



Graduate Student Handbook

Department of Consumer Science
University of Wisconsin

PhD in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics

Students Admitted After Jan 1, 2020



This handbook is a resource for current and prospective students. It provides an overview of the program and the process for students in the program to follow once admitted.

The Consumer Science Ph.D. Degree from the School of Human Ecology

The Ph.D. program in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics develops scholars able to apply social science theories to understanding household and consumer interactions within the marketplace and the public sector. Students undertake research on consumer decision-making affecting the social and economic well-being of individuals and families. This is a multi-disciplinary degree program. The goal of this program is to prepare students for the following types of job placements:

1. Tenure-track academic faculty positions, primarily in other schools of human ecology, consumer science or related units
2. Research administration positions in government, non-tenure academic units, nonprofit organizations, think tanks and related entities
3. Applied consumer research in the public and private sector, including market research, policy research and consulting.

This Ph.D. program emphasizes applied, quantitative methods, policy applications and a balance of teaching and research, including extensive work with undergraduate students. The goal is to prepare students who can be successful in teaching and research careers.

The primary organizational units that students in the graduate program work with include:

- The Graduate School: The Graduate School administers all University of Wisconsin-Madison graduate program (see <https://grad.wisc.edu/>). The Graduate School grants the Ph.D. in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics.
- School of Human Ecology (see <https://sohe.wisc.edu/>), or SOHE (or “the SoHE”) has four major programs: Human Development and Family Studies, Design Studies, Civil Society and Community Studies and Consumer Science. SOHE administers graduate programs through these departments, coordinated by the Graduate Program Committee (GPC). This committee administers admissions, awards, funding and changes to curriculum.
- The Consumer Science Graduate Committee: The Graduate Committee consists of tenured and tenure-track faculty in the Department of Consumer Science. This committee administers the program and oversees student assessments. Each student will have a main advisor who will report progress to the Graduate Committee. The chairperson of this committee also serves on the SOHE GPC.

What Makes This Program Unique?

There are fewer than a dozen doctoral granting consumer science programs in the United States, and fewer internationally. The Ph.D. program in Human Ecology: Consumer Behavior and Family Economics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison has many positive attributes relative to other programs:

- In-depth skills and training for professional researchers, including:
 - Empirical methods, experimental methods and causal inference
 - Analysis of major public datasets as well as administrative data
 - Understanding of consumer and household well-being theories and applications
 - Understanding of decision-making theories and models
- An emphasis on applications and applied research for strategy and policymaking in the public and private sectors
- Access to the extensive courses, faculty, resources and expertise of disciplinary departments and centers across the UW-Madison campus
- The potential for an intensive, four-year time to degree
- The ability to develop disciplinary or field sub-specialties, certificates and minor designations
- A focus on teaching, teaching experiences, outreach and presenting findings for the public
- An emphasis on publication and dissemination of research as a graduate student, including support to attend professional conferences
- Access to facilities including a behavioral decision-making lab, high quality statistics servers and unique datasets
- Opportunities to conduct research with centers and institutes across campus
- Multi-year funding available, including tuition and stipends
- A small program with approximately 20 students total

The Program

A primary advisor, or “chair” is someone whose research program is compatible with the student and with whom the student has a positive working relationship.

Primary advisors for students in the CS graduate program will be tenured or late-stage tenure track CS faculty, although by request other faculty in other departments can serve in this role with the approval of the CS faculty. The advisor monitors the student's progress towards degree completion, completes annual reviews and reports updates to the CS Graduate Committee. Upon admission, students are assigned a temporary advisor, but are expected to find a primary advisor after passing the preliminary exam. It is not uncommon for graduate students to change their advisor as their own interests change.

Program Milestones

Working with the student, the advisor determines if and when the student is prepared to complete each of five program “milestones”:

1. Preliminary Exam
2. Field Paper
3. Dissertation Proposal
4. Teaching Fellowship (mentored teaching)
5. Dissertation Defense

The table below shows a typical progression for a four-year program. This is a pathway that is feasible for most students but may not fit every student’s academic and personal circumstances.

