, historical, etc.). Care should be taken in the selection of a dissertation topic as the project must make an independent and original contribution. It is the responsibility of the student to thoroughly search existing literature and previously completed doctoral dissertations to ensure that the proposed dissertation research meets these criteria. ProQuest has a searchable Dissertations and Theses (PQDT) database, available through Northeastern University's library.

The **multiple paper model** requires a portfolio of manuscripts that are ultimately submitted for publication. As described in more detail below, the multiple paper model consists of an introduction; a review of theory and literature; (at least) three complete manuscripts; and a discussion section that summarizes the body of work.

### Preparing for the Proposal: Dissertation Pre-Proposal and Recruitment of the Committee

Students are required to draft a five-page pre-proposal to share with a potential dissertation Chair as well as potential committee members.  The pre-proposal should succinctly summarize the student's research question(s), embed the research question(s) in the literature, outline the underlying theoretical framework(s), and identify the methodological and analytical strategy.  The student submits the pre-proposal to the potential dissertation Chair and potential committee members, soliciting feedback to smooth the proposal preparation process.  Moreover, through the pre-proposal process, faculty members can gain a sense of the direction of a student's work prior to formally agreeing to serve on the committee.

### Preparing for the Proposal: Dissertation Committee

After identifying a dissertation Chair and committee members, the student distributes the pre-proposal.  Once the pre-proposal is approved by the Chair and committee members, the student must file an Examination/Dissertation Committee Approval Form signed by all committee members and the Associate Dean for Academic Programs with the Graduate Office.

Any changes in the make-up of the committee must result in a new form being approved and filed in the Graduate Office. Students **must** notify the graduate program in the event of any change in the composition of the committee (new Chair, new committee member, etc.) immediately. Such changes **require** the completion of a new committee approval form. No third exams or proposal defenses may be scheduled without a current Examination/Dissertation form being on file in the Graduate Office.

The committee should include a minimum of THREE tenured or tenure-track faculty or full-time terminally prepared research faculty (including the Chair) – at least two of whom MUST be faculty from within the School of Criminology and Criminal Justice.  The third member may be from the School, from another department in the College or University, or a terminally prepared (Ph.D. holding) committee member from outside of Northeastern University. Petitions for outside readers will be considered by the full Graduate Committee.

## Preparing for the Proposal: IRB Approval

Pursuing a dissertation (and successfully defending a dissertation proposal) that might fail to receive IRB approval/exemption is futile. It is therefore strongly recommended that all students obtain IRB approval or exemption early in the dissertation planning process and prior to the scheduling of the dissertation proposal defense. If this is not possible, all students must, at a minimum, meet with the Director of Northeastern's Institutional Review Board and file all required forms prior to scheduling the defense.

## Preparing the Traditional Dissertation Proposal

The traditional dissertation proposal, which must be developed in conjunction with the student's Chair, should have the following components:

- An "introduction" or section that introduces the topic, thoroughly describes the theoretical orientation, and identifies the problem or issue to be addressed in the proposed dissertation. The proposal should introduce a problem and explain why it is a problem worthy of research attention.

- A concise "literature review" section that reviews the previous research that is directly relevant to the proposed study (the literature review in the final dissertation will be much more comprehensive than is necessary at the proposal stage). It should then review the relevant literature in a concise and useful fashion i.e., the literature that is most directly relevant to the problem should be reviewed. One does not review all the literature on crime if one is studying the ecology of crime in a small city. If the paper involves theory or hypothesis testing, these should be stated, and the operational and conceptual matters outlined. Relevant definitions should be critically reviewed and evaluated as to their utility in the research. At the end of the literature review, students should identify the knowledge gap that will be filled by the proposed study.

- A section that concisely presents the specific "research questions" and the way in which they will be addressed.

- A "data, methodology, and analytic strategy" section will likely be the most substantial section of the proposal. The data and methodology should be described in enough detail that the committee fully understands exactly what it is that the student proposes to do in their own research. At a minimum, the data and methodology should include a detailed description of the:
  - Population and sample

- Sampling/Subject selection criteria
- Independent and dependent variables or variables of interest
- Measures/Instruments
- Methodology
- Analytic Strategy

This section must include a discussion of how the data will be gathered, their adequacy and limitations and why these methods of collection are superior to others should be included. Data analysis should describe what means will be used to analyze the data, available software, analytic coding, philosophical-critical analysis, statistics to be used and the format for presentation of findings should be outlined.

Moreover, in this section, the student should directly and concretely address how they will decide if the findings are evidence (or not) of the questions raised or arguments addressed.