Typical Pathway for Four Year Program

FIRST YEAR: Theory Development; Intro to Methods; Explore Research Interests; Professionalization

<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>	<i>Summer</i>
CS Courses & Electives: Mix of substantive and methods TA Professionalization: Attend workshops, meet speakers, read journals and books Meet with advisors and faculty Complete IRB Training	CS Courses & Electives: Mix of substantive and methods TA Professionalization: Attend workshops, meet speakers, read journals and books Meet with advisors and faculty Complete initial IDP	Pre-dissertation research Additional methods training Work on papers Read journals and books Prelim exam

SECOND YEAR: Deeper Methods Training; Prepare Research Papers; Professionalization

<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>	<i>Summer</i>
Methods and substantive courses TA Attend workshops, meet speakers, read journals and books Identify primary advisor	Methods and substantive courses TA Workshop/Speakers/reading Continue to meet with faculty Field Paper Attend Conference	Submit Field or other paper to journal/conference Pre-dissertation research Develop dissertation ideas Optional Internship

THIRD YEAR: Develop and Defend Dissertation Proposal; Develop Research Portfolio; Prepare for Job Market

<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>	<i>Summer</i>
Teaching Fellowship Attend conferences Meet with advisors and faculty	Teaching Fellowship Defend proposal Professionalization Present paper at conference	Dissertation Research Submit papers for publication Develop JMP (job market paper) Practice job Talk Optional Internship / Field Placement

FOURTH YEAR: Dissertation research; Present at conferences; Get job, Defense Dissertation and Graduate

<i>Fall Term</i>	<i>Spring Term</i>	<i>Summer</i>
Dissertation Research RA / PA Attend conferences Job Market Talks	Dissertation Defense Job Market Talks Attend conference and workshops	Submit papers Deposit Dissertation

Positions and Titles

Students may have the title of “Teaching Assistant” (TA). This position typically is a 9-month assignment, with at least a 33% to 50% part-time posting (13.3 to 20 hours per week) that pays a prorated stipend. TA positions typically provide full tuition remission for the academic year. TAs are assigned one or more courses per semester. The TA is supervised by the instructor of record for the course they are assigned to assist. TAs may conduct a range of tasks including: grading, developing assignments, maintaining course materials and websites, meeting with students, holding office hours and conducting reviews. Some students may take on more intensive teaching roles, with appointments up to 50% time. Other students will combine a 33% TA with 17% as a TA for another course or as a project assistant.

Some students may serve as “Graders”. These are typically hourly positions where students enter their time worked every two weeks based on an hourly rate. These positions generally do not provide tuition remission. Graders are assigned to one or more courses per semester and are supervised by the instructor of record.

“Teaching Fellows” are advanced graduate students who work intensively with a faculty mentor and are expected to develop and teach an undergraduate course for the department. This provides students an intensive teaching apprenticeship, which is critical for a future career in education or research.

“Project Assistants” (PA) are graduate students who have research-, or project-based positions. Like the TA, PAs are paid a salary and receive tuition remission. Typical PAs are 33% to 50% appointments, although for special circumstances positions may be as much as 75% appointments. PAs are supervised by the project director. PA positions may involve direct research, project administration, travel and a range of other tasks. These opportunities allow students to gain valuable research skills and work on topics related to their research interests. Faculty often recruit graduate students from other departments; it is up to the student to seek information about funding opportunities from faculty. Students should also let faculty know of about their research interests and skills.

“Research Assistants” (RA) are like PAs, except these students are also working on their own independent research.

“Dissertators” are students who have completed their dissertation proposal process and completed all required coursework. Dissertators are required to register for exactly 3 graduate credits each Fall and Spring semester.

UW-Madison students are required to contribute to “segregated fees”. These are the students’ responsibility unless the TA or PA funding includes these fees in addition to tuition remission. Students should understand how fees are treated before agreeing to a position. Students may also have other fees or expenses not covered by the stipend.

Course Work

The Graduate School establishes the minimum number of UW-Madison credits for a graduate degree (Minimum Graduate Degree Credit Requirement). A Ph.D. requires 51 credits, at least half of which (26 credits) must be at the 700 level or above, or 300 – 600 level courses with the “G50%” graduate level course attribute. Of those 51 credits, 32 must be taken as a graduate student at UW-Madison in accordance with the Minimum Graduate Residence Requirement. Students must have at least a 3.0 GPA in these courses to receive their degrees. All credits taken at UW-Madison, including those taken during the summer and at a distance, count toward this requirement so long as the course is considered a UW- Madison course. Students admitted to the degree program on "Probation" must complete courses to make up for these deficiencies no later than the end of the second semester of study.

All full-time students eligible for support and tuition remission are required to maintain full-time status, or at least **9 graduate-level credits per term** in the academic school year. This may include independent studies with CS faculty. The goal of this policy is to keep CBFE students on track to an on-time degree completion.

Students may decide to add a minor field. An “External Minor,” requires a minimum of nine credits taken in an external department. A “Distributed Minor,” requires a minimum of nine credits taken in multiple external departments within a coherent area of study. The CBFE program does not require or strongly encourage minors.