- A concluding section that discusses how the study will make a significant and new "contribution to theoretical and methodological knowledge." Students should have established the need for the proposed study and explicitly describe the contribution the study will make to existing knowledge.

The length of the dissertation proposal will vary based on a number of factors. That said, a long proposal is not necessarily better than a shorter one. It is expected that proposals will likely range from 35 - 50 double-spaced pages of text in length (not including tables, figures, and references). A succinct, well-argued document is preferable.

## Preparing the Multiple-Paper Model Dissertation Proposal

The multiple-paper model dissertation differs from the traditional dissertation in several respects. With respect to the number and scope of the papers:

- The multiple-paper model dissertation must be comprised of three (or more) manuscripts.

- These manuscripts should be framed as journal articles and must represent original work that commences with the pre-proposal; previously published work is not eligible.

- Manuscripts may use existing data and/or data to be collected.

- At least two of the manuscripts must be empirical pieces (i.e., quantitative, qualitative, or mixed method).

- The papers must form a cohesive program of research, with clear bridges and links between each manuscript.

With respect to authorship:

- At least one of the manuscripts must be sole-authored by the student.

- The assumption is that each manuscript represents independent research and writing conducted by the student under the guidance of the dissertation chair and committee members.

- With approval of the full committee, sole-authored manuscripts derived from the dissertation may be sent out for publication consideration between the time the proposal is defended and the time of the dissertation defense.

- One or more of the remaining manuscripts may be co-authored with the dissertation chair and/or members of the dissertation committee, but the student must be the lead author on these co-authored manuscripts. The co-author(s) may influence the framing, scope, research methods, analysis, and writing of the manuscript, as would be appropriate in the traditional dissertation model. But the expectation is that the co-author will not substantively write any parts of the manuscript until after the manuscript is approved by the chair and the full dissertation committee. As ethical co-authorship requires substantive contributions to the writing of a manuscript that go beyond providing feedback on a student's work, co-authored manuscripts deriving from a student's dissertation should not be sent out for publication consideration until the dissertation has been fully approved and successfully defended.

The multiple paper model dissertation proposal, which must be developed in conjunction with the student's Chair, should have the following six sections:

- A brief "introduction" or section that introduces the program of research and identifies the problem(s) or issue(s) to be addressed in the proposed dissertation. The introduction should introduce a problem and explain why it is a problem worthy of research attention.

- A concise "literature review" section ties together the broad literature on a question. It should provide a summary of the literature base and theoretical

foundation for the larger research agenda. If the paper involves theory or hypothesis testing, these should be stated, and the operational and conceptual matters outlined. Relevant definitions should be critically reviewed and evaluated as to their utility in the research. This section should also review the relevant literature in a concise and useful fashion (i.e., the literature that is most directly relevant to the problem should be reviewed). One does not review all the literature on crime if one is studying the ecology of crime in a small city. At the end of the literature review, students should identify the knowledge gap that will be filled by the proposed studies.

▪ Whether the manuscripts are quantitative or qualitative in nature, a "data, methodology, and analytic strategy" section is an important part of the proposal. As part of the alternate dissertation proposal, **there should be 3 distinct "data, methodology, and analytical strategy" sections**. Each section should first include a brief discussion of the purpose and scope of the specific manuscript and then a more detailed description of the data and methodology to be used in the specific manuscript. At a minimum, the data and methodology sections should include a detailed description of the:

   o Research method, data gathering, population, and/or sampling/subject selection criteria

   o Variables of interest

   o Tools, software, measures, and/or instruments

   o Analytic strategy

These sections must include a discussion of how the data will be gathered, their adequacy and limitations and why these methods of collection are superior to others should be included. Data analysis should describe the type of quantitative or qualitative analytic strategy to be employed, the tools that will be used to support that strategy (including software), and the format for presentation of findings should be outlined. Moreover, in these sections, the student should directly and concretely address how they will decide if the findings are evidence (or not) of the questions raised or arguments addressed.

▪ A summative discussion chapter commenting on the contributions, implications, limitations and future directions of the whole program. This section should discuss

how the manuscripts as a whole will make a significant and new "contribution to theoretical and methodological knowledge."

The length of the dissertation proposal will vary based on a number of factors. That said, a long proposal is not necessarily better than a shorter one. It is expected that proposals will likely range from 35 - 50 double-spaced pages of text in length (not including tables, figures, and references). A succinct, well-argued document is preferable.