The activities and courses a student may take on will depend on the student’s career goals and interests. It is important that students communicate their needs and interests with his or her primary advisor as early in the program as possible, and provide regular updates as plans change.

Prerequisite Undergraduate Courses (UW or equivalent):

- Calculus
- Intermediate Microeconomics
- Introductory Statistics
- Intermediate Statistics

Consumer Science Courses

Theory Courses:

- CS 748 Economic Organization of the Household
- CS 888 Advanced Consumer Behavior
- CS 901 Consumer/Household Finance
- CS 930 Family Policy
- CS 999 Independent Study (Prelim, Field Paper, Other)

Methods Courses:

- CS 901: Experimental Approaches
- CS 901: Causal Methods

- CS 901: Special Topics

SoHE Courses (as offered)

- InterHE 801 Human Ecology Theories and Perspectives
- CSCS 801 Proseminar-Engaged Scholarship
- InterHE 793 Research Methods

Statistics

Courses should include a computer and data analysis components. Students who have completed one of these or equivalent courses must, in consultation with their adviser, select a more advanced statistics course appropriate to their background and expected research. Examples include:

- AAE 636 Applied Econometric Analysis I
- AAE 637 Applied Econometric Analysis II (as offered)
- ECON 705 Econometrics II
- ECON 705 Econometrics II
- ECON 706 Econometrics III
- ED PSYCH 960 Structural Equation Modeling
- SOC 756 Demography

Research Methods

These courses focus on research methodology and data acquisition. Course components should include research design, survey research methods, or qualitative research. Students may select courses that are consistent with intended thesis methodologies, in consultation with advisor. Examples include:

- AAE 875 Applied Econometrics using Replication
- ED PSYCH 711 (a) Graphical Models for Causal Inference or (b) Quasi-Experimental Design
- ED PSYCH 760 Statistical Methods Applied to Education I
- ED PSYCH 762 Experimental Design
- ED PSYCH 773 Scaling, Factor, and Cluster Analysis
- ED PSYCH 960 Structural Equation Modeling
- ED PSYCH 964 Hierarchical Linear Modeling
- SOC 751 Survey Design (and/or 752)

Field Breadth / Application

Examples include:

- AAE 635 Applied Micro Theory
- CES/SOC 977 Spatial Sociology Seminar
- MKT 971 Seminar in Consumer Behavior
- MKT 972 Marketing Seminar
- PA 871 Program Evaluation (or equivalent applied)
- PA 883 Social Welfare Policy
- POLI SCI 917 Dynamic Analysis (Time Series Modeling in Politics)
- PSYCH 703 Social Psychology Seminar
- PSYCH 930 Social Psychology Seminar

- RMI Risk/Uncertainty (or equivalent)
- SOC WORK 950 Proseminar in Comparative Family Policy

Note: courses and course offerings frequently change. Please consult with faculty and existing students when selecting courses to determine which courses are a good fit. You should plan to meet with faculty *before* registering for classes each term.

Graduate Workshop

All enrolled CBE students should register for a 1 credit course in the fall and spring terms for the Graduate Student Workshop. This course meets 1 hour weekly (generally Fridays). Topics include:

- Professional development
- Student-led research presentations of work on progress
- Practice conference talks
- Practice job talks
- Guest lecturers and featured faculty

First-year Students:

Math Camp: The Department of Agricultural and Applied Economics (AAE) offers a “math camp” the week before classes begin. When offered, CBE students are required to attend. Contact the SoHE grad coordinator with questions about enrollment.

Preliminary Exam: Students sitting for the prelim (generally late May to early June) should register for a 1 credit summer course CS 999 with the exam chair.

Example Course Plan¹

First Year			
Course #	Course Description	Type	Learning Goals / Topics
CS 888	Advanced Consumer Behavior	CS Theory	Behavioral – Social Psychology models
CS 930	Family Economic Policy	CS Theory	Economic models
CS 901	Methods	CS Methods	Applied methods
INTER HE 793	Research Methods	SoHE	Research theory and applications
CSCS 801	Proseminar-Engaged Scholarship	SoHE	Human ecology professional development
INTER-HE 801	Human Ecology Theories & Perspectives	SoHE	Human ecology theories and perspectives
AAE 636	Applied Econometrics I	Statistics	Refresher course in econometric methods Applications;
PA 883	Poverty, Inequality, and Social Welfare Policy	Application	Overview of US social welfare policy
SOC 940	Sociology of Economic Change	Theory	Topic varies
ED PSYCH 711b	Quasi-Experimental Design	Methods	Causal theory; Application of causal theory without experimental framework
AAE 635	Applied Micro Theory	Field Breadth / Application	Microeconomics
Second Year and Beyond...			
Course #	Course Description	Type	Learning Goals Topics
CS 901	Experimental Approaches	CS Methods	Experiments in consumer research
PA 871	Public Program Evaluation	Field Breadth / Application	Causal Inference; Experimental and Quasi-experimental design
ECON 750	Labor Economics	Field Breadth / Application	Microeconomics
ED PSYCH 711a	Graphical Models for Causal Inference	Statistics	Application of causal theory to data -- calculate causal effects; mediation;
ED PSYCH 773	Scaling, Factor, and Cluster Analysis	Statistics	Measurement construction, validation, reliability analysis; Item Response Theory; Cluster analysis
AAE 875	Applied Econometrics using Replication	Methods	Replication of paper
ED PSYCH 762	Experimental Design	Methods	Basic experimental design and statistical analysis
SOC 751	Survey Design	Methods	Overview of survey design - designing the instrument, sampling
CS 999	Independent Research		

¹ This is not a required set of courses, but only an example. Consult with faculty for more information.

Seminars and Workshops

Courses are only one element of the Ph.D. experience. Seminars and special lectures given by visitors, talks by job candidates, and conferences are *equally important*. Students are expected to find a seminar series or two in which to participate on a regular basis. Workshops provide an opportunity to become exposed to cutting-edge research and a chance to meet with scholars from other universities. You will be required to report to the Grad committee on which seminars you regularly attend each year.

Examples of Campus Seminars

- Behavioral Research Insights Through Experiments (BRITE) Seminar
- CDE DemSem
- CFS Household Finance Seminar
- Development Economics Seminar
- IRP Seminar Series
- Marketing Seminar
- Nelson Institute Seminar
- RMI Seminar

There are summer workshops, trainings and other programs offered on Campus or at other universities that can greatly enhance student's ability to conduct research. Students can often receive support to attend these events. Often these workshops and trainings allow students to learn new research methods and to meet with students from other universities.

Examples of External Technical Workshops

- [ESTIMATE Summer Program at Michigan State University](#)
- [Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research \(ICPSR\)](#)
- [Causal Inference Workshop at Northwestern University](#)
- [Statistical Horizons Training](#)

Professional Development Opportunities

There also programs offered on and off Campus that students should

- [UW-Madison Writing Center](#)
- [IRP Graduate Research Fellows](#)
- [CDE Training](#)
- [Mellon-Wisconsin Dissertation Writing Camps](#)

Grading and Satisfactory Progress

Students are expected to fully engage with the coursework. Students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 in graduate courses. Graduate-credit courses are those numbered 300-999, with most courses 700 or higher. Audited or pass/fail courses do not count for graduate credit. Students must earn a grade of B or better in any Consumer Science department courses and C or better on other courses. No student can receive a degree or defend the dissertation proposal with outstanding incomplete courses.

Transfer Credits:

A request to have prior course work count towards the PhD degree will be considered by the Consumer Science Graduate Committee following the student's acceptance to the PhD program and, if credits were taken at another institution, upon review of course syllabus and other course documents. Even courses with similar titles may be taught in new and different way at UW-Madison. Taking common courses also facilitates networks with other students and providing a common intellectual foundation. Transferring credits is strongly discouraged and all transfers must have the written approval of the CS faculty.

Optional Masters Degree in Consumer Science

Students may apply to the Graduate School, in coordination with the Graduate Program Coordinator, to be granted an optional Masters (MS) degree in Consumer Science. Students are eligible for the MS after a minimum of 30 total credits, where at least 16 of were taken as a UW-Madison graduate student and 15 credits were in courses numbered 700 level or above or the 300 – 600 level with the graduate course attribute. To be eligible the student should have completed 9 credits of Consumer Science courses, and 3 credits each from research methods and statistics courses. The program does not require, nor encourage, seeking a masters if the student's goal is to obtain a PhD. The value of the MS in the academic job market is minimal.

Certificates

Students are encouraged to explore opportunities for (credit and non credit) certificates. Students who may want to teach in consumer science programs offering personal finance may benefit from obtaining a CFP Certificate. CFP programs may view this certificate as an important qualification to be considered for positions.



Annual Review

First year students will be reviewed by the CS Graduate Committee in the spring. This evaluation is based on data collected directly from students by the Graduate Program Coordinator (online), as well as administrative data. Students are required to track their own metrics in terms of presentations, paper submissions and other work to report. Students will should also request evaluations of their performance as teaching assistants for each semester in which they TA or serve as a lecturer. *It is critical students make sure these evaluations are completed by students before each course concludes.* All students must complete the UW Human Subject on-line training course (CITI) and maintain an ongoing certification of completion for their entire time in the program.