### Communication with and Feedback from Committee

As the student works on their dissertation proposal, they should seek regular feedback from the chair. Although the student's mentor will serve as the primary source of feedback in the proposal development stage, students should be regularly updating their full committee as to their progress (not less than once per semester).

As the student develops the proposal, they should be respectful of the many commitments of faculty members and keep lines of communication open and flowing. Students should, where possible, give committee members advance notice of their intentions to send a draft soon.  Although there will clearly be some variation, the general guidelines for content and length of proposals should be followed as closely as possible.

Students should expect to receive feedback from all committee members on a draft of a full dissertation proposal **no sooner than two weeks and no longer than one month from the date of delivery** to committee members.

- The quantity and nature of feedback provided by committee members cannot be dictated. However, as a general rule, committee members should provide some written feedback on a draft (whether in the document itself or in a separate document/email).

- Students are required to respond to the comments/concerns of all committee members – not just those of the Chair of the committee. Where conflicts arise (between recommendations of different members of the committee), the Chair of the committee, together with the student, should work with the committee members to find an acceptable approach.

- Faculty should be able to reasonably expect that any subsequent drafts of a proposal will have taken into account earlier feedback provided. Faculty members should not have to make the same recommendations multiple times. Where

necessary, students are responsible for explicitly explaining why a certain recommendation was not followed.

- Students should expect that they will be asked to submit multiple drafts of proposals – with each new draft incorporating suggested revisions of their committee members.

- Where there are concerns, direct communication between committee members and the Chair is also recommended.

## Scheduling the Proposal Defense

Once the full committee has indicated that the student is ready for a proposal defense, the student is responsible for identifying mutually agreeable examination dates with their committee. The proposal defense will then be scheduled by the Chair of the Dissertation Committee once the student has a fully developed dissertation proposal. Only the Chair of the committee can initiate the scheduling of the proposal defense.

A request to schedule must be submitted to the Graduate Program Office using the [scheduling form](#) **_two weeks in advance of the requested examination dates._** All committee members must have had an opportunity to comment on a complete draft of the proposal prior to the scheduling of a defense. The Chair of the committee is responsible for ensuring that all committee members feel the student is ready to proceed to the defense.

A hardcopy of the final dissertation proposal must be provided to all committee members as well as the SCCJ Graduate Office at least two weeks in advance of the examination. Failure to provide hard-copies of examination materials to the committee may result in the cancellation of the examination.  Although the student is ultimately responsible for getting copies of the proposal to all members of the committee, the process has run most smoothly when the Chair of the committee has facilitated the soliciting of feedback.

An announcement for the dissertation proposal defense will be sent to the broader School community at least two weeks prior to the scheduled date. Proof of IRB approval or exemption must be provided to the SCCJ Graduate Office before work on the dissertation can begin.

## The Dissertation Proposal Defense

The proposal defense will be open to all faculty and PhD students. Each proposal defense will be announced via email.  Proposal defenses are scheduled for two hours.

Students should prepare a ***30-minute presentation*** to be given at the start of the proposal defense. During this presentation, the student will concisely present the purpose, methodology, and analytic strategy for their study to the committee and audience. During the remainder of the exam, the student orally defends the proposal addressing any question or concern that a member of the examining committee or the audience may raise.

At the conclusion of the proposal defense, the student and all non-committee participants leave the room, and the committee discusses the student's proposal and oral presentation. Once a consensus has been reached, the student is invited back into the room to hear their results. Where deficiencies are identified, the committee will summarize those deficiencies - and the steps required to remedy them - in written feedback to the student. The written feedback is the responsibility of the Chair of the committee.

There are **three** potential outcomes for the proposal defense. After deliberation, the committee can vote to:

- **Pass:** If the committee decides that the proposal needs no revision (or only minor revisions), the student works with the Chair of the committee to complete those revisions prior to proceeding. The Chair of the committee must certify that the revisions are complete, and the final proposal must be deposited before the student is advanced to candidacy.
- **Pass with Revisions:** If the committee concludes that the revisions needed are fairly substantial, the student must complete the revisions and the entire committee must certify that the revisions are satisfactory before any data collection can begin. The candidate will only be advanced to candidacy once the final approved proposal signed by all the committee members has been filed in the graduate program office.
- **Fail:** The committee can vote to fail the proposal when the revisions needed are so substantial that the student will need to rethink or restructure the proposal.