Review Process:

Any student who is failing to make progress will meet with the CS Graduate Committee. Students may appeal their status providing evidence of any special circumstances to the CS Graduate Committee, and then the full CS department. Students may further appeal to the SOHE Graduate Committee, in writing, if they feel the Departmental review is inadequate.

Annual Review Metrics:

First Year

- Course Progress On Track
- IDP Complete
- Seminar Attendance Evidence of regular attendance at 1 or more series
- TA Evaluation Positive evaluations
- Prelim Pass or High Pass in all areas
- IRB CITI IRB Certification complete

Second Year

- Course Progress On Track
- IDP Updated
- Seminar Attendance Evidence of regular attendance at 1 or more series
- TA Evaluation Positive evaluations
- Field Paper Draft reviewed by 3 CS reviewers and approved after re-review

Third Year

- Course Progress On Track
- IDP Complete
- Seminar Attendance Evidence of regular attendance at 1 or more series
- Proposal Developed and Defended / Ready to Defend
- Teaching Fellowship Positive evaluations

Fourth Year

- Job Market Paper Complete
- Dissertation Defense Complete / Ready to Defend

Student- Advisor Course Annual Progress Discussion Guide

Annual Review of Grad Students (ARGS)	
Perquisites / Probationary Courses	
Consumer Science Theory Courses	
CS 888 Advanced Consumer Behavior	
CS 930 Family Economics and Policy	
Other Courses as determined	
Other Courses as determined	
Other Courses as determined	
Consumer Science Methods Courses	
CS 901: Experimental Approaches	
CS 901: Methods	
Other Courses as determined	
Other Courses as determined	
Other Courses as determined	
SoHE Courses	
InterHE 801 Human Ecology Theories and Perspectives	
CSCS 801 Proseminar-Engaged Scholarship	
InterHE 793 Research Methods	
Other Courses as determined	
Statistics	
AAE 636 Applied Econometric Analysis I	
Other Courses as determined	
Research Methods	
Course	
Course	
Course	
Course	
Field Breadth / Application	
Course	
Course	
Course	
Course	

Discussion Notes:

Milestones:

1. **Preliminary Exam**
2. Field Paper
3. Dissertation Proposal
4. Teaching
5. Dissertation Defense

Ph.D. Preliminary Exam

The purpose of the preliminary exam is to evaluate the student's preparation for conducting dissertation research. All full-time PhD students must take the prelim after their first year, unless the student is still working on deficiencies in prerequisite courses.

Prelim exams are designed for students to display breadth and depth of knowledge and their ability to identify and discuss important research questions and directions in the field. Passing the preliminary exam indicates that the student has demonstrated understanding of core material and should proceed in the program. The student is given up to 6 hours to complete the exam. One page of notes is permitted in the exam room.

The exam has two parts, **Theory Application** and **Methods Application**. It is written and graded by CS faculty teams. All responses should be well-informed, with appropriate technical details, and show a competency and fluency with basic research methods. Quality academic writing standards are expected for all parts of the exam.

Prelim Exam Evaluation Rubric

	High Pass	Pass	Deficient
Theory	Shows strong knowledge of theories and the ability to thoroughly apply to practical problems	Shows solid knowledge of theories and can apply theory to practical problems	Only shows knowledge of theories and/or cannot show ability to apply theory to problems
Methods	Shows strong knowledge of causal inference methods and the ability to thoroughly apply to practical problems	Shows knowledge of causal inference methods and can only generally apply them to practical problems	Only shows basic knowledge and cannot apply methods to research problems

A student who has a high pass on one section but fails another, may take the failed section. A student with a pass on one section and fail on the other section needs to re-take both sections. Not achieving a pass or high pass on both sections after two attempts is cause for removal from the program.

Students are encouraged to work with other students in preparing for prelims, but the taking of prelims is an independent exercise. Sample exams maybe available upon request.

Field Paper

The field paper shows the student is an independent researcher with a paper ready for submission to a journal or a conference. This paper should be finalized before the sixth semester. In the second year, students will work with their primary advisor to select three (3) faculty members to review the paper. These faculty reviewers will provide a conventional “Revise and Resubmit” set of comments, as would be provided for a journal article for peer review. The student will then revise the paper, prepare a response to reviewers and re-submit. There may be further iterations of revisions until the paper is ready for submission to a journal or conference.

Milestones:

1. Preliminary Exam
2. **Field Paper**
3. Dissertation Proposal
4. Teaching
5. Dissertation Defense

Conferences

Students should plan to submit papers to, and attend, major conferences in this field. The mix of conferences will vary, but common events include:

- Academic Research Colloquium – CFP Board Center for Financial Planning
- Academy of Financial Services (AFS)
- American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI)
- ASSA Annual Meeting (AEAs)
- Association for Consumer Research (ACR)
- Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM)
- Population Association of America (PAA)

The Dissertation

A dissertation is independent, original research. Good dissertations:

- Are highly interesting to the student
- Are related to the work of a primary advisor
- Can be completed in two years or less
- Have theoretical and policy relevance
- Will be of interest to other scholars and potential employers

The Ph.D. dissertation is an original empirical work that demonstrates the student’s ability to conduct research. This work is completed with frequent discussions with faculty and graduate students and participation in research seminars and presentations. Note that data collection can significantly delay projects. The collection of original field data is unlikely to be feasible without the additional funding support.

The Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee will consist of a chair (generally a tenured faculty member in the CS department, unless otherwise approved by the graduate committee) and at least

three additional faculty members, of which at least 2 must be CS faculty. The chair of the committee is the student's advisor. One member may be external to the UW-Madison campus. The graduate student is responsible for seeking faculty to agree to be on their committee. Typically, the proposal committee makes up the dissertation committee, with an additional faculty from outside CS.

At least three faculty members are responsible providing substantive feedback to the student on their research questions and motivation, conceptual or theoretical framework, literature, data, methods, analysis, and interpretation. It is expected that the student meet with all three "reader" members prior to their defense. Additional members are not expected to work as closely with the student or provide written feedback in advance. It is important that students communicate with their advisor and all committee members so that it is clear what each of their roles are.

The Proposal

After passing their prelim and completing all coursework, students will develop a dissertation proposal (typically the fall of the third year or later). The purpose of the proposal defense is to determine the student's readiness to commence their dissertation research. The proposal should clearly identify the research question or topic, establish the theoretical framework for the proposed topic, reference the relevant literature, and describe in detail the proposed research design and methods. A proposal is typically 25 pages in length.

Milestones:

1. Preliminary Exam
2. Field Paper
- 3. Dissertation Proposal**
4. Teaching
5. Dissertation Defense

The proposal should include a statement of the problem or question that the dissertation will answer. It should discuss the theory and methods appropriate to the question and provide a literature review that includes theory, data and methods. The proposal should also have a work plan for the research dissertation. It should also address who will be interested in the results, the importance of the results in the field, and potential policy implications. Proposals should include a process for IRB review. The IRB protocol must be approved by the UW Human Subjects Review Committee prior to starting any data collection. The IRB submission has to be completed by your advisor or other faculty.

The student is expected to present and defend their research proposal, as well as any material their committee feels is necessary for the student to conduct their dissertation research. Students should not schedule a proposal hearing until approved by their advisor and all committee members. Please plan any committee meetings at least a month in advance. Presentations may occur in an online virtual format or on campus as agreed by the committee with the student.

At least 3 weeks before the proposal defense, students must contact the SoHE Graduate Program Coordinator to request what is called a "prelim warrant" from the Graduate School. This warrant is signed by the student's committee and returned to the Graduate School. Students should provide a draft and seek written and oral feedback from their proposal committee well in advance of the proposal date.

The committee can pass the proposal, accept the proposal with revisions, or not accept the proposal. If the committee does not accept the proposal, the committee must make clear to the student what work is required to revise the proposal and whether the student must publicly defend the revised proposal. Committee members are not required to sign off until the proposal meets or exceeds all expectations.

Upon the committee's approval, the proposal (including any revisions recommended) constitutes a "contract" between the student and their committee. If the student proposes any major changes to their proposal, the student is responsible for consulting with their committee prior to making those changes.

If a student adds or replaces committee members after the proposal is completed, it is the student's responsibility to share the defended proposal with the new member(s). New member(s) may request for revisions to the proposal, request a new proposal defense or even additional requirements.

Proposal Evaluation Rubric

	Pass	Deficient
Theory	Shows strong knowledge of theories and the ability to apply to practical problems proposed	Only shows weak knowledge of theories and/or cannot show ability to apply theory to problems
Methods	Shows strong knowledge of causal inference methods and the ability to apply to research question	Only shows basic knowledge and cannot apply methods to research questions proposed
Feasibility	The proposed work is appropriate and can be completed within the timeframe, including work appropriate for the job market	The proposed work is not sufficient, appropriate or achievable towards a job placement

Hearings

It is the responsibility of the student to confer with their committee about their expectations, seek feedback, and obtain permission from their major professor to schedule their proposal hearing. Students also will arrange the date, time and location/format for the hearing agreeable to the committee members. Committee members should receive a copy of the proposal well in advance of the hearing (at least 7 working days). Hearings are scheduled for 120 minutes, with the first 60 minutes open to the public.