A student is considered to have passed the proposal defense only upon completion of any required revisions and, therefore, the student will not be "advanced to candidacy" until all members of the committee have certified that the student has passed the exam with no further conditions and the final approved proposal has been submitted to the Graduate Program Office. A copy of the IRB approval (or exemption) must be filed with

the proposal. The student must provide the SCCJ Graduate Office with a PDF of the final approved proposal and proposal presentation.

## Proposal Defense Progress Expectation

The dissertation proposal defense is expected by no later the end of the student's fourth year of study.

Funding in the Ph.D. program is predicated on satisfactory progress toward completion of degree requirements. Only students who have successfully completed the proposal defense by the end of their fourth year will be guaranteed funding in their fifth year. Additionally, only those who have achieved candidacy may be offered an opportunity to teach.

Students who have not successfully defended a dissertation proposal at least one month prior to the beginning of their fifth year will be placed on academic probation for failure to make satisfactory progress and may lose funding. The student on academic probation will be given two additional semesters to successfully complete the proposal defense. Failure to successfully complete the third qualifying exam in this time frame will result in dismissal from the program.

## Ph.D. Candidacy

Doctoral students in the Criminology and Justice Policy program are advanced to candidacy upon successful completion of: (1) the required semester hours (42 for those entering the program with a Master's degree and 54 for those entering with a Bachelor's degree), (2) the First Qualifying Exam (Foundations Exam), (3) the Second Qualifying Exam (Area Exam), (4) the Third Qualifying Exam (Publishable Paper) and (4) the Proposal Defense before the dissertation committee. Following the proposal defense, students are required to complete any required post-defense revisions and submit a copy of the final approved dissertation proposal, along with the signed approval form, to the SCCJ Graduate Program Office. Candidacy is then certified, in writing, by the College of Social Sciences and Humanities and posted on the student's official academic record.

As per university graduate bylaws, effective Fall 2019, achieving candidacy requires that students defend the dissertation proposal and complete all departmental, college, and university requirements except for the dissertation **within two years of completion of required coursework.**

## DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DISSERTATION

Upon achieving candidacy, the student commences work on the doctoral dissertation. The student should view the proposal as a contract and follow the methodology and analytical strategy as outlined in the proposal as closely as possible. Contact with the Chair and committee is necessary in all cases in which the methodological and/or analytical plan changes substantially. Additionally, the student should update the Chair and committee regularly (at least twice throughout each semester) on his or her progress.

Students should expect to receive feedback on dissertation drafts no sooner than 4 weeks from the date that they sent the complete draft out to their committee members.

- Although students work primarily with their Chairs through early drafts of the dissertation, the entire committee should be kept apprised of any important development (data access problems, change in methodology, analytic technique, etc...). The first full draft of the dissertation should not be the first time a committee member learns of such a change.

- Dissertation drafts are generally quite lengthy and reviewing them is time intensive and therefore 4 weeks for a thorough review is reasonable – though comments sooner are obviously welcome.

- Faculty members can reasonably request more time when full drafts are sent during busy periods (e.g. at the very end of a semester, in the weeks prior to national conferences, etc.).

Dissertation proposals and dissertations are not written in a month or two – nor even usually a semester or two. Students should expect that they will be asked to submit multiple drafts of both proposals and dissertations – with each new draft incorporating suggested revisions of their committee members (and then the revision needing further review). Review/feedback/revision/review loops can be found throughout academia and will follow students throughout their careers. In developing timelines, students should take into account these often-time-consuming review, feedback, and revision loops.

### The Dissertation Defense

Both the dissertation proposal and the dissertation itself are publicly defended before the examining committee. All students, faculty members, and other members of the academic community are invited to attend. Although they are certainly welcome to come to campus

for post-defense celebrations, SCCJ *does not permit* friends or family members to attend proposal or dissertation defenses.

## Dissertation Defense Timeline

The dissertation defense must be scheduled using the [scheduling form](#) at least two weeks before the anticipated defense date. If a student is hoping to defend their dissertation in time for a spring graduation, they should plan on getting a complete draft to the full committee no later than January 1st. For a summer graduation a draft should be submitted by April 1st, and for a winter graduation, a draft should be submitted to the full committee by August 1st. The process of getting from a first full draft to the point where a student can defend and deposit a dissertation typically takes about 4 months (see the timelines below).

### *What is a full draft?*

A full draft of the dissertation is a complete paginated draft *as the student will be expected to defend it*. Full drafts include (1) a title page, (2) a table of contents, (3) each of the chapters labeled and in order – including the introduction and conclusion chapters, (4) all figures and tables formatted as they will be in the final draft (e.g., output from statistical software programs like SPSS is not acceptable), (5) any appendices, and (6) a current and formatted works-cited section. The document must be paginated so that committee members can refer to specific pages where revisions are required.