The location and time of the hearing should be circulated two weeks in advance (10 working days) for the information of all department faculty and graduate students. All graduate students are expected to attend the public portion of each hearing. The student is required to share meeting announcements to all CS faculty, CS staff and CS graduate students via email.

At the end of the public presentation and question period, a private session with the student will follow. The student will be asked to leave the room to allow the faculty to discuss the project. Then the student will be called back into the room for further discussions.

Teaching Fellowship

Students who are serving as a TA should take part in mentored teaching preparation in preparation for becoming a Teaching Fellow (or Lecturer SA). Ideally, a student would TA for a course for several semesters, then work with a primary instructor to take over the course by their third year as the lead instructor.

Milestones:

1. Preliminary Exam
2. Field Paper
3. Dissertation Proposal
- 4. Teaching**
5. Dissertation Defense

This is a critical learning experience and will prepare students for a teaching-researcher role in their career. Teaching experiences can include: summer courses, course development, online course and special fellowships for mentored teaching. Even students who do not plan an academic career will benefit from experiences in the classroom and instructional design.

The Dissertation

The research presented at the defense hearing should be the final and most-well developed research. The chair or primary advisor will review and approve any work before it is scheduled for a defense.

A common format for the PhD dissertation is the “three papers” model, consisting of three separate, stand-alone papers, on related topics, each with their own introduction, literature review, model, methods, results, conclusion, and references. This latter format is designed to make any subsequent publication process easier. The three-paper dissertation normally includes an introductory chapter to provide an overview or context for the three papers and a concluding chapter tying the findings together.

Milestones:

1. Preliminary Exam
2. Field Paper
3. Dissertation Proposal
4. Teaching
- 5. Dissertation Defense**

It is normal in the defense hearing for the committee to suggest changes to the draft. Sometimes these are editorial and require a few days or less to complete, but often they are more substantial, requiring a range of additional work from analysis to re-writing. **Committee members may withhold signing off until all work is completed to expectations.**

Students are encouraged to frequently present at conferences and the department brown

bag seminar. It is in such seminars and NOT in the defense hearing that students can seek advice on research strategy and interpretation of results.

There are specific Graduate School guidelines about formatting in order to deposit a dissertation:

http://www.grad.wisc.edu/education/completedegree/Dissertation_options.html

The committee must be satisfied that the dissertation is an original and significant contribution to knowledge, that the arguments of the thesis are presented coherently, and that the arguments of the thesis are supported adequately by evidence and documentation. The committee must also be satisfied that the student has a broad and intensive knowledge of the topic on which the thesis is written. At a minimum, the chair and 2 CS faculty must provide positive votes to pass.

Students “deposit” their dissertation electronically with the graduate school. The instructions for preparing your dissertation or thesis can be found here:

<http://grad.wisc.edu/currentstudents/degree/>

Warrant

Students must notify the SoHE Graduate Program Coordinator to obtain a warrant from the Graduate School. The warrant should be given to the major professor prior to the defense hearing. If the committee requires revisions, they may sign under the understanding that the major professor will supervise and ensure that the revisions are completed. Faculty may also withhold their signature. When complete, the student will then deliver the signed warrant to the Graduate School and a copy to the Graduate Program Coordinator.



Job Market Paper

A crucial activity for any candidate graduating from a PhD program and applying to research or teaching positions is the job market paper (JMP). This paper is the *best* work that the student has produced, and typical solo author work. It is a unique paper that spotlights the student's skills and interests. It should be a paper that is suitable for publication.

Students in this program are expected to develop one high quality paper by summer the early fall of their fourth year. Students should also submit this paper (or an early abstract) to conferences in order to begin to "market" their work. This will also be part of the student's job applications. This paper should be well prepared and receive extensive feedback from advisors. The JMP should be a substantial component of the student's discussions with his or her advisors beginning the third year. Students should also create a website to post their professional CV, working papers, teaching and research statements and JMP. The UW Social Science Computing Collaborative is a resource to develop and host these sites (see [SSCC professional website](#))

Job Placements

The job prospects for graduate students are based on their job market paper and by the jobs available in market in a given year. Faculty advisors will support every student seeking a position, including advice, recommendation letters and even support for attending conferences. Some students will seek out research-based teaching positions, while other students will find placements in consulting, government or business. Other students will be well served by post-doctoral research positions or alternative placements that allow the student to further develop their expertise. This may include research-focused positions in state or federal government.