### *Why 4 Months?*

Using the Spring semester as an example… If a student submits their dissertation draft to the full committee January 1st, the committee has 30 days to send feedback on the complete draft (February 1st). If this is the first time that some of the committee members are seeing the dissertation, there will likely be revisions requiring a second review. If students set aside about a month to make those revisions, they could get the revised draft to the committee by March 1st – and they might be able to quickly look it over and allow the student to schedule an early April defense. They might, however, require another round of revisions before scheduling a defense, in which case the student would NOT be able to graduate as they had hoped at the end of the Spring semester. If a student defends in early to mid-April, they will have a couple of weeks to make post-defense revisions in time for an end of April deposit and May graduation. Keep in mind, when required, post-

defense revisions must be signed off on by the Chair so the student MUST allow time for the Chair to review the final dissertation.

This four-month timeline should be the working timeline regardless of whether a student hopes to graduate in spring, summer, or fall. Model timelines are provided below, and thesis guidelines can be found [here.](#).

***May Graduation - Timeline***
January 1st – Full Draft to Committee
February 1st – Feedback on Draft from Committee Members
March 1st – Revised Draft to Committee
Early to Mid-April – Potential Defense
Mid- to Late-April – Post-Defense Revisions
End of April (date changes each year): Deposit deadline for spring graduation

***August Graduation - Timeline***
April 1st – Full Draft to Committee
May 1st – Feedback on Draft from Committee Members
June 1st – Revised Draft to Committee
Early to Mid-July– Potential Defense
Mid- to Late-July – Post-Defense Revisions
Early August (date changes each year): Deposit deadline for summer graduation

***December Graduation - Timeline***
August 1st – Full Draft to Committee
September 1st – Feedback on Draft from Committee Members
October 1st – Revised Draft to Committee
Early to Mid-November– Potential Defense
Mid- to Late-November – Post-Defense Revisions
Early December (date changes each year): Deposit deadline for winter graduation

### Doctoral Dissertation – Other Guidelines

The Chair of the Dissertation committee should not sign the signature page until the dissertation is in its final approved form. Once all final signatures are obtained, doctoral students need to submit the signature page to the SCCJ graduate office. Students must

also make a formatting appointment with the CSSH Graduate Office before submitting the form and uploading the dissertation.

All graduating doctoral students are required to provide the SCCJ graduate office with an electronic copy of their final dissertation (in PDF format).  As a courtesy, a PDF copy of the final approved dissertation should also be provided to each of the committee members.

### Doctoral Dissertation Progress Expectations

As per university graduate bylaws, effective Fall 2019, doctoral students have **five years from completion of coursework** to defend their dissertations.

Following the completion of traditional coursework, proposal and dissertation related courses are graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Doctoral students are required to maintain contact with their proposal and dissertation Chair each semester to communicate ongoing progress toward degree requirements. Failure to do so will result in the assignment of a grade of unsatisfactory in the dissertation related coursework.

**Academic Progress Review:** A grade of unsatisfactory in dissertation-related coursework in any semester will trigger academic probation and may result in the loss of funding. A second grade of unsatisfactory (whether consecutive or not) may result in dismissal from the program (see the SCCJ Academic Review and Probation Policy).


## PH.D. ANNUAL PROGRESS EXPECTATIONS AND ACADEMIC PROBATION GUIDELINES

### General Progress Expectations and Academic Probation Guidelines

### Required Coursework

In addition to the requirements set forth in the "Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirements" section above, all doctoral students must receive a B- or higher in each and every first-year required course.

If the student receives below a B- in any of the required courses, they will be immediately placed on academic probation with potential loss of funding.  The student must retake the required course(s) below B- to increase the grade(s) to at least a B-.  If the course to be retaken is only offered once per academic year, the student will be placed on probation for two semesters and must retake the course at next offering.  Not more than two courses or eight semester hours of credit (in total, including electives that may need to be repeated to increase the overall GPA), whichever is greater, may be repeated. If the

student does not fulfill these requirements after the course(s) is retaken one time (after 1–2 semesters), they will be dismissed from the program.  Retaking a course does not add credits to the student's degree plan nor should it impact the timing of the student's degree plan.

Students registered for doctoral research, dissertation, and dissertation continuation receive a grade that reflects their progress over any given semester. A grade of "Satisfactory" is assigned when the student is making progress and has met the requirement of communication with all committee members at least once per semester. A grade of "unsatisfactory" is assigned when the student has failed to initiate contact over the course of a semester or appears to have stopped making satisfactory progress. Unsatisfactory progress in exam preparation, doctoral research, dissertation, or dissertation continuation courses in any semester will result in academic probation and may result in loss of funding. A second grade of unsatisfactory (whether consecutive or not) will require Graduate Committee review and may result in dismissal from the program.

### Failure to Make Satisfactory Progress

Failure to meet annual progress benchmarks will result in a series of graduated sanctions within the program. When students have failed to meet progress expectations in either the SCCJ graduate program's policies and procedures manual or in their annual progress expectation letters, they are notified of the deficiency in writing and given a pathway and timeline for remedying the deficiency. Research and teaching assistantships are an integral part of doctoral student training. Satisfactory academic progess therefore includes satisfactory performance in research and teaching assistantship assignments. SGA performance is evaluated at the conclusion of each academic term. As funding is predicated on satisfactory progress toward meeting degree requirements, failure to make satisfactory progress may result in loss of funding. In these cases, the Ph.D. Program Director, with input from the SCCJ Graduate Committee, Associate Director, and Director, will make funding recommendations to the College.

The general expectation is that students who have failed to make satisfactory progress as articulated will be notified of the deficiency in writing, placed on Academic Probation, and advised of a pathway and a timeline to remedy the deficiency. When students fulfill the satisfactory progress requirements within one academic semester, they return to good academic standing.  Failure to remedy the deficiency or a second semester on Academic

Probation may result in a recommendation for loss of funding or dismissal from the program. In these cases, the Ph.D. Program Director, with input from the SCCJ Graduate Committee, and the SCCJ Director, will make a funding and/or dismissal recommendation to the College. The expectation is that students who fail to remedy deficiencies as articulated in written correspondence regarding the deficiency and/or in the satisfactory progress letter will be recommended for dismissal.

## Qualifying Exams and Satisfactory Progress Deadlines

| Exam | | Exam Timing | Satisfactory Progress Deadline |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Qualifying Exam 1** | Foundations Exam | **1st Year**<br>Offered in May | **End of Year 1** |
| **Qualifying Exam 2** | Area Exam | **2nd Year**<br>Fall or Spring Semester | **End of Year 2** |
| **Qualifying Exam 3** | Publishable Paper | **2nd or 3rd Year**<br>Fall Semester - Approved Draft<br>Spring Semester - Writing Practicum | **End of Year 3** |
| **Proposal Defense** | Candidacy Achieved | **3rd or 4th Year**<br>Fall or Spring Semester | **End of Year 4**<br>*(within 2 Years of Coursework Completion)* |
| **Dissertation** | Dissertation Defense | Annual Progress until Completion | **End of Year 5**<br>*(within 5 Years of Coursework Completion)* |

## Academic Appeals Process

In accordance with university policy, graduate students are encouraged, whenever possible, to follow the guidelines in the Graduate Catalog  to resolve academic disputes during their doctoral program.

If the academic dispute is not satisfactorily resolved, the student can pursue avenues of appeal as prescribed by the College of Social Sciences appeals policy described in the Graduate Catalog.

*Note: The question below is a \*sample question\* for the First Qualifying "Foundations" Examination that the Graduate Committee generated to provide an example of the \*type\* of question students might be expected to answer. As the examination grading committees draft new questions for each sitting of the examination, the form and substance of questions will vary across exam administrations. All questions will be designed to elicit a response that demonstrates a student's ability to integrate theory with methods and statistics and to think critically about policy implications of work in criminology and criminal justice.*

**Sample Question**

Based on the anomie/strain tradition of theorizing, one could formulate a criminological model under which factors at more than one level of analysis influence the decision to engage in crime.

- Trace the history of anomie/strain theory, providing an explanation of each of the key iterations of this theoretical tradition. Make sure to discuss how U.S. and/or global contexts and social movements led to the development of each theory in the tradition. In addition, summarize the state of empirical tests of theories in the strain/anomie tradition, providing relevant examples.
- Formulate a comprehensive, testable model of criminal offending based on the anomie/strain tradition. This model should consider more than one level of analysis, and may, if necessary, integrate different theories in the strain/anomie tradition. Include a causal diagram, if applicable, to illustrate your conceptual model. Discuss the connection between your model and different iterations of the theory.
- Design a study to test your model of offending. At the very least, discuss sampling strategy, research design, and the advantages and disadvantages of your approaches.
- Discuss measurement strategies for the key concepts in your model: identify and define the key concepts in your model; discuss the operationalization of your concepts; and identify specific instruments that might be used in this process.
- Discuss an analytical strategy to test your model. What type of modeling strategy would you use? What is your dependent variable? How is the model appropriate to answer your research question based on the distribution of your dependent variable? Discuss model assumptions. Discuss test statistics that could be used to examine the applicability of the model and results to your formulated model of crime.
- If the results support your model of crime, what are the policy implications?