The job market process usually begins in the summer. Students on the market have to monitor job listings, and all students should watch postings to become familiar with programs. Typical academic departments to monitor include: Ohio State, Purdue, Minnesota, Florida, Georgia, Rhode Island, Missouri, Iowa State, Alabama, Utah, Cal State, South Dakota and other consumer science and/or human ecology programs.

Students should identify at least two recommenders from UW-Madison faculty, in addition to their primary advisor. Recommenders will develop a general recommendation letter, tailoring the letter as needed for certain position. Students should work closely with recommenders so they can write strong letters and meet all deadlines. Many job applications require recommendation letters to be submitted via 3rd party systems that require coordination with your letter writers.

Students should communicate job market plans at least a year in advance to advisors and faculty. Conferences, personal websites and professional networks are all critical to job placements.

Facilities, Labs, Computing and Offices

Offices. Students may have shared space initially with a goal of private workspace as students become more independent researchers or lecturers. Students serving as TAs may also have spaces for conducting office hours. Students can also reserve meeting rooms using the [room scheduling system](#).

Computing. All students should sign up for an account at the [UW Social Science Computing Collaborative](#). This includes secure server space, access to storage, statistical packages and Linux high performance data analysis. SSCC also offers trainings and consulting on statistical systems. Students can also access the [UW Software Library](#) to download a range of key software packages. (Stata, R, Matlab, LaTeX, etc.).

Labs. There are many social science labs on campus. The [Behavioral Research Insights Through Experiments \(BRITE\) Lab](#) is a state-of-the-art facility for laboratory data collection for business, consumer science, and other social sciences. The lab is located in 2117 Nicholas Hall.

Service Opportunities

Students can take part in campus and national professional development organizations, including:

- SoHE Graduate Student Organization
- Consumer Science Student Association (CSSA)
- Town Halls and Grad Student Socials

Internships

Graduate students seeking a position in government or industry will benefit from an internship, fellowship or apprenticeship during the summer or regular semester offering applied research experience. These can be established as paid positions, or for credit experiences. Students are strongly encouraged to explore this option—even students planning on an academic career will benefit from applied experiences to provide context and stimulate research ideas.

Financial Assistance

Financial support for graduate study is available from several sources and can be in the form of a loan, a scholarship, or employment.

UW Financial Aid

Contact the Office of Student Financial Services, www.finaid.wisc.edu . Programs administered through this office include: Federal Direct Loans, Campus Based and Work Study positions on campus. They also have information on scholarships and grants.

UW Graduate School Aid

The Graduate School offers a variety of fellowships, for a range of purposes and disciplines and with various restrictions. For more information, see Graduate School

Office of Fellowships and Funding Resources, www.grad.wisc.edu/offr . Of specific interest are Vilas Awards for student travel and research.

SoHE Awards

The school has a number of competitive awards, including:

- STAR Award – student research and travel
- Ausman Award – mentored teaching fellowship
- Douthitt Award– mentored teaching fellowship
- BRITE Lab Grant- support for studies in the lab

Student Responsibilities

The goal of this program is to develop students into independent researchers. Students should be mindful of their advisors and committee members' time. Meetings should be planned and scheduled, students should be prepared and have reasonable expectations for the time advisors can provide. Requests for recommendation letters or reviews of papers or proposals need to be made in advance.

It is the responsibility of the student to track their progress, communicate regularly with their advisor, to make appointments and meet with their advisor on a regular basis, and to follow the Graduate School processes and deadlines. Students are also responsible for communicating with committee members.

Successful graduate studies require frequent interaction with your advisor, committee, and fellow students. All Ph.D. students are to be based at the UW-Madison. In exceptional circumstances, students may petition the graduate committee for an exemption from this requirement.

International students are required to maintain full-time status (9 graduate-level credits; 6 in the summer). Exceptions must be approved by the International Student Services Office.

Conduct

Students may not submit a paper that is a revised version of a paper they have already written, or are submitting for more than one course unless they have prior approval. Doing so is breach of both the university's standards for academic conduct.

When an instructor or advisor suspects a student has committed academic misconduct in a course, he or she will be guided by the university's academic misconduct process. Information about the university's definitions, policies, and disciplinary sanctions are available at <https://grad.wisc.edu/acadpolicy/#misconductacademic>

The department adheres to the university's policies on sexual and other forms of harassment. For further information on sexual harassment and the procedures for filing a complaint, consult the university's Dean of Students Office at <https://www.students.wisc.edu/doso/reporting-allegations-of-sexual-assault-datingdomestic-violence-and-stalking/>