## 1. Objectives of this Appendix

This appendix formally outlines the appropriate roles and responsibilities for graduate teaching and research assistants, and their faculty supervisors. The School recognizes that Stipended Graduate Assistants (SGAs) provide valuable services to the University and the School. SGAs are instrumental to the School's mission of producing cutting edge social science research and delivering high quality education in the fields of Criminology and Criminal Justice. These objectives could not be carried out without the active participation and engagement of the School's SGAs. As such, the academic and personal well-being of SGAs is the School's top concern.

It is our hope that these guidelines will serve as a framework to facilitate the development and maintenance of mutually beneficial relationships among graduate students, their faculty supervisors, and the wider University community. These recommendations are designed to complement University and School policies for graduate assistants, as well as to provide additional guidance where needed and appropriate. This document will outline best practices, help clarify expectations, and reduce miscommunication, frustration, and dissatisfaction among faculty, graduate students, and the administrative staff in the School.

## 2. Types of Stipended Graduate Assistants and their Duties

A Stipended Graduate Assistant (SGA) is a student who receives financial support for an assistantship in an academic unit. There are two main types of SGAs: teaching assistants and research assistants.

A teaching assistant (TA) is a student whose assistantship primarily involves an instructional assignment. TA responsibilities vary greatly and may include, but are not limited to:

- Giving guest lectures on occasion
- Tutoring individual or small groups of students
- Holding office hours and meeting with students
- Administrative course support
- Assisting with the grading of homework, exams and/or written assignments
- Administering tests or exams
- Assisting an instructor with a large lecture class by teaching students in recitation, laboratory, or discussion sessions

- Helping to resolve software-related difficulties experienced during classes taught in a computer laboratory

The specific roles and expectations for TAs should be discussed at the beginning of each semester. TAs should be provided a copy of the course syllabus in a timely manner and given adequate notice when they are asked to lead class discussion or run the class – either because the opportunity would be beneficial to the TA or because the faculty member is away. TAs should not be responsible for planning activities for a class session without the assistance and active involvement of the faculty supervisor or the instructor of record for the course (hereinafter referred as faculty supervisor). TAs should not be expected to lecture or teach more than 5 class sessions per semester. Nor is it the TA's responsibility to assign final course grades or to ensure their accurate reporting to the registrar; however, TAs may support the faculty in this process.

When TAs ask to lecture on a specific topic covered in a course, the faculty supervisor should make a reasonable effort to accommodate that request. When possible, the faculty supervisor should be present for the class sessions led by a TA and offer constructive feedback.

A research assistant (RA) is a student whose assistantship primarily entails assisting a faculty member(s) with academic research. RAs are not independent researchers and are not directly responsible for the outcome of a research project. They are responsible to, and report to a research supervisor or principal investigator (PI). RAs' responsibilities vary greatly and may include, but are not limited to:

- Conducting literature reviews or library research
- Collecting, coding, cleaning or analyzing quantitative, qualitative, or textual data
- Conducting interviews and other forms of field work
- Preparing materials for submission to funding agencies and foundations
- Preparing materials for IRB review
- Writing reports or designing conference presentations
- Organizing conferences or workshops
- Supervising other team members, including undergraduate research assistants
- Participating in training sessions
- Mentoring undergraduate students on the research team

RAs should carry out all research assignments with the highest degree of scientific integrity. When human subjects are involved, RAs should comply with all the mandates as specified by the Northeastern IRB.

With respect to the publishing of research findings, the issue of authorship should be discussed in an open and honest manner between the RA, the faculty supervisor, and any additional project leaders (e.g., other PIs) prior to the beginning of manuscript preparation. Decisions about authorship should be consistent with the norms and practices in the given subfield.

As much as possible, an RA assignment should clearly specify to whom the RA should report. This may include faculty or students who serve as project supervisors.

In cases that fall outside of the more typical TA/RA assignments, active communication between the SGA and faculty supervisor becomes even more important in order to define the nature and boundaries of work.

Additional SGA assignments may include, but are not limited to:

- Administrative support to the College of Social Sciences and Humanities; School Director, Ph.D. Program Director, or administrative staff
- Serving as an undergraduate advisor, or preceptor, and providing support to the Undergraduate Program Director
- Providing editorial support to an academic journal

Regardless of their type, all graduate assistantships should be beneficial to both the graduate student and the academic or teaching unit. Generally, SGA duties should center on tasks that benefit both the academic unit and advance the professional development of the student.

## 3. Supervisory Roles for Faculty

Faculty supervisors should treat SGAs with respect, as colleagues-in-training. Faculty members should meet with the SGAs they supervise at the beginning of the semester, and regularly thereafter, to discuss the collective goals for the semester in teaching or research, the SGA's progress toward these goals, and the ways in which the faculty member will support the student in achieving these goals. Faculty supervisors should serve as mentors, which entails explaining the course design, describing pedagogical choices, and teaching philosophy; research aims and project trajectories; and/or perspectives on School service. More broadly, the SGA's overall professional development is a topic that should be discussed during such meetings.

When supervising TAs, a faculty member's responsibilities may include, but are not limited to providing grading criteria and rubrics for assessment; giving TAs guidance and feedback on course ideas or syllabus drafts; and providing guidance and constructive feedback on guest lectures.

Faculty members supervising RAs should provide guidance and regular feedback on all aspects of their work, including grant or fellowship applications, the IRB process, and presentations given at professional conferences.

Faculty members are required to complete a formal evaluation of each SGA (both TAs and RAs) at the end of each term.

Faculty members should recognize that a graduate assistant's SGA responsibilities are only one part of a student's education. As SGAs are primarily students, they should never be asked to skip a class or delay their work on other program requirements. SGAs shall not be asked to provide personal services for a supervisor.

## 4. Dates of Assistantships and Weekly Workloads

All graduate assistantships are 20 hours per week for a semester (typically,15-weeks). Although there may be weekly variation in the workload of a graduate assistant, ideally the number of hours should not fluctuate widely. Faculty supervisors should ensure that they do not assign more than 20 hours of assignments per week. An exception to this is an additional 6 hours as permitted by the Director of the School, where an RA is compensated for this time based on an hourly rate as stipulated by the University. The dates that a TA can be expected to assist are regulated by the academic calendar: they begin on the first day of classes and end on the last day of exams. If the TA's assignment is connected to a course, the TA must be ready to start assisting at the beginning of the semester. When the TA is finished with all assigned duties for the course, no more assignments should be expected.

All efforts are made to provide graduate students with SGA assignments as early as possible. The School will strive to base SGA placement decisions on several factors, including student year of study, student requests, academic interests, and professional goals. Students may seek additional unpaid research opportunities in the School or College outside of their TA or RA assignment, if those opportunities do not interfere with their primary TA or RA duties.

## 5. Student Expectations, Rights and Responsibilities

The proposed guidelines are consistent with both the College contract and the policies of the School. Students have the right to notify the Ph.D. Program Director or Program Director of any perceived unreasonable duty. This includes tasks with little to no notice or duties that consistently exceed the allotted 20-hours per week. In such cases, students may be asked to provide a log of the hours worked in previous weeks.

**6. University Policies and Additional Resources**

Graduate assistants, faculty supervisors, and School administrators are all subject to the rules and regulations of the University. These include, but are not limited to, Northeastern University's policies on Sexual Harassment and Discrimination, the Student Code of Conduct, and the Graduate Academic Regulations. For a more complete list of regulations and resources about teaching and research, please visit the Office of Graduate Studies website.

**7. Procedure for Grievances**

SGA appointments usually end after a designated period of appointment. They may also be terminated at any time for cause (e.g., failure to perform the required responsibilities, expulsion from program, unsatisfactory academic progress, failure to enroll, etc.). Decisions to end funding for a SGA are made in strict accordance with School, College, and University mandates.

Efforts should be made to resolve concerns informally between the SGA and the faculty supervisor. When issues cannot be resolved informally, the SGA and/or faculty supervisor should raise the issues with the Ph.D. Program Director and/or Program Director. The Ph.D. Program Director and Program Director should be viewed as resources for both the SGA and the faculty member and can be consulted at any time.

Disputes will be handled according to the review policies of the School, which recognize the need for confidentiality, preserving trust, and acknowledging the power differential present in student-faculty relationships. The order of review for assistantship disputes is as follows:

- Faculty member employing the research assistant;
- SCCJ Ph.D. Program Director;
- SCCJ School Director;
- CSSH Associate Dean for Graduate Studies